

BELLADONNA RACING LLC

NO. 12 – VOL. 5
DECEMBER 2025

THE BEST OF LUCK TO *Vahva!*

BLOODHORSE
FOR MORE THAN 100 YEARS

BY OLIVIA NEWMAN

KEENELAND NOV. SALE ENDS WITH RECORD AVERAGE AND MEDIAN

The eight-day sale was the highest-grossing November Sale since 2007



The Keeneland November Breeding Stock Sale concluded Nov. 11, with 1,976 horses changing hands for a total of \$245,901,400, including post-ring sales, seeing a 25% increase from last year's gross of \$196,492,900 from 2,159 head. The eight-day sale was the highest-grossing November Sale since 2007.

The 2007 November Breeding Stock Sale grossed \$340,877,220 over 15 sessions and included horses in training. The November Horses of Racing Age Sale became a stand-alone auction in 2022.

Records were set in both the average and the median, with the average seeing a 37% increase from last year's sale to \$124,444 from \$91,011, and the median jumped 50% from \$40,000 to \$60,000. Four hundred horses failed to meet their reserve, resulting in an RNA rate of 16.8%



VAHVA sold for \$3.1-million to Killora/Linton, agent for Boyd Racing. This was the second-highest price of the eight-day Keeneland November sale.

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"This year marked a watershed moment for Keeneland Sales," said Keeneland president and CEO Shannon Arvin. "From a record-shattering September Yearling Sale that topped \$500 million in gross sales to the continued momentum into an outstanding November Breeding Stock Sale, the confidence in this marketplace has never been stronger."

Eighteen horses sold for \$1 million or more, the most since 2017, and included one seven-figure horse on Day 2—a feat that had not been achieved since 2022.

"It's been remarkable," Keeneland vice president of sales Tony Lacy said. "To be very frank, we were hoping this would be a good, solid sale. We felt the quality was here and we had a good group of horses that would fit a large group of people. We were very pleased with the number of buyers that showed up—especially the international contingent—and we saw a lot of people here that we haven't seen in a number of years. It was very encouraging to see people energized to come back.

"But what was really encouraging was to see the domestic market so strong when it came to retaining a lot of these higher-end mares and retaining the gene pool," Lacy added. "The weanling market was also exceptional, and I think that allowed breeders to feel motivated and positive as they plan to breed mares



into the next season and into the near future."

The highest-priced horse of the sale was grade 1 winner Lush Lips, who brought \$3.7 million on the first day of the sale from Dixiana Farms. She was consigned by Taylor Made Sales Agency, the sale's leading consignor, selling 258 head from their draft for gross receipts of \$42,172,400.

"To have a horse that won the QE II at Keeneland come here and sell and bring \$3.7 million, it doesn't seem real," said Phillip Shelton, racing manager of Medallion Racing, which raced Lush Lips in partnership. "All the stars aligned, and full credit to the team at Keeneland. Every major buyer in the world looked at her. Plenty of major buyers were lined up and didn't get to bid because she brought so much money. Just an unbelievable feeling."

The highest-priced weanling of the sale also came on Day 1 when Donato Lanni, agent for Zedan

Racing, went to \$2.2 million for a son of Gun Runner. The colt, consigned as Hip 146 by Denali Stud, agent, was the highest-priced weanling sold at the November Sale since 2015. He was bred in Kentucky by Three Chimneys Farm and Brookdale Racing, and is out of the grade 1-winning Scat Daddy mare Nickname.



[▶ CLICK HERE FOR FULL BH STORY](#)

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TURF THRILLING *Thanksgiving*

Trying a route and the turf for the first time, LEGALIZE was all heart from start to finish and was awarded the win on Fair Grounds' Thanksgiving Day card. He finished the 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ -mile allowance in 1:40.49 over firm going.

Breaking sharply and getting to the lead easily under James Graham, LEGALIZE set an easy, but quick, pace up top, while getting pressured from the other speed horse, YINZER.

Clicking off quick fractions through a half mile, LEGALIZE kicked for home hugging the rail and was going easily when YINZER made a bid to go for the lead. Battling down the stretch, YINZER lugged into LEGALIZE and knocked him off stride, but LEGALIZE dug back in and was bobbed out on the wire.

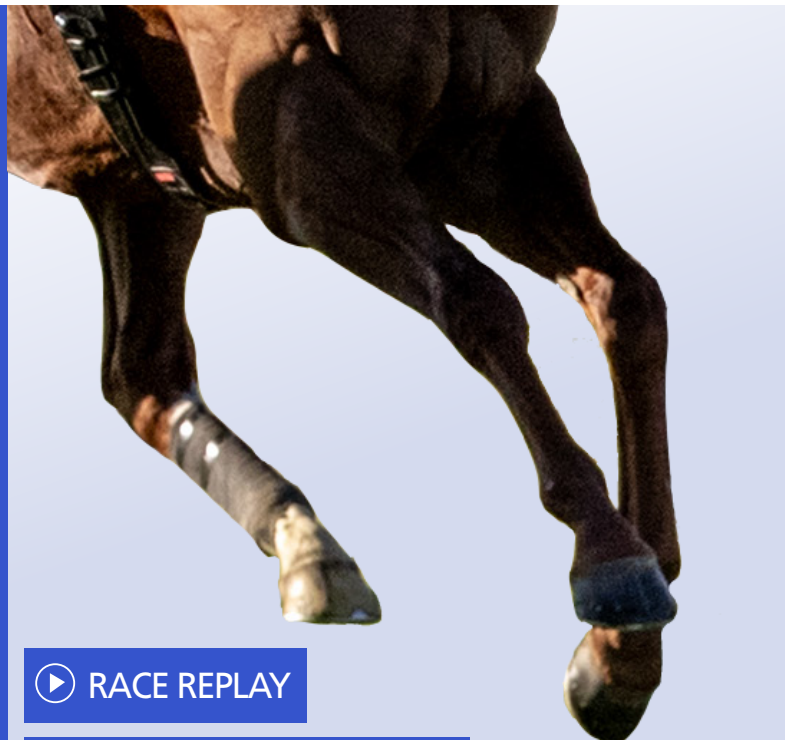
Graham quickly told the stewards that he wanted to make a rider's claim of foul. After the review, they agreed and LEGALIZE was placed first over Yinzer.



LEGALIZE ALL HEART IN TURF DEBUT

Cherie commented, "I am so happy with the race LEGALIZE ran and how he did it. He's never gone two turns in his life, so to run the way he did and in his debut on the turf, I think we found his home. I love how he went to the lead and relaxed, even with the outside horse breathing down his neck and making him move a bit early, he did not give up at all. I think that bump legitimately cost him a win without the help from the stewards, but I'm thankful that James made his claim of foul. I can tell LEGALIZE ran his tail off today. I will take our time with him coming up with his next spot, but it will be on the turf. David is getting a lot of grief at home tonight for not letting me run him on the turf sooner...but he's being a good sport and admitting he was wrong!"

Graham added, "This horse ran super; he broke and put me in a great spot. He was going easy there but the horse Paco was on was putting pressure on and moved early to make me go early. We took a good bump down the stretch and it no doubt cost us the race legitimately. The stewards made the right call and the head-on showed it. Congrats and I'm thankful to get a winner for Cherie, finally!"



[▶ RACE REPLAY](#)

RACE RECORD: 8-3-0-2 \$187,590

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MAKING THE GRADE AT *Churchill*

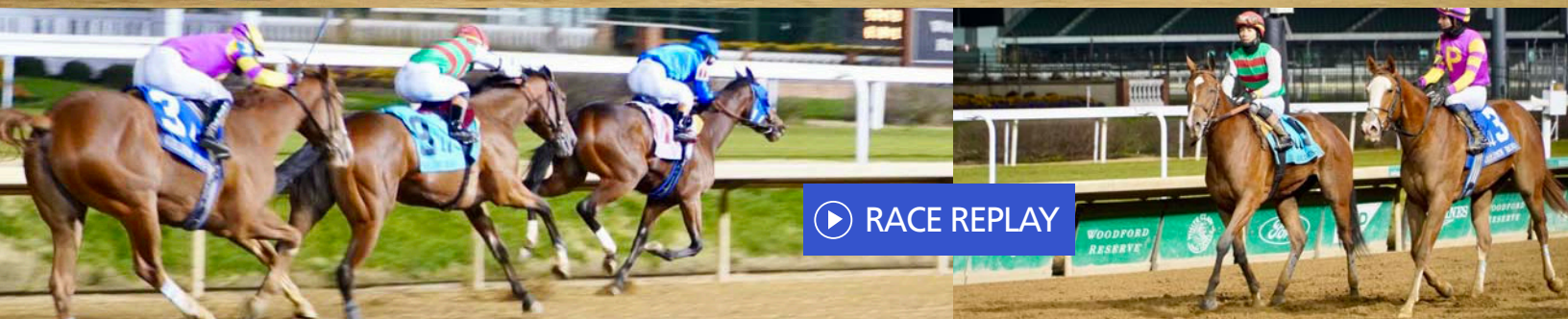


ATROPA ON THE TRAIL

With her huge closing effort to finish second by a half-length in the \$400,000 Golden Rod S. (G2) on November 29th, ATROPA earned five points toward a starting gate spot for next year's Kentucky Oaks (G1).

Plans are to ship her to Fair Grounds where Cherie will map out a path on the Oaks series for more points.

Jose Ortiz, who rode ATROPA to her maiden win, returned here and commented: "I thought I was going to get there even with the way the race shaped up. ATROPA gave me a big kick, and I can really feel her reaching out and moving strongly under me. Distance is no problem and as she puts it together mentally, we are going to have a lot of fun with her."



▶ RACE REPLAY

WOODFORD
RESERVE

BELLADONNA RACING

SETTLING IN FOR THE *Winter*



Several of our Belladonna runners have shipped to New Orleans for the 2025-2026 Fair Grounds meet, which started November 20th and will race through March 22nd. It has been our winter home-base since our inception.

This year, instead of Palm Meadows in Florida, we plan on keeping many of our runners at our main base, Kentucky. We will have strings in training at Keeneland, Turfway, and the trackside training center, all pointing for the lucrative purses that Turfway Park will offer during their meets. The holiday meet begins December 3rd and runs through December 27th, while the winter/spring meet runs during the months of January through late March.

In Kentucky, only one racetrack is open at a time, with Turfway having the longest stint. It is the only Kentucky track using the synthetic surface, Tapeta. Following Turfway's meet, racing switches to Keeneland's spring meet (April 3rd-24th) and then Churchill Downs' Derby week (April 25-May 2) and its spring meet through June.

Fair Grounds



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What's GOING ON

David Ingordo Q and A on Vet Scratches

Sunday, November 16, 2025 at 2:50 pm | [Back to: Shared News, Top News](#)
Updated: November 17, 2025 at 1:43 pm

By *Dan Ross*

The vet scratch is a baked-in component of the sport. It isn't going away. But is there a way to make the system better, more efficient?

On the one hand is the regulatory vet world, arguing that criticism of their vital role is not only damaging to the sport but often misleading (the latter argument **they back up with statistical support**).

On the other hand are the trainers and owners on the receiving end of a vet scratch decision who feel that too many sound horses are getting caught up in a system that doesn't effectively account for the subjectivity involved with identifying lameness, and subtle lameness especially.



David Ingordo | Keeneland

► [CLICK HERE FOR FULL TDN STORY](#)

SAVE THE DATES
FEBRUARY
5-7



Our annual Ocala Trip will be here before you know it.

Join us Feb. 5-7 when many of our partners plan to visit Dr. Barry Eisaman's incredible Eisaman Training Center to experience a morning of watching our two-year-old class go through their early training routines.

We also have a dinner planned to enjoy the camaraderie of this special group of owners.

We know some partners are not able to make the set trip, and we are working on a second weekend in late January for a similar experience. Stay tuned for those dates.



Trivia

What is oldest active racetrack in America?

ANSWER PAGE 7

VISIT OUR WEBSITE BELLADONNATB.COM

It is an all-source site for entries, results, updates, stats, current news, archived newsletters, and photos.

We encourage feedback so that we can provide the information you desire, so please let us know what you think of the overall content.



**CLICK HERE TO
VISIT OUR SITE**

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Around THE TRACK



The Process



Atropa



White Smoke



Vahva

A: It is now Fair Grounds after the harness track Freehold Raceway hosted its final meet in December 2024.

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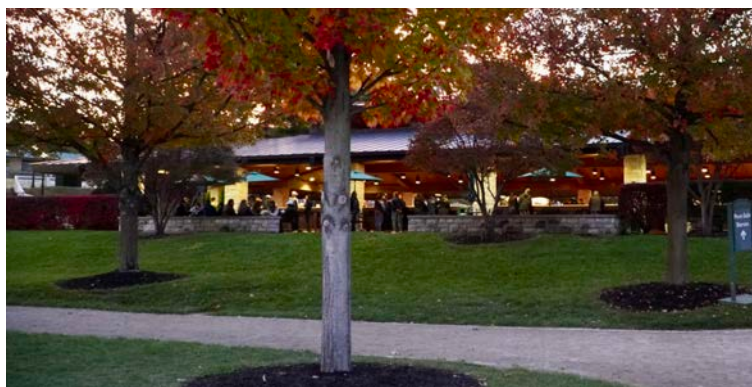
Around THE TRACK



Panache



Depiction



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The Process



White Smoke



Tiffany Cross



Atropa



Retribution



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Around THE TRACK



Pedroza



Roguishness



Mount Vernon



Acquazurra