

# PRINCESS ON THE HILL

*Sport's first female 1:50  
performer enjoying retirement*

BY PHILIP D. SPORN

Up a steep driveway and a hilly incline, a lone horse grazes in the large backyard paddock of the Kiefer family in rural Boonton Township, N.J. • Now 26 years old, Caesars Jackpot was, without question, one of the best pacing mares of her generation, setting several world records, being named 1990 Older Pacing Mare of the Year, and racing against (and defeating) the best females of her generation. In 1991, she became the sport's first female 1:50 performer.

**GOLDEN YEARS:** Now 26, world champion pacing mare Caesars Jackpot is enjoying life as a pasture ornament at Jake Kiefer's farm in New Jersey.





**MAKING HISTORY:** In 1991, Caesars Jackpot became the fastest pacing mare in history when she time-trialed in 1:49.2 at Springfield, Ill.



Caesars Jackpot was purchased as a yearling at the 1987 Kentucky Standardbred Sale for \$7,000. Trainer Abe Stoltzfus signed the ticket on the daughter of Walton Hanover-Tracy's Jackpot.

**As a 2-year-old, she took a record of 1:57** and earned \$39,758, the bulk of it by finishing second in the Sweetheart Pace consolation at the Meadowlands.

She blossomed in her 3-year-old season, earning \$273,592 with a 19-7-2-2 slate. Her biggest win was in the \$242,250 Mistletoe Shalee, where she defeated Cheery Hello, and followed that up with a victory in the Tarport Hap, set-

ting the stakes and Meadowlands track record of 1:52.1.

As a 4-year-old, Caesars Jackpot rose to the top of her class, winning the Breeders Crown, Milton Stakes and Roses Are Red Stakes, and was a runaway winner in Older Pacing Mare of the Year balloting.

She ended the year as the leading money-winning older pacing mare (\$353,550) and had a seasonal scorecard of 24-11-7-0. She set the all-age world record for 4-year-old mares (twice) on a five-eighths-mile track (1:52.4f and 1:52.2f), the former lowering Pacific's and Crystal Tree's previous standard), and also set the all-age record for

females in a race, winning an Open at the Meadowlands in 1:51.2.

In 1991, at age 5, Caesars Jackpot entered the record book as the sport's first 1:50 female. On an August afternoon in Springfield, Ill., her 1:49.2 time trial smashed Fan Hanover's 1982 record (T1:50.4) to become the fastest female ever. It took another eight years before another mare (Galleria, 1:49.1 in 1999) paced a faster mile.

To put her T1:49.2 record into perspective, at the time, only two males had ever paced faster: Matt's Scooter (T1:48.2) in 1988 and Niatross (T1:49.1) in 1980. For the season, Caesars Jackpot had an impressive 30-11-3-4 record and



JAKE MADE ONE LAST BID AT \$4,500 TO SECURE THE MARE.  
 HIS HAND WAS SHAKING AS HE SIGNED THE SALE SLIP.  
 HOW MANY 17-YEAR-OLDS HAD SPENT THAT MUCH MONEY AT ONE TIME?

earnings of \$209,410.

She was certainly no “one-hit wonder,” however. At the end of 1991, she had paced three of the fastest six miles ever by an older pacing mare, and six of the 10 fastest as well.

**After a moderate 6-year-old season in 1992,** and a few starts in 1993, Caesars Jackpot hung up her harness. She retired as the leading 1:55 pacing mare of all time (31, more than Shady Daisy and Delinquent Account) and third all time, behind Ramblin’ Storm and T K’s Skipper.

She started her second career as a broodmare and was bred to No Nukes in the spring of 1993. That resulted in

the \$70,000 yearling Nuclear Jackpot. He managed only \$10,488 in lifetime earnings.

Another No Nukes followed, the 1996 foal Caesars Pride, who made \$4,760. A switch to Artsplace produced Millennium p,1:52.2f (\$80,536).

After she was sold to Fashion Farms of Pennsylvania, Caesars Jackpot had foals in 2000 (the unraced Real Artist colt Et Tu Caesar); a 2001 filly by Real Artist (Caesars Artist); the 2002 Western

**GOOD BUY:** Jake Kiefer was in his teens when he signed the sales slip for Caesars Jackpot in 2006.

Ideal colt Western Jackpot p,1:51.2s (\$161,587); and the 2004 Real Artist filly Shezarella Caesar p,3,1:56.4f (\$19,345).

In January 2006 she was sent to the Meadowlands mixed sale.

Enter team Kiefer: Jake; his wife, Robin; and his son, also Jake. The senior Kiefer was a former trainer-driver on the East Coast circuit, but had been retired from the sport for many years. His son, Jake, then a teenager, was a breeding enthusiast who spotted the mare in the sale and thought she might be a good candidate to start their broodmare band.

Figuring she might go cheap because she was selling early in the sale, as well as the fact that she was 20 years old, young

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**RETIRED?:** Caesars Jackpot hasn't been successfully bred since 2008, but an embryo transfer has been discussed.

Jake, his mother and grandfather set off for the sale. They had a few broodmare candidates in mind, and Caesars Jackpot was selling first, in foal to the Pennsylvania stallion Real Artist.

The crowd was sparse early, and the early bidding stalled, to the point that the opening bid of \$1,000 was finally realized. A few moments later, Jake stepped in at \$3,500; a bidder in front of him bumped it to \$4,000, and Jake made one last bid at \$4,500 to secure the mare. His hand was shaking as he signed the sale slip. How many 17-year-olds had spent that much money at one time?

Jake called his father to give him the good news, but the senior Keifer didn't believe him. He drove to the Meadowlands to see for himself, while his son went home to get the money he had forgotten!

**Sharing ownership of the world champion** were father and son Kiefer, and the older Jake's longtime friend, Peter Paul Venturini. Venturini was a former baseball prospect in the Chicago White Sox organization, playing minor league ball for several years in the 1980s, primarily as a shortstop. He is now a business owner in northern New Jersey, special-

izing in business security systems.

The senior Jake is a maintenance engineer for an energy company in Long Island, while son Jake is a second-year veterinary student at the University of Kansas, who hopes to work in the breeding and/or reproductive field when he graduates. His mom, Robin, a part-time realtor, helps out feeding and grooming the old gal.

After the bargain purchase, Caesars Jackpot was sent to Blue Chip Farms in New York, and the foal she was carrying turned out to be the Real Artist colt Majestic Jackpot.

After that, however, the breeding gods were not kind to Caesars Jackpot. She was bred to Sealed N Delivered in 2006 and came up barren. In 2007, she was bred to Bettor's Delight and was pronounced in foal. Unfortunately, a fall recheck determined she had lost the foal. Around the same time, Majestic Jackpot was sold at the Pennsylvania Preferred sale at Harrisburg for \$17,000.

Not to be deterred, Caesars Jackpot was bred again in 2008 to Bettor's Delight, and produced the colt Bettor's Jackpot. Retained by her breeders, he made a few qualifying starts as a 2-year-old in 2011 and is now in training at the Mark Harder stable at Gaitway prepping for his 3-year-old season.

**Caesars Jackpot has not been bred** since, and spends her retirement days with her canine companion Jordan, a Chesapeake Bay Retriever, roaming the backyard of the Kiefer home with a view of the Rockaway River, 25 miles from Meadowlands Racetrack, home of some of her greatest accomplishments.

Although she is in relatively good health, team Kiefer has not ruled out the possibility of an embryo transfer with the world champion mare, despite the high cost and low chance of success.

So, for the moment, Caesars Jackpot is the spoiled princess on the hill, in the backyard up the long, windy driveway, who gets her 4:30 a.m. feeding from Jake Sr. before his morning commute to Long Island.

Life is not so bad for the sport's first 1:50 female.

PHILIP D. SPORN is a freelance writer living in New Jersey. | To comment on this story, e-mail us at [readerforum@ustrotting.com](mailto:readerforum@ustrotting.com).

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## SUMMER EARLY CLOSERS

<b>DREAM MAKER</b>		<b>\$50,000 G</b>
EVENT #49	Two-Year-Old Pace	Raced at Mohawk
NOMINATION FEE: \$100 (Can. & U.S.)		
1ST LEG	Monday, July 9, 2012	\$20,000 ea
2ND LEG	Thursday, July 19, 2012	\$30,000 ea
FINAL	Monday, July 30, 2012	\$50,000 G

Declarations close as posted on weekly condition sheet.

<b>BRIDGER</b>		<b>\$50,000 G</b>
EVENT #51	Two-Year-Old Trot	Raced at Mohawk
NOMINATION FEE: \$100 (Can. & U.S.)		
1ST LEG	Monday, July 30, 2012	\$20,000 ea
2ND LEG	Thursday, August 9, 2012	\$30,000 ea
FINAL	Monday, August 20, 2012	\$50,000 G

Declarations close as posted on weekly condition sheet.

<b>SUMMERTIME</b>		<b>\$60,000 G</b>
EVENT #53	Three-year-old pacers who were non-winners of 2 races or non-winners of \$10,000 lifetime, as of midnight March 31st, 2012. No allowances for age or sex. Raced at Mohawk	
NOMINATION FEE: \$100 (Can. & U.S.)		
1ST LEG	Tuesday, July 10, 2012	\$20,000 ea
2ND LEG	Friday, July 20, 2012	\$30,000 ea
FINAL	Monday, July 30, 2012	\$60,000 G

Declarations close as posted on weekly condition sheet.

<b>WHENUWISHUPONASTAR</b>		<b>\$50,000 G</b>
EVENT #50	Two-Year-Old Filly Pace	Raced at Mohawk
NOMINATION FEE: \$100 (Can. & U.S.)		
1ST LEG	Thursday, July 12, 2012	\$20,000 ea
2ND LEG	Monday, July 23, 2012	\$30,000 ea
FINAL	Thursday, August 2, 2012	\$50,000 G

Declarations close as posted on weekly condition sheet.

<b>IN FREE</b>		<b>\$50,000 G</b>
EVENT #52	Two-Year-Old Filly Trot	Raced at Mohawk
NOMINATION FEE: \$100 (Can. & U.S.)		
1ST LEG	Tuesday, July 17, 2012	\$20,000 ea
2ND LEG	Thursday, July 26, 2012	\$30,000 ea
FINAL	Monday, August 6, 2012	\$50,000 G

Declarations close as posted on weekly condition sheet.

<b>TOWN PRO</b>		<b>\$60,000 G</b>
EVENT #54	Three-year-old filly pacers who were non-winners of 2 races or non-winners of \$10,000 lifetime, as of midnight March 31st, 2012. No allowances for age or sex. Raced at Mohawk	
NOMINATION FEE: \$100 (Can. & U.S.)		
1ST LEG	Friday, July 6, 2012	\$20,000 ea
2ND LEG	Monday, July 16, 2012	\$30,000 ea
FINAL	Thursday, July 26, 2012	\$60,000 G

Declarations close as posted on weekly condition sheet.

## WEG's Signature Weekends...

### MOHAWK RACETRACK

**\$1,500,000 Pepsi North America Cup XXIX**

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SATURDAY, JUNE 16 - POST TIME 7:10 PM

**\$750,000 Maple Leaf Trot**

- Roses Are Red • Canadian Breeders Championship!

SATURDAY, JULY 21 - POST TIME 7:10 PM

**\$1,000,000 Metro Pace**

- Canadian Pacing Derby • She's A Great Lady • A Spring of Hope Invite
- Simcoe Stakes - 3yr Open Trotters!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 1 - POST TIME 7:10 PM

**\$1,000,000 Canadian Trotting Classic**

- William Wellwood Memorial • Peaceful Way

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15 - POST TIME 7:10 PM

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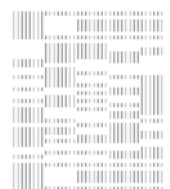
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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10 - POST TIME 7:30 PM

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## YEARLING NOMINATIONS

### 2013 CHAMPLAIN FILLY STAKES \$500,000E

EVENT #72 To be raced as two-year-old filly pacers and trotters in 2013.  
**Filly divisions. \$150,000 Added (\$75,000 each gait)**  
 Nominate Yearlings (Filly Foals of 2011).

	Can.	U.S.	
NOMINATION FEE	\$10	\$10	May 15, 2012
SUSTAINING FEE	\$300	TBA	March 15, 2013
SUSTAINING FEE	\$500	TBA	May 15, 2013
STARTING FEE	\$2,000	TBA	

If 13 or more horses declare to start, the race will be contested in divisions.

### 2014 SIMCOE FILLY STAKES \$500,000E

EVENT #74 To be raced as three-year-old filly pacers and trotters in 2014.  
**Filly divisions. \$150,000 Added (\$75,000 each gait)**  
 Nominate Yearlings (Filly Foals of 2011).

	Can.	U.S.	
NOMINATION FEE	\$10	\$10	May 15, 2012
SUSTAINING FEE	\$300	TBA	March 15, 2013
SUSTAINING FEE	\$500	TBA	February 15, 2014
STARTING FEE	\$2,000	TBA	

If 13 or more horses declare to start, the race will be contested in divisions.

### WEG 2014 STANDARD BRED BREEDERS OF ONTARIO ASSOCIATION STAKES \$350,000E

EVENT #75 To be raced as Ontario-sired three-year-old filly pacers and trotters in 2014. (Ontario-sired means bred by a sire that was registered in the Ontario Sires Stakes program in the year of breeding.)

**\$100,000 Added (\$50,000 each gait)**  
 Nominate Yearlings (Filly Foals of 2011).

	Can.	U.S.	
NOMINATION FEE	\$25	\$25	May 15, 2012
SUSTAINING FEE	\$200	TBA	March 15, 2013
SUSTAINING FEE	\$300	TBA	February 15, 2014
SUSTAINING FEE	\$300	TBA	March 15, 2014
SUSTAINING FEE	\$300	TBA	April 15, 2014
STARTING FEE	\$1,000	TBA	
LATE NOMINATION FEE	\$1,000		February 15, 2013

If 11 or more horses declare to start, the race will be contested in one or more eliminations.

### 2013 CHAMPLAIN STAKES \$600,000E

EVENT #71 To be raced as two-year-old pacers and trotters in 2013.  
**Open divisions. \$150,000 Added (\$75,000 each gait)**  
 Nominate Yearlings (Foals of 2011).

	Can.	U.S.	
NOMINATION FEE	\$10	\$10	May 15, 2012
SUSTAINING FEE	\$300	TBA	March 15, 2013
SUSTAINING FEE	\$500	TBA	May 15, 2013
STARTING FEE	\$2,000	TBA	

If 13 or more horses declare to start, the race will be contested in divisions.

### 2014 SIMCOE STAKES \$500,000E

EVENT #73 To be raced as three-year-old pacers and trotters in 2014.  
**Open divisions. \$150,000 Added (\$75,000 each gait)**  
 Nominate Yearlings (Foals of 2011).

	Can.	U.S.	
NOMINATION FEE	\$10	\$10	May 15, 2012
SUSTAINING FEE	\$300	TBA	March 15, 2013
SUSTAINING FEE	\$500	TBA	February 15, 2014
STARTING FEE	\$2,000	TBA	

If 13 or more horses declare to start, the race will be contested in divisions.

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## NOMINATIONS CLOSE TUESDAY, MAY 15, 2012

Event #	Name of Horse	Colour	Sex	Age	Sire	Dam

**SEND TO:** Woodbine Entertainment Group, 555 Rexdale Blvd., P.O. Box 156, Toronto, ON M9W 5L2. Attention: Kim Neelands. Make cheques payable to Woodbine Entertainment Group. Nomination fees in all stakes must accompany nomination. I/WE nominate the horse(s) specified on this sheet in the above race(s) and agree to all the conditions.

Owner: \_\_\_\_\_ Trainer: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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