Valley Victory looked to be a formidable force in the 1989 Hambletonian, and a match-up with fabulous filly Peace Corps promised a great race. Alas, Valley Victory came down with a virus just days before the contest and was retired from racing.

With impeccable breeding, hopes were high for Valley Victory’s career at stud. His first crop of Hambletonian colts came of age in 1994. When the field went behind the gate on August 6, no less than five of his offspring were there looking to avenge their father.

Victory Dream had won all seven of his races at the Meadowlands leading up to the Budweiser Beacon Course and was widely considered to be the pre-race Hambletonian favorite but he lost a bit of his luster when he was a flat fourth in the Beacon Course Final.

Others that attracted plenty of attention coming into the trotting classic were Yankees Trot winner Bullville Victory, another son of Valley Victory; Mr. Lavec; and Two-Year-Old Champion Weigate Crown.

Victory Dream’s driver and trainer, Mike Lachance and Ron Gurfein, had never won a Hambletonian, but his owners, the Antonacci clan of Connecticut, certainly had. Frank Antonacci, who bred the colt along with his brother, Tommy, bought back Victory Dream as a yearling for his wife and daughters. He, along with his cousin, Guy Antonacci, owned 1969 and 1971 Hambletonian winners Lindy’s Pride and Speedy Crown.

In the first elimination dash, Victory Dream was an easy two and a half length winner in 1:53. Bullville Victory edged Mr. Lavec in 1:54 in the other.

In the final, driver/trainer Jimmy Takter fired Mr. Lavec off the gate and led the way to a :26 opening quarter, the fastest such fraction in Hambletonian history. Mike Lachance sent Victory Dream after the leader at that point and was in control at the half, which was trotted in :56. Mr. Lavec shadowed the leader to the three-quarters in 1:25, but Victory Dream had plenty in the tank to repulse the challenge.

Lachance and Victory Dream sailed under the wire in 1:54. Mr. Lavec was second in spite of locking wheels with Bullville Victory in deep stretch. Bye Tsem was third, and Smasher was fourth. Smasher is owned by Arlene Traub, who also owned Valley Victory and, like the winner, is from that sire’s first crop.

The Meadowlands handled $4.9 million total for the Cadillac Hambletonian Day card, a world and track record.

**FEDERAL YANKEE**, b c, Valley Victory — Flaming Yankee, by Speedy Crown
Driver: Doug R. Ackerman  Trainer: Doug J. Ackerman
Owner: Richard S. Staley . . . x 3 5

**PAYOFFS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIRST ELIMINATION</th>
<th>SECOND ELIMINATION</th>
<th>FINAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victory Dream</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>Victory Dream 2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smasher</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>Mr. Lavec 3.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gum Ball</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>Federal Yankee 2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXACTA</td>
<td>51.00</td>
<td>EXACTA 34.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRIFECTA</td>
<td>146.60</td>
<td>TRIFECTA 154.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TIME BY QUARTERS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1/4</th>
<th>1/2</th>
<th>3/4</th>
<th>MILE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>1:25</td>
<td>1:53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>1:26</td>
<td>1:54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>1:25</td>
<td>1:54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SPECTACULAR TIMES**

1st Elimination: 1:53.0
2nd Elimination: 1:54.4
Final: 1:54.2

**SMASHER**, b c, Valley Victory — Fiesta Bowl, by Super Bowl
Driver: William O’Donnell  Trainer: Per Eriksson
Owner: Arlene Traub . . . x 2 4

**BYE TSEM**, br c, by Sir Taurus — Quail Ridge Nancy, by Texas
Driver: Joe Hudon Jr.  Trainer: Joe Hudon Jr.
Owner: Marilyn R. Fromowitz . . . x 5 3

**VICTORY DREAM**, b c, by Valley Victory — Crown Dream, by Speedy Crown
Driver: Mike Lachance  Trainer: Ron Gurfein
Owner: FA Stable (F. Antonacci) & Victory Dream Stable (A. Leavitt, et al)
Breeder: Crown Stable (Frank & Thomas Antonacci), NY
Groom: John Sokul
Sale History: $40,000 yearling at Kentucky Standardbred Sale. Syndicated prior to Hambletonian. . . . 1 x 1

Mr. Lavec, br c, by Speedy Somolli — Kramer Samba, by Allen Hanover
Driver: Jimmy Takter  Trainer: Jimmy Takter
Owner: AB Dica Vinn . . . x 2 2

The Minnehaha maternal family produced a record-tying ninth Hambletonian winner.

Victory Dream was voted the 3-year-old Trotting Colt of the Year.

Runner up Mr. Lavec, although trained in the U.S. by Swedish native Jimmy Takter, was a Swedish-sired and bred colt by 1978 winner Speedy Somolli. He was the first European-sired horse in the classic. (Speedy Somolli was exported and stood in Sweden since 1990.) Mr. Lavec finished second in his elims and second in the final beaten 2 3/4 lengths – the best finish ever by a European-bred horse in the Hambletonian. The colt was raised at owner Johan Diedan’s farm in Ireland.

Amateur driver Mal Burroughs won the Oaks with Gleam.