

The Drink Tank 210
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That's another magnificent Ditmar cover. Isn't it great. I think it's called Fake Bonestal, a reference to the famous artist of so many covers and whatnot.

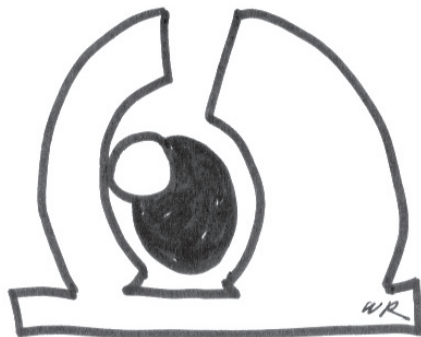
Things have been crazy, as they always are. I'm takign tomorrow off, partly because I'm not feeling well and partly to watch Evelyn, who I thought would be off of school, but instead she's off at the snow. Go figure.

The biggest deal right now has to be the TAFF race, which is just now wrapping up. I'm excited, it's almost time for me to use my remarkable counting powers. I'm very good at that.

And I'm still trying to get inDesign for my new computer. It's always a trouble to get software for Museum computers.

And then there's Twilight. I've been watching the movie over and over and over again!

And let us begin with the debut of Sandra Childress in The Drink Tank!



The Running of the SMoFs by Sandra Childress

When it comes to Fen and Sports, you have the SMOFcon regulars who camp-out on Sunday for the NFL games as things are winding down. During Worldcon, BNFs and Regular Joe-Fans gather up in groups and try to get a block of seats to a baseball game when in the USA or Canada. If it times right, there's always a chance for a hockey game to break-out for the six or so fans at an East Coast Convention who need to get their puck-fix. Then in 2006, when one fan was working at a Thoroughbred Breeding and Training farm in Ramona, CA – horse racing became the newest sport to join the ranks of Fandom participation.

SMOF Racing (it's not what you think) was founded April 2006 with nine Fans from around the US and Australia. Sandra Childress was working at Ballena Vista Farm (www.ballenavistafarm.com) at the time when trainer Dan Hendricks sent Cara Blanco in to be given away due to a bowed tendon. Cara needed a long lay-up to heal, and his owners had other horses they would rather invest their time in. Sandra made a quick call to Jim Briggs, her husband, and then posted on LiveJournal to see if there were enough people interested in sharing the financial burden of resting Cara for the next 9 months. Within 30 minutes, SMOF Racing was born.

Now, you have to be asking yourself, what does one tell the trainer when

he asks, "What does SMOF mean?" Well, we've been really busy coming up with alternatives to Secret Masters of Fandom. They include: Send Money Or Feed, Seeking Money Ovation and Fame, Sandra's Many Online Friends, Several Masochistic Ordinary Fools. We'd love to hear your suggestions as to what it stands for, so drop us a line.

And of course, our silks...yes, we had to have the propeller beanie. But since we couldn't all agree as to which 3 color segments to use based on the real beanie...and it was Mardi Gras when we were discussing it...we went with the Mardi Gras colors of Purple, Gold, and Green. We added White Stars on the Black Sleeves for our love of science fiction. And we saved our jockey's ego by not requiring him to wear a "beanie cap". He can wear any color cap cover, so Seth tries to grab black when he's not in a hurry.

Cara Blanco came back from his injury to train with Mike Chambers, one of the leading trainers, and Seth Martinez, the leading jockey, at Turf Paradise in Phoenix, AZ. In his first race, we had a late rider change as Seth was injured the day before in a starting gate accident, but Cara still came in 4th. Not bad for a 4 year old gelding who was off-track for over a year. He brought home a little bit of money for SMOF Racing as owners get paid all the way down to 5th place. Then it was off to Seattle's Emerald Downs. Up in the milder climate, Cara was a

happier horse. He proceeded to earn the nickname “Happy Feet” from the morning riders as he’d go bouncing onto the track for his jogs and gallops. What he lacked in speed he made up in steadiness...being a one-gear-wonder. Cara’s race times would clock out at :24 seconds for a quarter-mile...not fast, but very consistent.

As such, his record while running for SMOF Racing was: a 4th, another 4th, then a 3rd, and another 3rd, then a 2nd. This was all due to the fact that the faster horses in his “Maiden” class were conditioning out and no longer eligible to race against him. He was bound to finally “break his Maiden.” And I get a call from Mike that Seth says “Enter him!” a week after his last race. This is considered a quick turn-around for a racehorse, as they usually get 2 or even 3 weeks between races. So, Mike does just that. And on July 4th., 2008, while several of the SMOF Racing partners (and two new ones who joined just before post time) were at Westercon in Las Vegas – Cara Blanco finally broke his Maiden by winning his first and only race. Four of the partners were able to watch the race at a local casino sportsbook, and celebrated losing money on him as he went off as 2nd favorite that day.

Cara Blanco when on to run twice more (2nd and 3rd), but came back sore the last time. He has since been retired from racing and sold to a Hunter/Jumper barn in Washington. Last reports are



“he’s loving his new career.”

But it’s not over for SMOF Racing. In fact, last October Sandra and another partner attended the Barrett’s Fall Mixed Sale in Pomona, CA to review the up and coming yearlings (who would be turning 2yo on January 1st). With hopes to purchase one that was passed over by the others in attendance at the sale, they actually bought two: a colt and a filly by the same sire – Anziyan Royalty, the only horse to beat Lava Man twice. The partnership that started with Cara Blanco has continued with Il Marchese (aka “Mark”), the colt, who is out of Spirit of Punches. He begins his saddle training the first of February. A second partnership has been formed to work with the filly, Miss Solana who is out of Prolly, and she is waiting to start her training mid-March. There’s space available in both of these rather affordable partnerships.

What’s been really neat about be-

ing able to own 1% of a racehorse is that it keeps the actual out of pocket expenses down. A typical horse in training at the track can run up to \$3500/month. But at 1%, that’s \$35...or for Sandra – a month of Starbucks’ coffee. And with this partnership, there have been months where expenses have been as low as \$5/1% as each of the horses has been at pasture. And unlike other partnerships that charge a “management fee” on top of the actual expenses, since Sandra is also an owner in both partnerships, she doesn’t charge a fee.

Now as with any racing partnership, you do it for the love first – rewards, second. With both of these two horses, we actually expect to see a little more in the rewards column this year (and 2010) as with “Mark” we are targeting the Best Pal Stakes at Del Mar in August. It will depend on how his early training goes as well as when he comes back in for his “legging-up” in April, but given his pedigree we expect him to do well at the distance and in that company.

Miss Solana, her pedigree says that she should run well as a late 2yo and even better as a 3 and 4yo. We’re excited to find out what her preferred distance will be, as right now she looks like a sprinter, but her pedigree says she should go longer. For her, there are a couple of Stakes races at Oak Tree late in October that would be right up her alley. We just have to see what she tells us she wants to do.



CARA BLANCO

Smof Racing - Owner
Mike Chambers - Trainer
Carol Hubbard - Asst Trainer
Seth Martinez - Jockey
Nevah Nevah - Second
Hellbender - Third
 1 1/16 Miles in 1:45.4
 Purse \$6,000 July 4, 2008



Letter Graded Mail
sent to garcia@computerhistory.org
by my loyal readers

Let's start with a seed for something of a rant that comes from Mr. Steve Stiles!

Great shot of Baltimore's Senator theater. I felt a pang of sadness when first seeing it a few days ago; as you know, this historic Art Deco theater, built in 1939, was on the verge of going up on the auction block, perhaps a future parking lot. It's been dodging that particular bullet quite a few times, previously in February 2007, when it was saved by private donations. To quote Wikipedia, "The Senator's struggles have been attributed to a practice known as "clearance". Movie "clearing" or blocking occurs when rival theatres, usually multiplexes, invoke agreements with distribution houses to exclude a nearby theatre from ever concurrently running the same films that are running on any of their screens. The Senator's current owner, Tom Kiefaber explains: "We eventually overcame the (rival multiplexes') clearance, but without equal access to the first-run lifeblood of the film exhibition industry during that difficult period, we were forced to accumulate debt that is a continuing detriment to the economic viability of The Senator Theatre." "

That viability ran out, placing Kiefaber, a true mensch, in massive debt and on the verge of bankruptcy. Fortunately,

with little more than a week remaining, the city has moved to purchase the mortgage, putting Baltimore in the position of guaranteeing that the Senator continues on as some sort of entertainment venue. I don't know if Kiefaber is totally out an economic mess, but at least, according to the Baltimore Sun, his house is no longer being held as collateral. He deserves much more slack for doing as much as he's done to preserve one the few remaining classic movie houses.

--Steve Stiles

When I first found that image, I was sure I'd seen the theatre before. I had, it turned out, in films such as Hairspray. It's a beautiful theatre, one of the ones from that era that has remained. Reading all about the theatre on the SaveTheSenator site has made me so glad that there are people who are still fighting for these places.

At Cinequest, I spent some time with the man who maintains the organs at two of the theatres around San Jose: The California and the Stanford. They're both lovely theatres, and the organs are amazing. David Packard was the one responsible for saving them (along with hundreds of films from the last 100 years by setting up trusts and

funding the UCLA Film Preservation Program. There are a number of sites dedicated to old movie theatres, I spend a fair amount of time researching movie palaces and film history. It's a shame that we're losing, on average, one pre-1950s movie theatre a week. There are still about 700 left, only about 250 of which still show films. Many are in need of repair, many are simply in need of a group to run films in them. It's something that really tells the story of America in the 20th Century. We lived our lives, our traditions, through films and through the places we watched our films. Art movements can be traced through the buildings that showed our films, and it's important that we preserve at least some of them, the exceptional ones like the Stanford, the California, the Senator, the Paramount, the Fox in Alabama and so many more.

