

Part 1 The Making of a Champion and a New Barn

A chance encounter in of all places Brooks Feed Store was the beginning of a story almost too good to be true. A trotter who wouldn't trot, a trainer and part time farrier with deep racing roots who wouldn't give up, a big win over an undefeated rival and the defending champion in a legendary trotting race became one of the biggest stories in harness racing this year.

Rodney Hughes a fourth generation Standardbred trainer recalled the day he showed up at the Brooks store in Port Perry and was offered a chance to train a 2 year old by the stallion "San Pellegrino" out of a proven producer mare called Village Beauty. The problem was the big dark gelding "broke" on the turns and that along with an imperfect hock caused by a kick as a foal had scared off other trainers.



The Van Camps were only looking for a months effort from Rod to see if the gelding had potential but Rod Hughes is anything but a quitter. It took 8 months but Rod's persistence, encouragement and help from father Jerry and wife Emily paid off when San Pail was ready to qualify at Kawartha Downs.

After some promising starts the next unlikely chapter in the story came when Rod Hughes asked experienced driver Randy Waples to take over as San Pail's regular driver. Since then it's been one cheque after another including five winners in the last six starts. Nothing however topped the winning of the \$720,000 Maple Leaf Trot on July 25th 2009 at Mohawk. San Pail held off defending champion Arch Madness and a late challenge from undefeated American Lucky Jim coming home to the ecstatic cheers of a throng of supporters.

The lifetime winnings of over \$950,000 helped put up a new barn on the Dunsford farm Rod owns with wife Emily. Rod hasn't given up his day job though. Each day he leaves some of the chores to father Jerry and wife Emily and heads out to shoe horses. The Hughes farm is proudly served by *Durham's Feed Supplies*.

The Van Camp's are very quick to give credit to Rod and family for the amazing turn around. Of course Rod is quick to emphasize that ***"The only feed I put in the pail is a Brooks Feed"***

We wouldn't expect anything else of course. After all

"Fueling champions is what we do"



Rod Hughes (right) and Glen Van Camp share the Maple Leaf Trot Glory



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It's San Pail Again **Part 2**



It was July 25th 2009 when Brooks Feeds celebrated along with trainer/part owner Rodney Hughes, as San Pail, a brown gelding by San Pellegrino became the unlikely winner of the Maple Leaf trot defeating the unbeaten American "Lucky Jim." The story of how trainer Hughes took this flawed horse when there were no other takers and took him to the winners circle in one of harness racing's most prestigious races, is a rags to riches story that warmed the heart of even the most

hardened observer.

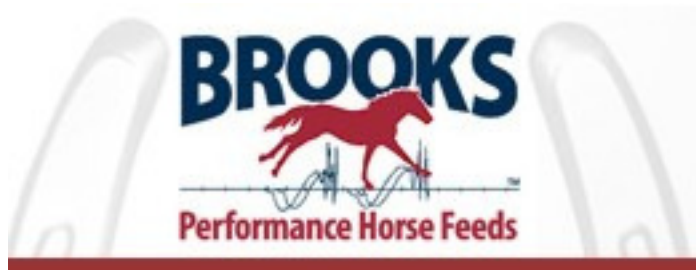
So on July 24th 2010 there was San Pail ready to defend his title and there too was Lucky Jim the proud American eager to smoke his rival. At post time most of the betting public were with the son of S Js Photo, Lucky Jim. Trainers Andy and Julie Miller were determined to avenge Lucky Jim's only loss of 2009. San Pail was the better's 3rd choice. What does a horse need to do to get respect?

Maybe trotting the ½ in a Mohawk record :54.2 or coming home with a three length victory in a sizzling 1:51.3, a Maple Leaf Trot record time. Arch rival Lucky Jim came in fourth.

"I'm so happy with that horse tonight. He's just awesome. He's what you dream of. To do this twice is just unbelievable. I knew we had lots of support here tonight. I was just hoping we had the horse to back it up" said a very happy Rodney Hughes after the big win.

The win pushed the lifetime winnings of San Pail up to \$1.6 million for Hughes and co-owner Glen Van Camp. San Pail is the first repeat winner of the Maple Leaf Trot since Mr. Muscleman in 2004-5.

Another Champion Fuelled by Brooks Feeds



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