

O.T.B.O. MEMBER RON PAOLUCCI HAS \$854,000 PAY DAY IN GRADE 2 CHARLES TOWN CLASSIC

Last year's Ohio Owner of the Year, Ron Paolucci is off to a fine start in 2017. Best known in the Buckeye State as the owner of Horse of the Year Mo Don't No he owns or is partners with numerous out of state runners. Last season his color bearers won stakes from New York to California and now he has made his mark in West Virginia.

Paolucci has had amazing success with his private purchases and you can add the 7-year-old gelding Imperative to the list. The well-bred son of Bernardini is no stranger to the Grade 2 Charles Town Classic, he won it in 2004 over Game On Dude in 2005 he was second in the event to Moreno. Paolucci struck the deal to get him last season and in January he won the \$400,000 Posiedon Stakes at Gulfstream Park. He had to bring three sets of his bright Lime Green silks to Charles Town, as he also started War Story and Cautious Giant in the race.

The race played out as planned when Cautious Cat was sent immediately to the lead to keep favored Standford pressed on the pace. Imperative and War Story sat back and let him do his job and into the stretch the final time they both surged past the leaders on the muddy track with a thrilling three-neck finish at the wire with Matt King Coal breaking up a Paolucci 1-2 finish at the wire. "I really thought we had the exacta," stated Paolucci after the race.

"The whole life is about family and my dad (Ron Paolucci, Sr.) is not doing real well and I wish he could be here. That's the toughest part. I know he's watching from home. I know how proud he is of me. He always said that fat little kid from Stow, Ohio would make something of himself and, like most kids, all you want to do is please your parents and my dad gets so much joy out of the races."

Imperative's résumé now features a 6-8-3 record from 38 starts, with earnings of \$2,973,135. The June 10 Metropolitan Handicap (G1) at Belmont Park could be a target in the future. "I think we're going to have a good campaign with him this summer out here on the East Coast, and I think if you look at every race he's run outside of California, it's been dynamite," Paolucci said. "We're thinking about the Met Mile. Giving him a little time in between. It looks like there would be a lot of speed in that race, but we'll see. That's the initial plan."