



## Your shipping solution!

Wherever in the world your horses are coming from or going to, **Global Horse Transport, Inc.** has the experience, personnel and expertise to get your horses to their destinations as safely and rapidly as possible.

With over 25 years of stable-to-stable experience and more than 25,000 horses shipped worldwide, our excellent track record of caring and professionalism means the horses we transport arrive safely, comfortably, and on time.

Some happy clients include Moni Maker, Mr. Musclemann, Dream Vacation, Giant Diablo, and your next Global Champion!

**Global Horse Transport, Inc.**  
Phone: 631-957-6710 (Wayne)  
Phone: 631-835-3874 (Christian)  
[www.globalhorsetransport.com](http://www.globalhorsetransport.com)

THE EUROPEAN VIEW ~ By Klaus Koch

# The Green Man From Sweden

I cannot imagine that any North American harness racing fan older than 40 has forgotten “the green wave” which referred to Hall of Famer Billy Haughton and his sons Peter, Tommy and Cammie. They all wore the same green and white colours, and the success of the family was spectacular.

Sadly it diminished through the tragic deaths of Peter, a very promising driver who was killed in a car accident in 1980 at 25, and then his father Billy who passed away after being critically injured in an accident at Yonkers in July of 1986 at the age of 62. But the famous colours are still represented at the races today through trainer-driver Tommy Haughton.

For many years we’ve had a green wave in Sweden as well. However, it is a one man wave. As a young trainer in the early 80s, Ake Svanstedt, who was born in 1958, wore orange and black colours, but due to a sponsor he changed to a green jacket with a black belt rather early in his career.

If you wonder why this column is dedicated to Svanstedt, it’s for two reasons. One, he is the biggest Standardbred trainer in Sweden (in all of Europe actually) with more than 200 horses in his control, and two, it is

because he was the spectacular buyer of top Canadian trotter Snazzy Hot Rod.

Svanstedt was born and raised in the countryside outside Sundsvall, the fourth largest city in Sweden, 250 miles north of the capital Stockholm. Sundsvall itself is the capital of the biggest province in Sweden, Northland. The racetrack in Sundsvall is also the fourth largest in Sweden.

As a groom Svanstedt worked in his home area, but after a while he got an assignment with the leading trainer in the country, Stig H. Johansson, who might be far more familiar to readers in North America. Strangely enough the two did not get along, and Svanstedt quit his job, mainly because he was discontent with the number of drives (almost none) he was assigned to by Johansson. Instead he decided to begin on his own as a trainer back home in Sundsvall.

Svanstedt is a quiet guy, and people were surprised that he stood up against the Emperor of Standardbred trainer, Johansson. But exactly that kind of behaviour has become the brand of Ake Svanstedt. He doesn’t say much, is almost impossible to get on the phone (quite extraordinary when you train 200+ horses), but when interviewed he always



Klaus Koch

says his opinion, no matter what others are thinking.

His way of driving is a bit the same. He is daring (but far from dangerous), optimistic and unpredictable. And he has the material for those measures because his horses are always extremely well trained possessing toughness like few others.

In the 90s Svanstedt trained a horse named Zoogin, probably his best horse so far, even though he also trained Elitlopp winner Gidde Palema. Zoogin became the winningest trotter ever in Sweden earning more than \$4 million (US). Combined with the exposure he received through Zoogin, Svanstedt’s training methods became famous. He trained Zoogin and all his other horses through a forest trail, which constantly went up and down. “Hill training” it was called and many other trainers started to copy it.

In the late 90s I visited his farm with a group of journalists, who were all excited about watching a training lot on the

Photo by Monica Thors

hilly tracks in the woods, each lot containing up to 25 horses. In the following mass interview with Svanstedt in the aisle of one of the barns, he was asked how he came up with his training method.

At that point all of Sweden was convinced that an almost academic calculation was behind it all, so the journalists were quite surprised when Svanstedt said: "Well, when I bought the farm I was planning to establish a five-eighths mile track and a straight track of the same length, but unfortunately I did not pay attention to the fact that I had too little land.

"The farm was paid for, and I had to look for alternatives in order to avoid bringing the horses 25 miles onto the track in Sundsvall, so I came up with this." No scientific calculations at all, but I would call it sheer talent that has made Svanstedt great.

Being there in Matfors, as the village was called, where Svanstedt even had to borrow his neighbour's garage in order to have enough stalls for the horses, I noticed how well his horses looked, and

that is in my opinion the real key to Ake Svanstedt's success; he has the ability of making his horses feel well and happy.

Eventually the farm in Matfors became too small, and Svanstedt started looking for a new training centre in the Stockholm area. I was race secretary at Solvalla (the Stockholm racetrack) then and worked hard to get Svanstedt to come there.

We were looking at farms, and we came close, when Svanstedt suddenly found his dream place a further 250 miles south west of Stockholm, close to the second city, Gothenburg. So we lost Svanstedt, but I do understand his reasoning.

He really found the optimal circumstances for training a lot of harness horses. The place is called Bjertorp, and that is where Svanstedt is settled today training 219 horses together with his three second trainers who all have had their own careers before signing up with Svanstedt. One of them, Raoul Engblom, trained the babies for Jimmy Takter in New Jersey for a number of years.



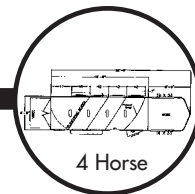
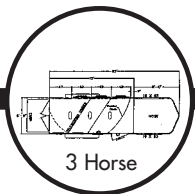
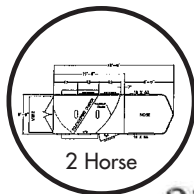
Photo by Stefan Melander

**Ake Svanstedt**

Initially in this column I compared Svanstedt with Billy Haughton concerning their race colours. There are more parallels. In a time, when catch drivers are dominating all over the world, even



**Fully Equipped,  
Custom Designed  
Standardbred Trailers**



**3 Horse Trailer  
Only \$286<sup>29</sup>/month  
\$0 down!**



**LOOK AT OUR NEW LOWER PRICES!**

Eastern Canada	Quebec	ONTARIO			Manitoba	Saskatchewan
HOLIDAY RANCH 506-366-3291	FERME LOTBINIERE Quebec area 418-926-3485	VIA TRAILERS London area 519-264-2354 877-TRYAVIA	PARK MOTORS Toronto area 905-877-2261	TOP LINE TRAILERS Ottawa area 613-774-0992	MIRACLE RANCH 204-224-1180	FLAMAN SALES 1-888-235-2626

so in Sweden, Svanstedt is among the very few who run a big training facility in addition to driving most of his stock himself. In races where he doesn't have a horse entered, he is often used as a catch driver. During the main race meets he seldom watches from the sidelines.

And he is a top driver. Turning 50 this fall he is still alert, a top sportsman and aggressive very much to the punters liking. He is a skilled businessman too, always looking for new possibilities, new owners and new horses. He found a top trotter in Snazzy Hot Rod and recruited a number of well known Swedish owners to invest in him.

I do not know if you'll see Snazzy Hot Rod in North America again, but the possibilities are good. If not, Svanstedt has invested in a number of young American and Canadian trotters, with whom he is aiming to race in your country. You will soon be familiar with the Swedish one man wave.

This is all this time. Please do not hesitate to comment on my articles. My



Photo by Stefan Mjalandar

**Not only is Svanstedt the busiest trainer in Europe, he is also a top catch driver.**

e-mail address is ontrack@telia.com and as usual I would be more than happy to get reactions from the North American racing fans. 📧

Till next time,  
Klaus Koch

*Klaus Koch is one of Scandinavia's*

*leading racing administrators and is perhaps best known for his former role as director of racing at Solvalla Racetrack. His duties included orchestrating the Elitlopp, one of the world's most prestigious races, and attracting North American and Australasian horses to compete in the event.*

# Open For Business!!

## MEADOWBRANCH TRAINING CENTRE

A new 22 stall barn is completed and stall applications are being accepted. Make your winter stabling arrangement now – don't delay and miss out.



Call to learn about the Meadowbranch advantages.



902 4th Concession West, Flamboro, Ontario  
(Located directly behind Flamboro Downs)  
(905) 599-4060 or (519) 647-9949  
Email: meadowbranchstables@look.ca