

## JL Cruze, Doo Wop Hanover post Graduate victories

from the Meadowlands Media Relations Department

**East Rutherford, NJ** --- The third leg of the Graduate Series for trotters pitted a rematch of JL Cruze vs. [Father Patrick](#), this time for \$100,000 on Friday (June 19) at the Meadowlands.

Click here to watch race:

<https://youtu.be/lxo-e4LWfkg>

Fresh off the upset two weeks ago that sent shockwaves throughout the sport, JL Cruze was given more respect at the windows Friday night, sent off as the 9-5 second choice. [Father Patrick](#) was given the nod as the favorite, despite the narrow loss last-out and post 10 Friday night, released as the 1-2 choice.



JL Cruze floated off the gate, while [Father Patrick](#) did the same, watching many trotters vying for early position to his inside. Around the first turn, JL Cruze sat mid-pack in fifth, with [Father Patrick](#) right behind him. The early lead belonged to Gural Hanover, who reached the quarter in :26.4.

**JL Cruze was a narrow winner over [Father Patrick](#) in a lifetime best 1:50.4.**

As the field straightened up on the backstretch, JL Cruze launched his bid for the lead, with [Father Patrick](#) hot on his heels and the pair ranged up into contention as JL Cruze cleared the lead going to the half-mile in a sharp :54.1. [Father Patrick](#) was left uncovered briefly, but he asserted himself rather quickly and made the lead as the field moved into the far turn. His pilot, Yannick Gingras, let [Father Patrick](#) roll to three-quarters in 1:22.3, while Sumata was challenging first over.

JL Cruze was locked in the pocket for much of the stretch as [Father Patrick](#) reached for the line. But inside the final eighth of a mile, the pylons opened up for JL Cruze and John Campbell guided his trotter through the narrow opening where he sprinted to the wire to defeat [Father Patrick](#) in a lifetime best 1:50.4. That clocking also equaled the fastest trotting mile of the season. Resolve rallied to be third from well back.

JL Cruze is owned by Ken Wood, William Dittmar Jr. and Stephen Iaquina and is trained by Eric Ell. He cost just \$32,000 at the Standardbred Mixed Sale in November and has now earned \$233,638 this season. Driver John Campbell spoke to how the horse has developed.

"Back in February, we knew he was good, but I don't think anyone could have predicted this. But he kept getting stronger as time went on and I knew he could trot with these, but I wasn't sure he could win. But he just keeps getting better."

Amazingly, trainer Eric Ell reported that JL Cruze kicked his stall the morning of the second round of the Graduate and he considered scratching the horse. Not only did he race, but he defeated [Father Patrick](#), a feat he accomplished again Friday night.

The \$250,000 Graduate Trot final will be contested on Meadowlands Pace elimination night (Saturday, July 11).



*Lisa photos*

**Doo Wop Hanover overcame a tough journey to win in a world record time of 2:02.3 for 1-1/8 miles.**

The third leg for the Graduate pacers was also contested Friday night at The Meadowlands for \$100,000. An overloaded field of 12 would go to the post and because of the two trailers, the race was contested at 1-1/8th miles.

Rockeyed Optimist, a winner of nine of 10 starts this season was sent off as the odds-on favorite, while Doo Wop Hanover, a winner of the first round of the Graduate Series was let go at 7-2. Both 4-year-olds are trained by Steve Elliott.

The early speed came from the inside as Limelight Beach and Lyons somewhere blasted to the front, but Rockeyed Optimist was aggressive from his outside post and he would grind into it early on and made the lead past the quarter of :27.1. In the meantime, Doo Wop Hanover never saw the pylons and was allowed to settle into his stride uncovered while racing nearly 10 lengths off the lead as Rockeyed Optimist sprinted past the half-mile in :53.4.

At that point, Doo Wop Hanover began to launch a steady bid for the lead while leading the outer flow, tracked by All Bets Off. Rockeyed Optimist completed three-quarters in 1:22.1 as Doo Wop Hanover continued to close in.

As the field straightened away in the stretch, the two Elliott trainees were side by side and they put on a show, pacing through the stretch together, leaving the field behind. Doo Wop Hanover, despite being uncovered throughout the nine furlongs, was able to wear down his stablemate and score a win in a world record clocking for 1-1/8 miles, winning in 2:02.3, eclipsing the previous mark of 2:03.1 established by Noble Ability in 1999. All Bets Off checked in third.

Doo Wop Hanover was sent out by owners Peter Blood and Rick Berks.

John Campbell swept the Graduate events Friday night and was extremely impressed with the performance of Doo Wop Hanover.

"He went a huge trip, but he wasn't working that hard and that was the key. But we were out the whole way and he just kept coming."

Both Elliott trainees are being pointed to the \$250,000 Graduate final on Friday (July 3).

In other action, Hot List made it back-to-back victories, both in the form of pylon skimming drives as she won the \$28,500 Fillies and Mares Open Pace over Iniiitowinafortune in a sharp 1:49.4. The win was another on the card for John Campbell who scored a hat trick on the program. The mare is trained by Arnold Marks.

The \$26,000 Open Trot was won in wire-to-wire fashion by DW's NY Yank, who led at every pole to score in 1:52.1. Obrigado was locked in the pocket throughout the mile and

appeared to have a ton of trot while finishing second. Trainer Ron Burke sent out the winner.

The \$22,800 Cathedra Dot Com final went to Next Flight Up in a 24-1 upset and she rallied down the center of the racetrack and chased down Oceans Motion, Real Drama and That Woman Hanover to score in 1:50.4 for driver Brett Miller and trainer Jeff Smith.

Both carryovers in the Jackpot Super Hi-5 lived to fight another day, with the fifth race carryover growing to \$162,597 and the last race carryover swelling to \$141,004.

Total handle for the Friday program yielded a 10 percent increase over the same night in 2014, despite one less race.

Racing resumes on Saturday with a 13-race program beginning at 7:15 p.m.