

By HNBYS.COMMUNICATIONS

The opening day session of the annual Standardbred Horse Sale held in Harrisburg, Pa. saw 61 New York Breds go through the sales' ring with averages down slightly from last year's final totals. Traditionally, the first session is usually the strongest and with 96-less horses being sold this year on the first day it's difficult to gauge the market even though the average was up from \$43,933 to \$51,432, which is understandable based on the decrease in number of horses being offered.

Trainer Dave Spagnola, who is based at Saratoga Harness Track, is attending the sale and stated: "I thought the number of buyers was a little light in comparison to previous Harrisburg sales and thought the New York Breds sold for slightly less than last year."

Spagnola's observation was corroborated based on comparison of sale averages from nearby states. 61-New York Breds averaged \$36,361 while 92-New Jersey Breds averaged \$61,516 and 96-Pennsylvania Breds averaged \$52,010.

At the conclusion of the first session a relieved Murray Brown, Vice-president of the sale, stated: "The top was extraordinarily good, I thought. The trotting market, which I thought was relatively poor compared to the top pacing market at Lexington (Select Yearling Sale) was far better than the pacing market here. There's so many things I can't explain. Usually people say. "Well, it was the European presence." But the Europeans weren't strong. It was domestic money."