

Doug McCarthy's Moblessinsdinblues (pronounced Mo Blessins Din Blues) captured the inaugural running of the Snowman Trotting Stakes at Sudbury Downs last weekend. Trained by Keith Jones, the 7-year old gelding repeated the same winning style as he had in his elimination the week



before when Gerry Belanger front ended him to a four-length victory. However, as Belanger had a horse from his own stable in the Snowman Final he had to decline the catch drive. Stepping in was Mike MacNeill. He followed the Jones' orders to get to the front and keep on improving his position. That he did and turned aside all challengers, albeit with a slimmer $\frac{3}{4}$ length margin in a time of 2:00.2. It marked the fourth win of the year for Moblessinsdinblues and increased his 2011 earnings to \$38,832.

Heading into the final race card of the season tonight, ace reinsman Dave Dowling sits high atop the driver standings in virtually every category. He has faced the starter 478 times in 2011 and with 103 wins his the only driver to eclipse the century level. In addition Dowling complimented that with 84 second place finishes and 55 thirds and the horses he drove have earned just a few shekels shy of \$550,000. Dowling also sports an impressive Universal Driver Rating (UDR) of .351.

Teetering in second and third spots are Paul "The Kid" MacLean and Mike MacNeill. The Kid has competed in 423 races so far and has a performance line of 72 wins, 69 seconds and 48 third showings and has just tipped the half million dollar mark by \$653 and sports a UDR of .298. MacNeill has driven in 443 races, which has resulted in his garnering 71 winners, 66 seconds and 71 thirds and has \$497,682 in purse earnings to his credit. He is driving in 10 of the 11 races on this evening's program and with only a little luck should easily surpass the \$500k. MacNeill has a UDR of .296. So, the second and third spots may not be determined until the final race.

Depending on which value you put on most wins, highest win percentage, UDR or money earned (for my money...it is the money) Gerry "Li'l Ger" Belanger currently ranks second with \$505,726. For the record, he has raced 488 times at Sudbury this year and has recorded 60 triumphs, 91 place finishes and 74 thirds while maintaining a .277 UDR.

The complete driver and trainer standings are listed on the inside cover of the tonight's program as well as on the www.sudburydowns.com web site.

Downs' Racing Secretary Brent Powell has programmed a feature race for upper class pacers in the 10th. Owner/trainer Paula Pidutti hands the reins over to Dave Dowling for her 4-year old Sambucca Mystic. He has drawn the outside in an abbreviated six-horse field but has plenty of step away from the gate. That could have him controlling the pace but he will no doubt experience serious challenges in the final stages. Kid MacLean's No.4 Flight Night is a winning sort with 12 so far this year and he revels in those races with fast early quarters responding with usual rousing come-from-behind finishes. Li'l Ger has drawn inside at the pylons with his veteran pacer, 11-year old Thomson Seelster. He is a war-horse and certainly a contender at this level.

In the eighth race co-feature trainer Jay Polifroni will be in the bike to drive No.4 Pinner. He has won his last couple against similar horses and is another of those late charging horses that usually create lots of excitement. Second choice attention may fall to the No.2 FB Seelster. Trainer Jean Noel LeBlanc has called upon The Kid MacLean to handle the driving chores. The last time he sat up behind him they met in the winner's circle and this group may prove a little less dominant than in his last few races.

While this is the final live harness racing card of the season, the very best in harness and thoroughbred racing from tracks all over North America will be available for wagering at Sudbury Downs and throughout the Northern Teletheatre Network.

On behalf of the management, staff and horse racing participants at Sudbury Downs, I would like to thank all race goers for their patronage. We wish you the Merriest of Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

This column will resume when live harness racing returns in the spring of 2012.