
NOTE:

You can view the following story exactly as it appears in *Hoof Beats*. Simply click on “View” in your Adobe Acrobat menu bar, scroll down to “Page Layout,” and then click on “Facing.”

Enjoy!

Bill Perretti and the farm that shares his name have

'A Man of



changed racing BY NICOLE KRAFT • PHOTOS BY MARK HALL



His Word'





Bill Perretti did not start his business career with an Ivy League education, family connections or a sizable fortune.

What he had was \$10,000, a single gas station/car dealership in Hackensack, N.J., and a lot of self-confidence.

It was the 1960s, and harness racing was in its heyday. Perretti didn't know much about the sport—and he didn't really care. He was busy building an empire that reached its first plateau when the dealer known as “Wild Bill” was—

within five years of opening his first store—one of the largest Chrysler dealers in America.

But Perretti was far from done. He took his auto kingdom and moved it west to Texas, where he developed a passion for steers and horsepower of a different type—namely Quarter Horses. He had cultivated a 1,000-acre cattle and cutting-horse ranch in the Lone Star

State when the East Coast called him yet again, and Perretti headed back to New Jersey, where he added restaurateur to his resume.

A man who seems to find success in everything he touches is often seeking new entertainment and interest, and it was that drive that brought Perretti to The Meadowlands, ablaze with glamour and glitter in the late 1970s. So busy was

Super stallion: 1989 Horse of the Year Matt's Scooter was the first impact stallion to stand at Perretti Farms. His offspring have banked more than \$62.6 million.

the track that Perretti had difficulty getting a table for dinner, and he wanted to be part of anything that was that exciting.

He began a quest for a trainer, hooking up with George Berkner, and the pair joined forces on the aptly named Wild Bills Skipper, by Meadow Skipper, and Wild Bills Bunny, a half-sister to the Berkner-trained B.G's Bunny.

Combined, the two pacers earned less than \$4,400.

It would be easy to imagine Perretti quickly moving on to other pursuits. But “Wild Bill” had long proved himself a man committed to excellence, and one who did not know how to be unsuccessful—at anything. His answer was to buy more horses—horses that, less than 10 years later, were the best in the sport.

On a sprawling homestead in Cream Ridge, N.J., Perretti Farms now sits as a



standard by which most other breeding operations can be judged. It is home to top stallions and elite mares, combining them to produce some of the best performers in the sport. In 2006 it welcomed the reigning Horse of the Year in Rocknroll Hanover, who the Perretti crew feels could be the next great super sire. If Perretti's past is any indication, the stallion's success seems preordained.

The farm's recipe for winning is summed up in one sentence from its owner's son, Anthony: "Mr. Perretti doesn't know how to fail."

Unique

The name Perretti has, in what seems like 20 short years, become household among harness racing. It is uttered throughout the upper echelon of the sport—when a top performer prepares to head off to the breeding ranks, when a fantastic filly needs a home in a broodmare band, when a legendary racetrack needed salvation through new ownership.

It is spoken with admiration for an incredible rise to fame and success over two decades when racing was not at its peak. It is spoken with wonder at the man who seems to find success in most of

The latest champion: 2005 Horse of the Year Rocknroll Hanover is standing his first season at Perretti Farms in 2006.

his equine ventures, as he stands stallions who make champions.

It is also, however, spoken with some trepidation about a man who will not accept failure from himself or from others. It is spoken with a shake of the head when stories are shared about the famed Perretti temper flaring at the most inopportune moments—of the fellow horsemen he has alienated, of the restaurants he has been asked to leave, of the business dealings that have gone south upon the clash of personality.

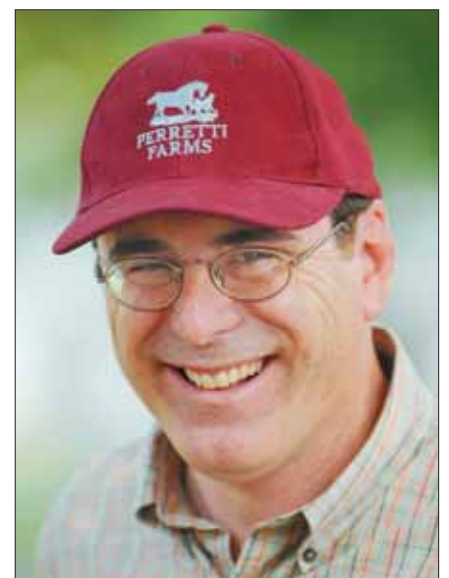
"Mr. Perretti is one of the most unique individuals I've ever known—or ever will know," said Murray Brown of Hanover Shoe Farms. "They broke the mold when they made him. He's brash. He's the epitome of the car salesman. He is also, in my opinion, a very bright man. I think the game is the biggest part of things for him—the battle or the event. Once the battle or event is done, he goes

Right-hand man: Bill's son, Anthony, is the farm's general manager.

looking for another.

"He can be abrasive. I've seen that side. He can also be extremely charming. I don't think the minutia impacts him in the slightest. He is always looking at the big picture."

The bespectacled Perretti, with a toothy smile, mop of white hair often stashed under a baseball cap, and snowy





beard, rarely gives interviews, preferring to let the farm's voice come from the mouth of the well-traveled, well-regarded Bob Marks. Marks had gained a lifetime of bloodline knowledge in the years before racing knew the name Perretti, and is now synonymous with the farm.

A former advertising copywriter, Marks entered racing as a gambler, and by the 1960s was writing articles for *Trotter Weekly*. He eventually wound up virtually editing the publication, and also creating and distributing tip sheets. In the early 1980s he joined New York's

Boardwalk Farms and "made the switch from civilian life to the horse business."

It is Marks, one of the industry's greatest pedigree minds—and most clever horse namers (see sidebar)—who tells the Perretti story, from the Wild Bill automotive days to the bucolic perfec-

“You have to surround yourself with good people—that’s Bill’s



Say hello: The Perretti stallions attract admirers from across North America and around the world.

No Nukes fame, and a youngster by the name of John Campbell, who was in the 1980s both driving and training as he made his way in the racing business.

Perretti's early equine purchases further demonstrated his business acumen. He took a big wallet and his ever-growing industry knowledge, and parlayed them into such broodmares as Norah Bell, whom he and partners Lana Lobell Farm and Paula Campbell bred to No Nukes to produce the millionaire race mare Nadia Lobell. Perretti bought out his partners in 1985, before the filly began her stellar racing career. The same year he invested in the Abercrombie mare Angel Be Good, who went on to earn \$100,000 on the track.

The blessing of having such good mares is that they carry residual value as broodmares. The curse is having to find somewhere to keep them. That led Perretti to purchase property in New Jersey to house his broodmares. But since broodmares must also consort with stallions, Perretti also started buying stallion shares, and even stood the Albatross stud Walt Hanover. Perretti was also a significant shareholder in premier horses like No Nukes.

But after losing to Hanover Shoe Farms in a bid to give No Nukes a home upon the closing of Lana Lobell, Perretti had enough of being at the whim of syndicates. He started shopping for his own "major" stallion, said Marks, and settled on 1989 Horse of the Year Matt's Scooter, a son of outcross stallion Direct Scooter.

"We struck up a relationship with [Matt's Scooter owners] Gordon Rumpel and Charlie Juravinski, it just sort of happened, and we wound up buying him," said Marks. "My counsel to Mr. Perretti was very simple; I said, 'He's not going to be the next No Nukes, and he's not going to be the next Meadow Skipper. What he will be is like his father, but better. And he's going to be long-term—15 or 20 years from now, he's still going to be siring stake winners. All Volomites do that.'"

tion of the present-day Perretti Farm. It is clear from the warmth in his voice and his knowledge of the subject how much Marks respects all that his boss has accomplished and created.

"He's very much a renaissance man, in the sense that he dabbles in everything,"

said Marks. "He wasn't educated much, but he's super-intelligent, and he's got tremendous entrepreneurial instincts."

Basic instinct

Those instincts led Perretti in his earliest days to use trainers like Steve Demas of

doctrine. We have the best people for the best horses." Bob Marks



To maximize the stallion's chance at success, the farm analyzed what Matt's Scooter didn't have—2-year-old speed—and decided to cross him with bloodlines that had found freshman success.

"We gave him every No Nukes mare we could find, and every Albatross mare we could find, figuring that Albatross was already the preeminent broodmare sire while No Nukes could be the heir apparent," said Marks.

The experiment worked in Matt's Scooter's first season of 1990, as the No Nukes mare No No Abby produced 1993 freshman divisional champion Freedoms Friend 2,1:53.1 (\$637,622), and the Albatross mare Viking Princess produced \$399,000 winner Viking Terror. Matt On The Rocks, a winner of \$399,054, out of the No Nukes mare Vodka On Ice, led his second crop.

Matt's Scooter hit pay dirt in his third crop, as he and the Most Happy Fella mare Mossy produced millionairess Mystical Maddy, and the 1994 crop was led by millionaire His Mattjesty, out of

Dreamscape: Dream Vacation strikes a pose amid the stately architecture of a Perretti barn.

the No Nukes mare Lady Hathaway.

After siring 949 starters who earned over \$62.6 million, Matt's Scooter scored his fastest and second-richest performer, Royal Mattjesty, who is out of the No Nukes mare Lady Hathaway.

"Matt's Scooter has turned out to be a very, very good sire," said Marks. "He's not a super sire, but he's been a great sire over the years."

Cream of the crop

And Matt's Scooter was just the beginning.

The farm's stallion roster quickly began to read like a who's who, as \$3 million winner Presidential Ball and 1997 Horse of the Year Malabar Man called Perretti home, as did world champion Falcon Seelster and millionaire Woodrow Wilson winner Jeremys Gambit.

The Perretti consignment, too, also

began to read like a celebrity roster, as Marks noted in these edited chronicles from the history section of the farm's Web site.

- The 1989 crop numbering 33 featured Perretti Farms' initial major association with the stallion No Nukes, as 11 by that stallion were consigned including the major winners Silky Stallone p,3,1:51.3 (\$785,323), Nuke Of Earl p,4,1:52.1 (\$404,532), Sablevision p,3,1:53.1 (\$379,777), and Nuke Skywalker p,3,1:53.3 (\$259,035). In all, the No Nukes averaged \$75,900, with the sales topper Silky Stallone topping the group at \$135,000.

- 1990 represented a major expansion for Perretti Farms as the yearling crop swelled to 47, several of which were sold at Tattersalls and the remainder at Harrisburg. Headliners included Nuclear High (No Nukes-Buzzy's Gal) p,7,1:53.1f (\$595,548), Cold Warrior (Nihilator-Sniffles Hanover) p,5,1:51.2s (\$150,723)...and a No Nukes filly named Sabilize (Sable Hanover), who



would become a headliner in Australia winning the famed Miracle Mile, among other stakes.

- 1992 brought the debut crop of farm stallion Matt's Scooter, comprising 29 from a total crop of 72. The first Matt's Scooters made impressive debuts both in the sales ring and later on the racetracks. Perretti's Matt's Scooter sales topper that year was Mattamatics p,2,Q1:56.4 (\$11,089), at \$105,000.

- 1996 ushered in the Presidential era as the first offerings of Presidential Ball would join the Matt's Scooters as major players on the Perretti ticket. Some of the better known "Balls" were Old Hickory p,3,1:54 (\$82,749), Lush Limbaugh p,3,1:52.2 (\$212,534), and Angel Be Great p,3,1:54.1 (\$170,816), though unfortunately the sales topper Real Sport (Lady Hathaway) at \$250,000 failed to fulfill expectations.

- 1999 saw a major pendulum shifting to incorporate significant trotters along with the traditional pacers. It also brought the farm's initial \$300,000 yearling in Arts Unknown p,6,1:52.2f (\$143,422), an Artsplace brother to 2-

In the green: Revenue S, who banked nearly \$2 million in his career, stands his second season at Perretti Farms this year after breeding 164 mares in 2005.

year-old speed sensation Mattna Carter. But it would be the trotting yearlings that would create tidal waves, as that year the consignment featured Hambletonian champion Scarlet Knight 3,1:53.4 and Breeders Crown champion Liberty Balance 3,1:55s (\$1,022,595)—each in utero at the time of their dam's purchases in 1997.

- 2000 launched the Malabar Man and Tattersalls era at Perretti. The Malabar Mans were well received, with Mallelujah attracting a top bid of \$190,000. The year 2000 also represented major offerings by the repatriated Falcon Seelster and newcomer Jeremys Gambit, in addition to the traditional offerings by Matt's Scooter and Presidential Ball. The 2000 consignment,

Formidable duo: Perretti and Jeff Snyder worked out the deal to bring Rocknroll Hanover to the New Jersey farm.

numbering 76 in its entirety, featured major headliners like millionaire Royal Mattjesty (Matt's Scooter-Lady Hathaway) p,5,1:48.4, Mcardle (Falcon Seelster-Lilting Laughter) p,3,1:49 (\$2,455,609), and My Starchip (Pine Chip-My Starlet) 3,1:54.2 (\$383,356).

- 2001 incorporated two new present-



tations into a crop that had swelled to 103. Joining the incumbent Malabar Mans, Matt's Scooters and Presidential Balls were the initial showcase offerings of the farm's newest stallions, Artiscape and Muscles Yankee.

• The 2005 yearling crop might have been the most diversified offering to date, featuring yearlings by a variety of stallions, highlighted by the first crop of 2002 Horse of the Year Real Desire.

Standards of excellence

Muscles Yankee moves quietly out of his stall, the shuffle of straw giving way to the clip-clop of hooved feet on a concrete surface. In the early afternoon sunlight, his bay coat reveals a blanket of dapples. His mane and tail sparkle like the locks of a supermodel. His head is held high, as if seeking out a cute filly in a faraway field.

A glance at the halters along the doors of the Perretti Farms stallion row is like a harness racing who's who—2005 Horse of the Year Rockroll Hanover, Triple Crown champion Windsong's Legacy, international trotting star Revenue S, two-time Breeders Crown winner Artiscape, world champion Dream Vacation, Meadowlands Pace consolation and North America Cup winner Red River Hanover, homebred world champion Mcardle—each stallion seemingly more robust and striking than the last.

The farm's acquisition of Muscles Yankee is just one example of its desire to get the best to make the best, although it was hardly apparent at the time.

"While we're always looking for the best available," said Marks, "we didn't buy into Muscles Yankee thinking he was anything more than a promising trotting

colt that we'd enjoy racing in partnership with Jimmy Wheeler, a charming rogue who we'd become friendly with at Harrisburg. We had a great sale that year, and it was more of an impulse than anything else. We had never even seen the colt.

"We said, 'We'll take 25 percent of the trotter.' We didn't know who he was. We never looked at him. We weren't even on the program, but after his 2-year-old year, when it was obvious that he was going to be next year's Hambletonian favorite—to us, anyway—the opportunity came to buy another 25 percent because Wheeler was in financial doldrums. Bill's entrepreneurial instincts took over. He saw it as an economic bargain for us."

Charlie Keller III of Yankeeland Farm, breeder of Muscles Yankee, admit-

By Any Other Name

Even before Perretti Farms was recognized for the success of its offspring, it was known around racing for the originality of its names.

Credit for that notoriety lands squarely on the shoulders of Bob Marks, who sees a horse's name as not simply a moniker, but rather an extension of its equine persona, the farm and their combined personalities.

"To me, it's really an expression of creativity," he said. "In essence, I've always felt that every horse is born with a name. The question is, are we good enough to come up with it?"

Historically, Standardbred names have fallen into three different categories. First come the farm or stallion names—such as Hanover (for Hanover Shoe Farms), Armbro (for Armstrong Bros.) and Adios (like Adios Harry, Adios Cleo). Second come the names with creativity, developed by such noteworthy namers as the late Norman Woolworth at Stoner Creek Stud, and the Van Lennep family at Castleton Farms. Third comes everyone else.

Marks, a former advertising copywriter, started naming horses when he worked with Boardwalk Farms in the early 1980s.

"What we tried to do was achieve a

recognition factor for those looking through the results in *Horseman and Fair World*," he said. "We wanted it to correlate with something. I often had trouble differentiating between Bullet Almahurst, Bullet Hanover, Bullet Lobell or Armbro Bullet. It was very confusing."

Marks said that when he started to understand pedigrees, he couldn't help but admire the names that followed stallion lines, and when Matt's Scooter arrived at Perretti, he brought that back—with a twist.

"When I started out I thought there were basically two kind of horses: Adioses and Hanovers. I realized that Hanovers could be by any number of sires like Hoot Mon, Star's Pride, Tar Heel, Knight Dream, Adios, Hickory Smoke, etc., while all those Adios Harrys, Adios Butlers, Adios Boys, etc., were by one horse—Adios. It stuck."

Consider names like Matt On The Rocks, Matt Russian, Mattcher Intherye, North Mattlantic and Mattsolut, all foals of Matt's Scooter with Vodka On Ice, as well as Mattery Powered (out of Electric Shock) and Mattmaghandi (out of Silent Quilla).

Lady Hathaway is among the most well-known of Matt's Scooter's consorts, as she and the stallion produced such

royalty as Lady Mattingly, Matter Of Money, His Mattjesty, Her Mattjesty and Mattmoiselle.

Artiscape, a son of Artsplace, also opened up a plethora of naming opportunities, resulting in such offspring as Art Carney (dam Matt's Last Laugh), Artbidexterous (dam Dexter Lobell), Artbitration (dam Serious Smile), Artcastic (out of Cape Mattered by Matt's Scooter), Artristocat (out of Paper Cheetah) and Artriverderci (dam Roman Art).

Other examples of Marks' genius come with the same mares meeting different stallions. Silent Quilla, for example, also birthed Mike Dieson by Die Laughing, while Vodka On Ice also had Vodka Artini with Artiscape and Capitol Chill with Presidential Ball.

Or mares like Thirty Six-D, a daughter of Slightly Stacked, who produced such voluptuous performers as Cup Runneth Over (Precious Bunny); Presidentialparton, Ballpark Figure and Herbert Hooter (Presidential Ball); and Mattuesque (by Matt's Scooter).

Marks said he is far from alone in the quest for clever names, citing people like Russell Williams of Hanover Shoe Farms—think of the Western Hanover colts Red River Hanover, Rustler Hanover and Dead-Eye Hanover—for creativity. The latter was, of course, renamed The Panderosa, representing another who Marks considers a naming genius—Bob Glazer of Peter Pan Stables.

ted he was pleased when Perretti acquired part of the promising colt, because he knew that meant Muscles Yankee would get every opportunity to succeed as a stallion.

“He went out and spent a lot of money on good trotting mares to be bred to Muscles, and that was very helpful in getting nice offspring,” said Keller. “He is always willing to make the financial investment. He has spent a lot of his own money for our industry.

“My experiences with Bill have been very good. We have a lot of one-on-one conversations, and I always enjoy them. He’s a colorful guy. He’s very frank and very strong in his opinions. I’m sure some people find that irritating, but my experiences are good.”

The farm’s focus was still on trotters when Malabar Man made his run

through his Horse of the Year season. When Perretti was approached about standing the son of Supergill, the farm quickly jumped.

In the 1990s, after he had already sent to stud such incredible stallions as Artsplace, Western Hanover and Life Sign, George Segal promised Marks, “You’ve got my next stallion.” Marks, who forgets nothing, woke Segal up at 6:30 in the morning of Oct. 4, 1997, just hours after an International Stallion Stake in which Artscape came from 10 lengths off the pace to win in 1:52.3.

“George,” Marks declared, “you said I get the next stallion, right?”

Segal responded, “Yes.”

Marks simply replied, “I want him,” and never even said the horse’s name.

Artscape became a two-time Breeders Crown winner, and has since sired 2004

Horse of the Year Rainbow Blue and 2003 North America Cup winner Yankee Cruiser. From just 336 starters, he has sired 42 \$100,000 winners, and his foals have total purse earnings of more than \$19 million. He was moved to Winbak of New York for the 2006 season in an effort to capitalize on the state’s rich slots programs.

Winners and losers

Don’t think for a minute, however, that Perretti doesn’t lose a few, too.

The farm wanted No Nukes, and supported him heavily even after losing out to Hanover Shoe Farms. It was behind Hanover yet again in the pursuit of world champion Western Ideal, and watched as that stallion sired millionaires Rocknroll Hanover and Cabrini Hanover—as well as world’s fastest racing pacer American

“I’ll think of Pan names and send them to him,” admitted Marks. “People send me names. I’m thrilled when they do.”

Marks said that some names, though they may sound odd on a foal, quickly grow in stature with racing success, citing such examples as Albatross and Meadow Skipper. Some combined names may also seem to be easy cop-outs, but become great on great horses—think Niatross (Albatross-Niagara Dream) and Cam Fella (Most Happy Fella-Nan Cam).

Don’t think that Marks wins all his naming battles with USTA Registrar Bob Luehrman, who put his foot down on such names as Pamelot for a colt out of Pamela Nukes (“He said it was too feminine for a colt”).

He also faces the indignity of a disappointing name change, or in some cases an improved name change as happened with the Artsplace-Wendy M Hanover colt Artspace, who was renamed Modern Art, and the Muscles Yankee-Edith’s Chip filly now named Celebrity J Lo. Marks’ choice: Dingbat.

“Modern Art was a significant

improvement over Artspace, as was Nuke Skywalker over whatever I called him,” said Marks, “though I did kind of like Dingbat.”

Marks admitted that Muscles Yankee names are a challenge, since so many of them have to do with body building. He did, however, get Muscletoe, Muscle Cars, Mr Universe and—the ultimate Yankee name of all—Steinbrenner, from Peace And Quiet, no less.

Other “famous” names to be bred by Perretti have included Angel Cordero (Nihilator-Angel Be Good), Netanyahu (Presidential Ball-Matt About You), Nicky Mantle (Muscles Yankee-Hornby Nicole), Rocky Malboa (Malabar Man-Paisley Yankee), Zeta Jones and her full brother Enny Youngman (Enjoy Lavec-That Fabulous Face), and Gorbachev, though that one required a letter of permission from Sgt. Frank Gorbachev, stationed at nearby Fort Dix. He conveniently was dating a woman in the Perretti front office and was honored that

someone would name a horse after him.

“It’s labeling,” Marks said of his passion for names. “You can’t underestimate the value of aesthetics, including the name. Is it any wonder a car failed that was called an Edsel? It doesn’t matter if the car was good, bad or indifferent. It just didn’t sound like a car an aggressive young man would want to drive.”

“To me, it’s really an expression of creativity. In essence, I’ve always felt that every horse is born with a name. The question is, are we good enough to come up with it?” Bob Marks



Ideal—from his first crop. The farm even tried to get the great Cam Fella when he left Dreamaire Farm, but “weren’t aggressive enough,” according to Marks. He went to Bob Tucker’s Stonegate Farm and sired millionaires Eternal Camnation, Armbro Positive, Pacific Fella and Armbro Operative.

Finally, Perretti sought Art Major and Bettor’s Delight, but lost both to Blue Chip Farms.

“I’m not so sure that we needed Bettor’s Delight,” admitted Marks, “and maybe we’re lucky that we didn’t get him.”

But one stallion on which the farm simply would not compromise was Rocknroll Hanover, the Western Ideal half-brother to Red River Hanover and millionaire Royalflush Hanover. The farm bought 10 percent of the colt in July from owners Jeff Snyder and Audrey Campbell’s Lothlorien Equestrian Center, after Rocknroll Hanover had won the North America Cup and Meadowlands Pace. The agreement kept the colt racing through 2005 for trainer Brett Pelling, after which he would be retired to stand at Perretti.

“He was the first one that we absolutely, positively felt we had to have,” Marks said. “Pursuing a stallion is ability, instinct and need. We needed a pacing stallion. The opportunity was that Jeff Snyder wanted to diversify a little bit, and he liked the idea that the horse would stand in New Jersey, as [the Snyder-owned 1994 Horse of the Year and Hanover stallion] Cam’s Card Shark does.

“I told Mr. Perretti that Rocknroll Hanover is like Bret Hanover all over again. Bill’s instincts were that we could not afford to miss out on him.”

If racing performance is any indication, then Marks was right on the mark yet again. Rocknroll Hanover ended his career by winning the Breeders Crown, capping a 26-race, 15-win career, in which he earned \$2.7 million. The colt averaged better than \$105,000 a start.

“What didn’t this horse do?” asked Marks rhetorically.

Perretti way

Arriving at Perretti Farms feels as much like driving through Bluegrass Country as it does a cruise through the Garden State. The farm was constructed, accord-

ing to general manager Anthony Perretti, “very much on Kentucky guidelines.”

Spacious, with rolling hills and cascading tree lines, Perretti’s New Jersey operation contains 750-plus acres, housing more than 200 horses, primarily mares and weanlings.

It started as an old potato farm, with nary a fence or barn to be found. In the next two decades, under the Perretti vision, it was modeled and crafted to suit every anticipated equine and human need.

And in a salute to the history that predated the Perretti presence, pastures bear names like Malsbury and Cemetery, the former the moniker of one of the original old farmers of the area, and the latter a nod to the 19th-century burial site that is visible from the hill.

The equine end of the Perretti operation is supervised by stallion-broodmare manager Fidencio Cervantez, who came from Mexico knowing barely a word of English and is now considered indispensable in caring for some of the most famous stallions in the world. Dr. Peter Boyce, who used to be with Hanover Shoe Farms, is Perretti’s attending vet.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 128

Make your move.™



Triple concentration. Stomach soothing nutrients. Wakes up horses muscles. High potassium levels for Lasix horses. Aspartates and chelates for the fastest absorption. Make sure your horse is ready so when the time is right he has enough gas in the tank so you can Make your move.

800-944-1984

www.peakperformancenutrients.com
info@peakperformancenutrients.com



© 2006 Peak Performance Nutrients, Inc. All trademarks are property of Peak Performance Nutrients, Inc. Boca Raton, FL.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 78

while Linda Petrenko runs the office, and Lindsey Taylor runs the lab.

"You have to surround yourself with good people—that's Bill's doctrine," said Marks. "We have the best people for the best horses."

The mares—200 in the off-season and up to 300 in the breeding season—are bred in New Jersey, and then the youngsters get shipped to the family's 980-acre Kentucky property after they're weaned. Perretti owns the majority of the broodmares—including such greats as Sable Hanover, dam of \$300,000 winners Sablevision and Mattduff, and Lady Hathaway, who produced Royal Mattjesty and Breeders Crown winner His Mattjesty. The farm has also played host to some pretty famous boarders, among them world champion Worldly Beauty and 2001 Horse of the Year Bunny Lake.

Marks discussed the idyllic mechanics of broodmare life at Perretti, stressing that often the best thing that happens is often nothing out of the ordinary. He acknowledged that if he knows anything about a given mare besides the fact she had a foal, something is usually wrong.

"I always get into trouble whenever I walk around the racetrack, and people say, 'How's my mare?'" he said, laughing. "I say, 'Damned if I know!' The reason why is, if I know, you've got a problem. If I don't know, she's in one of those

"I always get into trouble whenever I walk around the racetrack, and people say, 'How's my mare?' I say, 'Damned if I know!' The reason why is, if I know, you've got a problem."

Bob Marks

fields, fat, sassy and raising her foal, doing exactly what she's supposed to be doing in harmony with nature."

Then Marks inadvertently reveals one of his own secrets to his own success: He actually does know something about the farm happenings.

"I can tell you Worldly Beauty is possessive," he said slyly. "And she fell in

love. Her buddy last year was Vernon Blue Chip, the dam of Blue Mac Lad, and if any of those other mares went near Vernon Blue Chip, Worldly Beauty was kicking them away. She was protecting her friend. She's a boss."

Worldly Beauty had a Western Ideal filly in 2005 and is in foal to Cam's Card Shark.

As for Perretti's own foals, they return home to the Garden State in September as yearlings, having been raised at the farm's Paris, Ky., annex where they are prepped for the Standardbred Horse Sale Company's Harrisburg sale under Cervantez's vigilant eye.

"Basically they're groomed and they're exercised, and they're taught to lead and they're taught to stand, and they're taught to do everything a horse must do," said Marks. "By the time they finish with the walker, starting gates don't scare them. They're virtually ready to be harnessed and hitched up from the day they are brought home after sale."

Trials and tribulations

While Perretti Farms may be on its way to perfecting the way it does the pedigree

ADOPT A HORSE!

Horses for adoption from companions to competitors, horses of all ages and abilities for trail riding, pleasure driving and therapeutic riding programs to loving homes. Visit our Web site to see our horses that are available for adoption and to learn more about our organization.

STANDARD BRED RETIREMENT FOUNDATION

P.O. Box 763
Freehold, NJ 07728

www.adoptahorse.org

E-mail: srfmail@bellatlantic.net
(732) 462-8773



SRF is 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization

NEW YORK SIRE STAKES No. 47

NOMINATIONS CLOSE MAY 15, 2006

Nomination Fee \$50 (US funds)

For 2005 foals of registered mares bred to eligible New York stallions in 2004. Foals to race as 2-year-olds in 2007 and 3-year-olds in 2008 at New York State pari-mutuel tracks, and at state and county fairs.

No nominations will be accepted without a copy of USTA registration certificate. Conditions are available from Agriculture & NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund.

• MAKE PAYMENTS TO:

Agriculture & NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund

90 State St. • Albany, NY 12207

(518) 436-8713 • fax (518) 426-1490

www.nysirestakes.com

E-mail: agfund@nysirestakes.com



matching, breeding, foal raising and selling end of the sport, roadblocks keep Perretti from getting too complacent. As a New Jersey breeding operation, the farm must deal with such "frustrations," said Marks, as the prohibition against embryo transfer foals in New Jersey Sires Stakes, which fortunately is slated for adjustment commencing with the foals of 2007.

"It's ludicrous that the horse can race in the Hambletonian but not in the New Jersey Sires Stakes," Marks said. "[In 2004] we sold a colt that Bob McIntosh bought. He was out of My Starlet, and he had to be an embryo transfer, because she can get in foal, but she can't carry it. He sold for \$120,000. He might've got \$200,000 without that rule. He was the complete package.

"At that moment, we realized, we're cutting off our nose to spite our [face]. We're not protecting anybody with this rule—we're just hurting the breeders. But that's always been the problem in New Jersey."

Perretti is "vehemently," according to Marks, against an industry proposal that attempts to address bloodline diversity by limiting stallion books. The move is a

result of a study by Dr. Gus Cothrane that revealed potentially dangerous levels of inbreeding in the Standardbred.

"There are too many things wrong with the business than to worry about whether the genetics might dry up in 40 years," Marks said. "That is kind of side-stepping the issue. The main question would be, who's going to buy these yearlings? How do we get fans? Why can't we get the collective powers that be together to implement meaningful marketing programs?"

Additional challenges have come as Perretti sought expansion beyond the breeding and racing end of the business. His most notable foray came in 2000, when Perretti put together a group of investors to purchase The Red Mile and the Tattersalls Sale Company, including Frank Antonacci (Lindy Farms), the late Paul Nigito (Joie De Vie Farm), George Segal (Brittany Farms) and Joe Thomson (Winbak Farms).

Perretti was hands-on with just about every aspect of the track—from advertising to paving the parking lot. Those close to the situation said that within two years his relationship with some other

investors had soured to the point that the partnership no longer seemed viable.

By 2002 Perretti, who had invested substantially in both his new Kentucky acreage and the track facility itself, had sold out. There was talk that he would eventually leave the horse business completely.

"Bill didn't think it was going the way he wanted it going, so he decided to sell out," Thomson recalled. "He's an entrepreneur type of guy. I think he thought it was in the best business interest of [himself] and The Red Mile for him to sell."

Thomson credited Perretti with reviving the floundering track with new ideas and new management personnel, acknowledging that there are not many people that could have accomplished as much as Perretti did in The Red Mile's revitalization. The challenge came in as old ways began to prevail over new ideas, and once relationships started to sour, there was no ability to recover.

Marks said Perretti's goal with the purchase was to create a "collective," like a cartel, especially with the sales (Tattersalls) aspect of the venture, where by the group would join forces to create



NORTHLANDS PARK PRESENTS

WESTERN CANADA PACING DERBY No. 46

Guaranteed purse C\$175,000 for foals of 2005 to race as 3-year-old pacers in 2008. To be raced in Edmonton in 2008 under the auspices of Northlands Park.

FEE

Nominating fee
Sustaining payment
Supplemental Nomination 2YO

C\$ 10 due on or before May 15, 2006
C\$ 100 due on or before March 15, 2007
C\$ 500 due March 15, 2007
(to be made eligible for future payments in 2008)
C\$ 500 due on or before Feb. 15, 2008
C\$ 1,000 due at time of declaration
C\$15,000 due at time of entry *(including declaration free)*

SCHEDULE:

Complete conditions available upon request

ALL NOMINATING, SUSTAINING SUPPLEMENTARY, DECLARATION FEES INCLUDED IN FINALS

PLEASE PRINT • OFFICIAL ENTRY BLANK

Event No.	Name of Yearling	Sbx: C,G,F	Sire	Dam	Owner(s)

FUTURE PAYMENTS: Northlands Park, as a courtesy, will make every effort to advise nominators of future sustaining payments, but it is the responsibility of the owner of the eligible horse to ensure that future sustaining payments are made whether or not a notice has been received.

Owner or Agent _____
Address _____
Date _____ Telephone _____

Please make check payable to Northlands Park and mail to: Northlands Park, c/o Alan Bott, Box 1480, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5J 2N5; phone (780) 471-7275, or fax (780) 471-7173.

a dominating yearling marketplace at one locale. The other partners disagreed, however, and some continued to sell their yearlings at the Standardbred Horse Sale Company's Harrisburg Sale.

"When it was obvious that it was not going to be run as a cartel situation, but rather more like independent people doing their own thing who happen to own this track and sale, Mr. Perretti did not think that was a good business plan," Marks said. "He just felt that at that point we would sell out—divest our interest."

"Being a self-made man, I believe Bill likes to make decisions on his own," added Thomson. "He does not like people telling him what to do. Bill is a fellow that if he's a friend, he's a great friend. If he's an enemy, that's not so good for you."

"He loves the action. When things are boring or humdrum, Bill is not going to be in that business very long. He likes to go forward."

Perretti's management style—his way or the highway—may be unique in racing, but he is far from alone in the business world. In fact, Marks said, Perretti's model closely follows that of his good friend, George Steinbrenner of the New

York Yankees.

"George is the only guy that Mr. Perretti actually calls 'boss,'" Marks said with a chuckle. "Mr. Perretti has done the same thing that George has done with the Yankees—he wants people around that are smarter than him. There are not too many people that are, but basically that's what he seeks out—intelligence and talent."

"But he is also just as unmerciful. He'll get rid of somebody in two seconds if he doesn't think they'll measure up."

The future is now

At Perretti Farms, the future is seen in Rocknroll Hanover, whose 2006 book is already full and closed, and with the continued shuttle of stallions like Red River Hanover and Mcardle between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres to service the ever-expanding breeding market.

The future is also evident in the return to the farm of Perretti's son Anthony, who cut his teeth in the car dealerships and returned from a sojourn in the film business to serve as the farm's general manager; and in the family support

offered by Bill Perretti's wife Cindy, an accomplished horsewoman, and daughter Veronica, a recent George Washington University graduate.

Marks, too, represents the farm's future, as he maintains the careful balance between Perretti's passions and the interaction the farm has with the Standardbred industry as a whole, fostering the relationships that will bring promising blood through the Perretti gates for generations to come.

Behind it all is Bill Perretti, now age 79, a man who continues to see the future as happening right now.

"He's terrific at just looking at the big picture," said Marks of his boss. "He does not get involved in the small aspects—he gets people to do that for him."

"I think he'd like to be known as a breeder of great horses, of world champions, and he'd like to be known for evolutionary ideas. He's very much a man of his word and a man of the world." ▬

To comment on this article, e-mail us at readerforum@ustrotting.com.

Standardbred TRACK CONDITIONER



There's no substitute for quality, and that's how we've constructed the Standardbred Track Conditioner. The massive 6' welded channel frame and 4' I-beam tooth rails eliminate flex and produce beautiful results pass after pass. A single lever controls depth and raises the unit instantly for transport on the 10-1/2 inch rollers. The entire package comes ready to hook and use, with all hoses and fittings in place and tested. Optional drag screen (not shown) and level bar put that perfect finishing touch on a flat, smooth and exceptionally safe track surface.



Tungsten Carbide tipped teeth last years, but are easy to replace and adjust.



8-inch hardened steel teeth are backed by an 4-inch welded steel gusset which supports the tooth for added stability.



Easy set depth control adjusts quickly, then resets instantly to the exact preset depth to suit your specific conditions.



Optional Level Bar works material back up the track, smooths and finishes for a safe, good looking surface.

LARCOM & MITCHELL
SERVING THE RACING INDUSTRY SINCE 1952

1320 State Rt. 37 W., Delaware, Ohio 43015
PHONE: 740-363-6691 FAX: 740-363-0205