

Donald Busse

1918-1970

Inducted 1999

Donald H. Busse was born in Portage, Wisconsin in 1918. His father Hugo Busse was the owner, trainer and driver of many horses who raced at the fairs throughout Wisconsin. Like many young people, Don learned about the sport of harness racing from his father. However, he did not immediately decide to pursue a career as a trainer and driver. He first went to work at a canning company.

In the early 1950's, Don Busse went to work for himself, basing his stable at the old fairgrounds in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin. He raced at county fairs throughout Illinois and Wisconsin. In addition, he raced at several Chicago area pari-mutual tracks, such as Sportsman's Park, Maywood Park, Washington Park and Aurora Downs. Don moved his operation to Kirkland, Illinois in 1957.

Chief among Don's many accomplishments would be the national driving championship he earned in 1963. He scored 201 wins that year; Don also became the 25th person to record 1,000 victories since the United States Trotting Association came into existence. Don's best year was 1968, during which he achieved 231 wins and earned \$382,212. In 1969 Don scored his 2,000th win driving H.A. Meyer's Winning Crystal. Don and his son Daryl are the only father and son to win national driving championships; Daryl earned his in 1975.

Don continued to race horses and left his mark on the sport until his death at age 52. He was rightfully inducted into the National Hall of Fame in 1984.

Nominated by O.L. "Buck" Weaver