

ROBERT MACKENZIE

Rockwood, Ontario

Nominated as: Active Director, Ontario Region

I am 49 years old. I have resided in Rockwood, Ont., with my family since 1994. I have been training professionally since 1987.

Prior to horse racing I played hockey for St. Francis Xavier University for three years and one year for the University of Cape Breton, graduating from there in 1986. Previous to this, I played 250 games in the Quebec Minor Junior Hockey League and was team captain of the Sherbrooke Beavers in the 1980-81 season. Sport has been the biggest part of my life – harness racing included.

My involvement in harness racing started in 1974 when I purchased a subscription to Harness Horse. I started as a fascinated fan and soon purchased my first race horse along with my brothers in 1976 to race at the Cape Breton Sports Centre. In 1987, with my brothers Francis, Rousell (Raz) and Jean-Marc, as well as a group of investors, started racing on a larger scale that allowed us to race horses all over North America and Europe. Along the way I learned a lot about racing and met many interesting people with a profound love for Harness Racing.

For the past six or seven years I have been racing a smaller stable of seven or eight horses, as well as breeding mares which I have raced.

I am seeking a seat on the Board of Standardbred Canada with no specific platform and no hidden agenda; only the belief that the best days for this sport lie ahead. To be honest, this is my first time stepping forward to offer an opinion on what I see for the business which I have dedicated a lot of efforts to. However, with that being said, I have also learned that experience only counts if you have been doing the same things right years after year. Debate, or difference of opinion in this business is natural – that is why we race. Division is not. This business is dwindling and the ones paying for this are inevitably the horse owners, trainers and drivers.

I think that Standardbred Canada has lost the pulse of the business. There are many voices which should be heard, not just those of a select few. Unfortunately in sport we all have best before dates, including the policy makers. In the horse racing business being turned out to pasture is not a bad thing because it allows for fresh stock. Standardbred Canada needs change and I would appreciate your vote so that we may make change for many and not only a few.