

## **Resolve Ready to Defend Title in International Trot**

**By Brandon Valvo for the SOA of NY**

YONKERS, N.Y. – Although owner Hans Enggren jokes that he doesn't remember much nowadays, when it comes to his horse Resolve, he has plenty of fond memories to share. Enggren attended the Yonkers International Trot last year when Resolve won and the experience is something he will never forget.

"The service that we got, the people were absolutely marvelous to help me from beginning to end. The race was amazing and the audience was amazing," he said. "We felt so welcome and the race was amazing and to see all these people with video cameras and regular cameras."

Enggren watched last year as Resolve led at every call in the \$1 million International. With trainer Åke Svanstedt in the sulky, Resolve won the 1 ¼-mile stakes by 1 ½ lengths and stopped the timer in 2:23.4.

Although his connections dreamt of defending their title in the race's 2017 renewal, a freak incident in early September threatened their plans. Before Resolve raced in an elimination of the Maple Leaf Trot at Mohawk Racetrack September 8, he suffered a snake bite.

"He was turned out in a pretty large area and that's when it must have happened," Enggren said. "It's such an amazing thing to be bitten by a snake when he went to Canada. I mean, gee whiz. That has happened to me once before in my life. I had a horse called Meadowbranch Ava. I liked her and I bred her and she was in foal and she was bitten by a snake. It's just unbelievable. It's the second time for me."

Resolve finished seventh in his Maple Leaf Trot elimination, beaten 6 ¾ lengths by Mambo Lindy. After the race, Resolve spiked a fever and the vet discovered the bite.

"The vet had to give him some antidotes, which was pretty strong. I told my trainer to let him rest," Enggren said. "In the meantime, he was rested, was treated. He has trained almost up to normality. He's looking pretty good now and Mr. Svanstedt is very pleased with him and he said he'll be alright for the race on the fourteenth. We are very, very careful with everything about the horse."

Although Resolve hasn't raced or qualified since the Maple Leaf Trot elimination, Enggren and Svanstedt have pointed him for the International Trot. Enggren and Svanstedt didn't want to rush their star back to the races after his incident. Enggren suggested they each develop a plan for the son of Muscle Hill's fall season and reconvene to make a decision.

"When he was hurt by the snake and I didn't want him to race, I called Svanstedt up and I said, 'why don't you decide on what race you would love to be in more than any other race for the rest of the year,' and I said, 'I'll tell you mine and we'll call each other back.' It was strange, we both picked the same race."

Enggren's careful handling of Resolve this fall is understandable. He spent months trying to buy Resolve from his breeders Mike Pozefsky and Edward Wilson before a deal was struck in July 2014. Since then, Resolve has won a host of open stakes in North America, including the Mack Lobell, A.J. Cutler, and Maple Leaf Trot. Resolve has also enjoyed success overseas, finishing second to Nuncio in the 2016 Elitlopp Final and third to Timoko and Propulsion in this year's edition. All told, Resolve is 18-for-62 with another 26 placings and has earned \$2,743,033.

"I fell in love with him when he was still a 2-year-old," Enggren remembered. "I just fell in love with the horse and I didn't give up. This was in October when he was 2 and it took till the sixteenth of July – it's amazing that I remember that date because I don't remember very many things anymore – and on that day, the very, very kind and nice owners and breeders of Resolve agreed on a price of which they would sell him to me.

Enggren noted Resolve and trainer Svanstedt have developed a special bond in their time together. He credits this for much of Resolve's success and it gives Enggren confidence heading into the International Trot October 14.

"The horse is always doing his best and he wants to race. I think he's getting up to that by the coming Saturday, I certainly hope so. Svanstedt seems to feel that everything is going to be fine," Enggren said. "I understand that there are some very good horses and on paper, we know that we have beaten them before. I know the other horses in there, but I also know this horse has been so amazing on so many occasions that I think he'll do fine.

"I still say if he doesn't pick up a check, I'll be extremely surprised," he continued. "I do know that he and Svanstedt are a team. It's amazing how they are, both on the track, off the track, and when they just see each other in the barn. They just like each other so much. Everybody likes this horse. He's just extremely kind and he's amazing."

Although Enggren won't be able to attend the International Trot this year – the 88-year-old recently spent a week in the hospital – he will be watching intently from home. Resolve has brought Enggren closer to his family and friends, who all convene on race days to root for the star trotter.

"He's a marvelous horse and I have made more friends because of him. We have a little theater here every time he races because my friends come and want to see him," he said. "I think I will stay here and see the race and invite my kids and my friends and we'll do it here."

*More International Trot invitees will be featured as the race draws closer. The \$1 million Yonkers International Trot at Empire City Casino will be raced Saturday (Oct. 14) at Yonkers Raceway. For more information, visit [www.internationaltrot.com](http://www.internationaltrot.com).*