

NY-Bred Lord Cromwell rules in Dexter Cup

by Ken Weingartner, Harness Racing Communications

Freehold, NJ --- Lord Cromwell and driver John Campbell moved to the lead on the backstretch and were never threatened from there, cruising to a 5-1/4 length win in Saturday's (May 6) \$143,737 Dexter Cup for 3-year-old male trotters in a stakes- and track-record 1:55 at Freehold Raceway. Gustavo Fring finished second and Southwind Cobra was third.



USTA/Ken Weingartner photo

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The Dexter Cup is the first Grand Circuit event for 3-year-old trotters on the road to August's \$1 million Hambletonian Stakes at the Meadowlands.

Southwind Cobra, who started from post five, took the early lead from Sir John F and reached the opening quarter-mile in :28.1. Lord Cromwell, the 4-5 favorite, was on the move after Southwind Cobra hit the half in :57.3 and was in front by the time he reached three-quarters in 1:26.4.

"I knew they were going to trot out of there and he's actually better from behind," Campbell said. "Once I spoke to him at the five-eighths, he was gone. He actually finished well within himself. I was very happy with the trip. He was very handy. I think he's got a pretty good future."

Said winning trainer Ed Hart, "I loved the post position. A lot of it is post position on a half-mile track. We drew good and John drove him perfect and everything worked out.

"He's got a big set of lungs. He just goes."

Lord Cromwell, bred and owned by Carolyn Atherton, is not eligible to the Hambletonian. The horse was limited to four starts last year because of sickness and complications from being gelded.

"Looking right now, I'm sorry that we didn't," Hart said about the Hambletonian. "You never know. He's staked a bit lightly. Last year we couldn't really stake him heavily."

Lord Cromwell paid \$3.60, \$2.80, \$2.40.

The previous stakes record of 1:55.3 was set by Anders Bluestone in the 2009 Dexter Cup. Anders Bluestone shared the track record for a 3-year-old male trotter with Keystone Activator.

"He was super today," Hart said about Lord Cromwell. "He's just a really nice horse."

Lord Cromwell, by Chapter Seven out of the mare Oh Oh Its Magic, is 2-for-2 this year and won two of his four races last season. He has earned \$97,588 in his career.



USTA/Ken Weingartner photo

Lord Cromwell's connections celebrate in the winner's circle after his Dexter Cup triumph.

Campbell, who is retiring in July to become president of the Hambletonian Society, won for the 10,655th time in his Hall of Fame career. He pushed his lifetime purses to \$299.61 million. He ranks first all-time in driver earnings, leading No. 2 Ron Pierce by \$84 million, and is ninth in wins.