

## JL Cruze supplements to Hambletonian Maturity

by Moira Fanning, publicity director, the Hambletonian Society

**Cranbury, NJ** --- The second edition of the \$443,300 Hambletonian Maturity Stake attracted the attention of the fastest trotter in Meadowlands history -- JL Cruze, whose connections supplemented their Cinderella story purchase for a fee of \$50,000.



*Lisa photo*

**JL Cruze trotted in 1:49.4 in the Graduate final, the fastest in Meadowlands history and a world record on a mile track.**

"He's just awesome," said William Dittmar Jr., who co-owns with Kenneth Wood and Stephen Iaquina, in a post-race interview after JL Cruze's 1:49.4 victory in the [Graduate final](#). Delaware-based trainer Eric Ell purchased the horse for \$37,000 in last year's Harrisburg Mixed Sale and with the victory on Saturday has earned \$396,138 with 15 wins in 17 starts.

Just five eligible trotters entered against JL Cruze, but they include Dan Patch Trotter of the Year, the filly Shake It Cerry, who was just a nose back of JL Cruze in the historic 1:49.4 mile, and Dan Patch sophomore Trotting Colt of the Year, [Father Patrick](#), with earnings of \$2.5 million lifetime. Both are trained by Jimmy Takter.

Also entered are Il Sogno Dream and Resolve, the fourth and fifth place finishers in last year's Hambletonian won by [Trixton](#).

The Charlie Beaver-trained Il Sogno Dream will be making his first start at The Meadowlands this year. The son of [Cantab Hall](#) was sixth in the Cleveland Trotting Classic on July 3.

Resolve is owned by Hans Enggren, who won the Hambletonian 30 years ago with Prakas and will be seeking a unique double in the Maturity. Resolve is trained and driven by Ake Svanstedt and was third in the Graduate to JL Cruze and Shake It Cerry.

Gural Hanover completes the field of six. The hard-knocking son of [Crazed](#) hails from the Ron Burke barn, and was timed in 1:50.3 while finishing fourth in last Saturday's Graduate.

The Hambletonian Maturity will be raced Saturday (July 18), along with \$2.6 million in stakes, anchored by the Crawford Farms Meadowlands Pace at the Meadowlands Racetrack in East Rutherford, N.J. Created by the Hambletonian Society and the Meadowlands as a racing opportunity solely for 4-year-olds previously eligible to the Hambletonian and Oaks, the inaugural event drew a field of 14 that included the 2013 Oaks winner and Dan Patch Horse of the Year, Bee A Magician, and the Hambletonian champion, Royalty For Life. It was won by Your So Vain and Ake Svanstedt.

Like the Hambletonian and Oaks, the Maturity racing conditions prohibit the use of Lasix, the only race day medication permitted in New Jersey and entrants are subject to out of competition testing. The distance is a 1-1/8 miles.

All starters in the race will receive money, with the winner receiving 50 percent of the purse. One percent of the total purse will be paid to the owners of the finalist finishing sixth.

The remainder of the purse for the Maturity will be divided 50-24-16-10 percent for the horses finishing second through fifth.

Post positions will be drawn later today.