

Butenschoen is hopeful for 'excellent' Bill's Man in Graduate final

Friday, July 06, 2018 - by Ken Weingartner, USTA Media Relations Manager

Hightstown, NJ --- John Butenschoen expects a good effort from Bill's Man in Saturday's \$250,000 Graduate Series championship for 4-year-old trotters at the Meadowlands Racetrack. The only question is how good.

"Some days he's a real good horse, some days he's an excellent horse," Butenschoen said. "If the real good horse shows up, we should be able to get a check. If the excellent horse shows up, we are good enough I think to win. There are times when he is absolutely fantastic and there are times that he's just a really, really good horse. It's going to depend what horse shows up. We'll see."

Bill's Man was more than good in his most recent start, winning with a then track-record-equaling 1:52.1 mile at Harrah's Philadelphia on June 21. For his career, Bill's Man has won eight of 39 races, cashed a check a total of 32 times, and earned \$557,229. He closed last season with a victory in the Matron Stakes.

He finished second in a division of the Graduate Series on June 10 at Tioga Downs and was fourth in two prior rounds of the event.



New Image Media photo

For his career, Bill's Man has won eight of 39 races, cashed a check a total of 32 times, and earned \$557,229.

Bill's Man, a son of [Credit Winner](#) out of Silver Springs, will start from post seven with Corey Callahan driving for owners Crawford Farms Racing, M And L of Delaware, and VIP Internet Stable. He is 8-1 on the morning line.

Butenschoen also sends out Don Dream in the Graduate final. He will start from post six with driver Brett Miller and is 15-1. Don Dream, a son of [Donato Hanover](#) out of Gabbys Dream, has won seven of 21 career races and earned \$128,803. The gelding is owned by Crawford Farms Racing.

"It's nice to be able to start the year off racing against 4-year-olds," Butenschoen said. "I think they're both coming into the race in good shape."

"We've got a chance here now for two weeks to race for some really serious money before we've got to jump and tackle the open boys down the line," he added, referring to the July 14 Hambletonian Maturity for 4-year-old trotters at the Big M. "I think it's a good way to get their feet wet. Bill's Man started early last year and raced all the way through the Matron, so he didn't get a whole lot of time off. So it's nice when they come back they don't have to race against horses that are a little more seasoned. It's a good springboard."

Ariana G, the lone female in the Graduate trot field, is the 3-1 favorite. Yannick Gingras will drive the mare from post eight for trainer Jimmy Takter and owners Marvin Katz and Al Libfeld.

Saturday's card also includes the \$250,000 Graduate Series championship for 4-year-old pacers and two eliminations for the Crawford Farms Meadowlands Pace for 3-year-old pacers. The top five finishers from each elimination advance to the July 14 Meadowlands Pace final. Elimination winners draw for posts one through six.

Racing begins at 6:35 p.m. (EDT). The Graduate Series finals are races five and 10. The Meadowlands Pace eliminations are races six and eight.



Mike Lizzi photo

Funkwaffles, a two-time New York Sire Stakes champ, has won 13 of 34 races and earned \$874,223.

Butenschoen will be busy in the Graduate for pacers, too, with Funkwaffles starting from post six. Funkwaffles, a two-time New York Sire Stakes champ, will have Callahan driving for Crawford Farms Racing and is 10-1. For his career, Funkwaffles has won 13 of 34 races and earned \$874,223.

He is winless in six starts this season, but has a second-place finish behind Filibuster Hanover in a preliminary round of the Graduate. In his most recent start he was seventh in an elimination of the Ben Franklin Pace on June 23 and bypassed the Franklin consolation last week to refresh for the Graduate final.

"He's been victimized in most of his starts by post positions," Butenschoen said. "He's raced extremely well but he doesn't have a lot to show for it. The one time he did get a chance to strut his stuff he was a close second to Filibuster at Tioga. He's not a very big horse, but a very game horse. We figured let them go at it hard (last week) and hopefully we're a little bit fresher. If we can work something out I think we're OK."

Higalator, who has won three of his past four races, including two preferred handicaps at The Meadowlands, is the 3-1 Graduate pace favorite from post 10. David Miller will drive for co-owner/trainer Jenny Bier and fellow owners Joann Dombeck and Midsized Construction.

Following is the Graduate Series championship field for 4-year-old trotters.

PP-Horse-Driver-Trainer-Morning Line

- 1-Lord Cromwell-Jim Marohn Jr.-Ed Hart-10/1
- 2-Dunbar Hall-Jody Jamieson-Stephanie Jamieson-7/2
- 3-Moonshiner Hanover-David Miller-Chris Beaver-9/2
- 4-International Moni-Scott Zeron-Domenico Cecere-6/1
- 5-Sortie-Trond Smedshammer-Trond Smedshammer-15/1
- 6-Don Dream-Brett Miller-John Butenschoen-15/1
- 7-Bill's Man-Corey Callahan-John Butenschoen-8/1
- 8-Ariana G-Yannick Gingras-Jimmy Takter-3/1
- 9-Top Flight Angel-Andy Miller-Julie Miller-15/1
- 10-Yes Mickey-Ake Svanstedt-Ake Svanstedt-8/1

Following is the Graduate Series championship field for 4-year-old pacers.

PP-Horse-Driver-Trainer-Morning Line

- 1-Miso Fast-Louis Roy-Virgil Morgan Jr.-7/2
- 2-Donttellmeagain-Tim Tetrick-Jim King Jr.-5/1
- 3-Western Joe-Scott Zeron-Chris Choate-9/2
- 4-Mac's Jackpot-Brett Miller-Jeff Smith-15/1
- 5-Blood Line-Andy McCarthy-Jimmy Takter-10/1
- 6-Funknwaffles-Corey Callahan-John Butenschoen-10/1
- 7-Maroma Beach-Matt Kakaley-Ron Burke-15/1
- 8-Filibuster Hanover-Yannick Gingras-Ron Burke-8/1
- 9-Lawrencetown Beach-Doug McNair-Ron Burke-15/1
- 10-Highalator-David Miller-Jenny Bier-3/1