

# NATIONAL Trotguide



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## Smooth Satin abduction attempt POLICE CALLED!

By NOEL OVINGTON

**THE harness racing world has been rocked by the attempted abduction of reigning Grand Circuit Champion, Smooth Satin, from the Bathurst stables of Steve and Jenny Turnbull at a round 8.30 on Tuesday night.**

Jenny said Cath Hewitt, wife of trainer Bernie Hewitt, who also live on the property, raised the alarm.

"Cath heard a noise and saw a horse loose," Jenny said.

"She called out to Bernie to help catch the horse, and put it back into its yard. Then a voice called out: 'it's all right Cath, it's only Craig (Turnbull)'."

So whoever the perpetrator(s) is knew not only the Hewitts, but the Turnbuls as well.

"At the same time Cath and Bernie's son, Jason, called out 'mum, 'Socks' (Smooth Satin's stable name) is out of his stall'."

In the meantime, Smooth Satin was taken 100 metres up the road to Tony 'A D' Turnbull's property and tied up to a ute.

Steve Turnbull said he believes whoever was responsible for this just panicked and tied the horse up as they were getting away.

"They even left their own head stall and lead on the horse. They came close to getting away with Smooth Satin. If it wasn't for Cath, well, we really don't want to think about what might have happened," he said.

After Bernie Hewitt alerted Turnbull of the situation, and after checking that Smooth Satin was okay, the pair immediately took off in pursuit of the 'kidnappers'.

"By the time Bernie called me they had gone," Turnbull said. "We drove around looking for them, but they had well and truly disappeared. John Boserio then came over and said he saw a float by the side of the road at Perthville, about 12kms away."

The local police were then alerted, and impounded the float.

"The police tracked the owner of the float, and were told by the owner that it had been left at the Bathurst Showground," Turnbull said. "So it looks like it was stolen from there."

Turnbull said police are of the opinion the attempted abduction of Smooth Satin was the work of "amateurs".

"Apparently it looks like they've left finger prints all over the float," he said. "Plus, it appears they tried to load Smooth Satin onto the float, but he must have just 'jibbed' and refused to go on."

Turnbull said it was hard to find a motive for the attempted abduction.

"They wouldn't be able to race him, so other than holding the horse for ransom, what other reason could there be?" he said.

"Unless they wanted to harm him. But if that was the case, why tie him up? They could have just set him loose."

Turnbull said on Wednesday morning, that other than a lack of sleep, everyone had recovered from the ordeal.

"When Bernie first called me I thought he was having me on. I mean, I guess it's always in the back

of your mind that someone may try to 'get at' a horse like Smooth Satin, but you don't expect it will ever happen. We have security in place at the stables, but you can't be with the horse 24 hours a day," he said.

"The whole thing is just a mystery to us. We just hope that the police find whoever is responsible quickly. Then we will be able to relax a lot better."

On the positive side, Turnbull said Smooth Satin has suffered no ill-effects from the incident.

"He seemed nice and bright last night, and I jogged him this morning and he was fine," he said.

Turnbull said he will step up Smooth Satin's work rate over the next few weeks, with the six-year-old expected to return to the racetrack later this month or early October.



Reigning Grand Circuit champion SMOOTH SATIN was the victim of a 'kidnap' attempt at the Bathurst stables of Steve and Jenny Turnbull on Tuesday night

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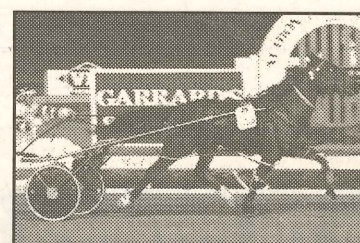
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