

2011 HARNESS RACING MUSEUM AMATEUR DRIVING CHAMPION

Amateur drivers from driving clubs throughout the US and Canada compete for The Hall of Fame Amateur Driving Championship. It is won each year by the amateur driver donating the most driver's commissions to The Harness Racing Museum & Hall of Fame. Previous winners are Edward B. Rudner (1995), Bud Hatfield (1996, 1999 & 2000), Joe Pennacchio (1997), Lella McIlmurray (1998), Alan Schwartz (2001), Robert Krivelin (2002 & 2004), Gene Miller (2003), Scott Woogen (2005), Dein Spriggs (2006), Tony Verruso (2008), Steve Oldford (2009) and Todd Whitney (2010).

For the second time in three years, **STEVE OLDFORD** has been named **HARNESS RACING MUSEUM AMATEUR DRIVING CHAMPION**. Steve's father, Gene, bought him his first horse when he was about eight. By the time Steve was twelve his father had a stable of Michigan colts and Steve started mucking stalls and traveling the Michigan fair circuit. Two years later he was jogging and training, and when he turned sixteen he received his fair license. He took a break from the track to attend Western Michigan University, where he graduated with a business degree. Following graduation he joined his family business, Oldford and Associates, suppliers of components to the automotive industry. Steve also began raising Standardbred and Quarter Horses on his farm in Crosswell, Michigan. He wanted to get back into driving, but family responsibilities prevented this until June 2006 when, after sitting in the stands and standing on the backstretch for almost thirty years, he purchased a trotter to race in the Michigan fair amateur series. After Steve's first fair race, fellow driver Kelly Walker convinced him to join the Delvin Miller Amateur Drivers Association. Thirty-four starts later and 2006 came to a close with Steve experiencing the thrill of racing at the Meadowlands in the Billings Silver Cup.

In the 2007 season, Steve saw over fifty starts and made a trip to the CKG Billings Gold Cup. In 2008, driving Eng-Amer Bobby and Feeling Frazzled, Steve won the Michigan amateur driving series championship and the Billings Series point championship. He took another trip to the Billings Gold Cup where he finished second with Eng-Amer Bobby. In 2009, as a member of Team USA, Steve traveled to New Zealand where the team raced at five different venues and emerged victorious in the series. That same year he was elected a director of the USTA for District 2-A MI.

2010 was a banner year for Steve. He won the Billings regional point championship, the regional final, the overall point championship and the Billings Gold Cup Final at The Meadows, piloting his own Celtic Merchant to victory. Steve also organized the Great Lakes Amateur Driving Association, with races hosted weekly by Hazel Park Raceway.

Steve's most memorable wins were at the 2006 Billings Series in Charlottetown, PEI, where he won three out of the four races while finishing second in the fourth. The 2008 meets at The Red Mile and the Delaware County Fair were also standouts, as were his victories in the Billings races and the New Zealand Challenge. Steve has recently returned from the annual East-West Driving Challenge at Cal Expo, in which he won two races, hitting the board in four of eight starts and leading the East in a substantial triumph over the West. Steve is also proud to have campaigned Grand Circuit horses including Godiva Hall, Matts Waller, Ballroom Delight and The Budster.

For Hall of Fame Day events please [click here](#).