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Boston-Area Author Wins Bronze Medal for Horse Book

The Independent Publisher Book Awards Honor the Story of Sham (Secretariat's Greatest Challenger) in the Race For the 1973 Triple Crown

Boston, MA – May 10, 2011 – It was more than fitting that during the weekend of this year's Kentucky Derby, Sham and Secretariat went to battle once again. This time, however, they weren't jockeying for position on the track; they were competing for the 2011 Independent Publisher Book Awards.

Written by Phil Dandrea, *Sham: Great Was Second Best* earned a Bronze Medal in the Sports/Fitness/Recreation Category, finishing just behind the second-place book, *Secretariat's Meadow: The Land, The Family, The Legend*. While Dandrea found it ironic that Sham was bested by Secretariat once again, he took comfort in knowing despite the nearly 40 years since their legendary race for the 1973 Triple Crown, these two rivals still crossed the finish line neck-and-neck.

With Sham still holding the second fastest Kentucky Derby time in history (though unofficially), Dandrea's book illustrates this incredible horse was simply born the wrong year. With a winning pedigree, a sturdy frame, and impressive victories against the best colts the West had to offer, Sham possessed enormous potential and a winner's heart. If he had run any other year, many believe he would have taken the Triple Crown himself. Yet he found himself matched against a super horse, and Sham's greatness was eclipsed.

"The book gives readers an inside look at the drama between Sham and Secretariat in some of the greatest horse races the sport has seen," says Dandrea. My goal was to help Sham get the recognition he deserves. But this book isn't just for die-hard racing fans. Anyone who has worked hard, achieved great things, but has still fallen short can relate to Sham."

Published by Acanthus Publishing in 2010, *Sham: Great Was Second Best* started as a column written during the author's graduate studies at Emerson College in Boston. Following years of travel and research, it evolved into a full-fledged biographical account of one horse's extraordinary battle against a legendary rival.

Dandrea blends historical analysis and interviews to provide an in-depth look at Sham's career. Information gathered from thoroughbred racing publications of the day, newspapers, and press releases from the archives of the racetracks at which Sham ran, as well as visits to Claiborne Farm (where Sham was bred and raised), and Spendthrift Farm and Walmac Farm (where Sham spent his retirement and stud career), in addition to personal interviews with Sham's jockeys, trainer, and owner, serve as the foundation for the narrative.

The medal will be presented to Dandrea at the awards ceremony in New York on May 23, 2011. Other winners in the Sports/Fitness/Recreation category include the Gold Medalist, *Keeneland:*

A Thoroughbred Legacy by Fran Taylor and, in a tie for the Bronze Medal, *A Passion For Tarpon* by Andy Mill. The Silver Medal book *Secretariat Meadow: The Land, The Family, The Legend* was written by Kate Tweedy and Leeanne Ladin.

Sham: Great Was Second Best is available for purchase in either hardcover or paperback on the website www.shamhorse.com or in bookstores throughout the US.

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About the Author

Phil Dandrea can recall seeing his first Kentucky Derby on TV as a boy, when he watched Riva Ridge take the Run for the Roses in 1972. He has since traveled across the country to see the sport at all levels and from various vantage points, from the box seats at Triple Crown events to the mucked stables behind the scenes. He is a member of both the National Thoroughbred Racing Association and the ownership group IEAH Stables, whose colt Big Brown won the Florida Derby, Kentucky Derby, Preakness Stakes, and Haskell Invitational Handicap.

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