

SWEDEN'S CRUZADO DELA NOCHE WINS \$1 MILLION INTERNATIONAL TROT
BY FRANK DRUCKER, Publicity Director, Empire City @ Yonkers Raceway

YONKERS, NY, Saturday, October 13, 2018—Who was that masked man?

Those weren't Brian Sears' colors, those weren't Brian Sears' odds, but that was Brian Sears, occupying Yonkers Raceway's winner's circle...again.

Sears and Sweden's 30-1 (not a typo) out-the-whole-way Cruzado Dela Noche stalked, then snapped, Norway's Lionel (Goran Antonsen) at the wire Saturday afternoon (Oct. 13th), winning the \$1 million Yonkers International Trot @ Empire City Casino.

The mile-and-a-quarter 40th International—the fourth after two decades of dormancy—began with 10 world-class trotters representing seven counties. It ended in the first turn for 7-5 favorite Ringsostarr Treb (Wim Paal) of Italy and Sweden's Pastore Bob (John Untersteiner) after both made breaks trying to leave.

After that merriment, Italy's Arazi Boko (Alessandro Gocciadoro) made the first lead, working around the lone American and lone lass Ariana G (Yannick Gingras) before a :28.2 opening quarter-mile. The U-S miss then played leapfrog, retaking from Arazi Boko before Canada's Marion Marauder (Scott Zeron)—out early from the cones—made the lead.

It was a :57.1 half with triple-millionaire Marion Marauder doing his thing and Lionel now first-up, having moved from fifth. He took it to Marion Marauder from the 1:27 three-quarters to the 1:55.3 milepost.

Meanwhile, Cruzado Dela Noche, who, from post position No 6. advanced to be second-over, went three-deep early. It was Lionel putting away Marion Marauder soon after the final turn, needing only to hold off the horse he towed.

Despite racing his eyeballs out, Lionel could not stall Cruzado Dela Noche, who prevailed by a head in 2:24.3 at a \$62.50 win mutuel.

France's Up and Quick (Jason Bartlett) knifed through to grab third—beaten a length-and-a-quarter—with Ariana G and Marion Marauder rounding out the payees. Arazi Boko, Canada's Will Take Charge (Tim Tetrick), Denmark's Slide So Easy (Flemming Jensen), Ringostarr Treb and Pastore Bob completed the order.

For seventh choice Cruzado Dela Noche, a 6-year-old son of Muscle Massive leased by Anders Strom's Courant Inc. (whose colors Sears wore) and trained by Marcus Melander, it was his second win in seven seasonal starts. The exacta paid \$698, the triple paid \$14,069 and the superfecta paid \$67,948 (base \$2 payout, 10-cent ticket worth \$3,397.40)

"The horse raced super," Sears said after winning his first International. "I was just hoping for a cover trip. I just didn't want to be three deep into the first turn. I was happy with the trip...pulled into right where I needed to be.

“He had the trip that he needed and you have to have some luck to win these types of races. That's what happened.”

The result surprised Melander.

"We had two qualifiers at Pocono and we weren't really sure if he was 100 percent in form for this race," he said.. "Even if he was good in those two qualifiers, he didn't have a real race in three, almost four months. He's used to the mile and a quarter in Sweden, so distance was never my concern. But he showed us he was in the right shape today."

Cruzado Dela Noche, who spent his first two racing seasons in North America before being exported, is Sweden's sixth International Trot winner.

As for the post-mortem, "The first here (Yonkers) has been coming up quick for about 70 years now," Jerry Riordan, Ringostarr Treb's trainer, said.

"That was just a case of, he pretty much had to leave. (Wim Paal) had the horse where he needed to be. It was just a speed break."

"I didn't want to get into the race that early, but when (Ringostarr Treb) broke, it forced my hand," Zeron said. "He had a chance to race, and that's all you can ask for. Congratulations to the winner."

...and those who found him at the windows.

(Invitationals stories shortly)

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(photo-Mike Lizzi-accompanies)

(FFI...Frank Drucker, Yonkers Raceway Publicity Director, 914-968-4200)
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