

'Sam' double on Cup Day

dream come true for Wakelin and Noble

• by David McCarthy

Phil Williamson gave a new twist to an old line when he described the results of the first two trotting events on New Zealand Cup day as the "highs and lows of racing"

As it happened he experienced both when, after Murcielargo plunged an army of punters into the depths of despair after an early mistake in the opening event, **Springbank Sam**, given a miraculous break late in the race by Matthew Williamson, stormed home to grab Uncas virtually in the last three strides of the Cromwell Handicap to add to an illustrious record for the Williamson stable in November at Addington.

Murcielargo's error gave a special high to **Phillipa Wakelin** and her life and training partner, **Stephen Noble**, when it was **Theycallmesam** which snuck through on the rail to win the Garrad Horse and Hound trot, the couple's first win on Cup day at Addington.

It was a special thrill described by Phillipa as "a dream come true" for a stable which has specialised in trotters over many years now.

What is more, like so many of the stable successes there was a family involvement, in this case Eileen and Graeme Noble who race the Grant Our Wishes 6-year-old with Stephen.

Stephen and Phillipa's daughter Paige, was on hand for the big day too, though her interest in the racing, as with most 3-year-olds, seemed somewhat limited.

Phillipa bought Theycallmesam at an all aged sale for \$9000 five years ago and Tuesday was still only his 17th start and fifth win.

"He has ability and probably can get near the top classes but he was always a little weak and we have waited on him. He tries so hard and he just goes one good race after another."

The Wakelin and Noble partnership and its distinctive colours, has bounced back well recently something which Phillipa considers partly the result of using Adam White as the blacksmith, and Lillian Bonner as her therapist.

"They seem to have picked up with Adam doing the shoeing," said Wakelin.

She says "90 per cent" of her team's work is done on the



Paige has her attention elsewhere as her parents enjoy their first Cup Day win.