



HARNESS DIGEST

10TH ANNIVERSARY

HAMBLETONIAN EDITION

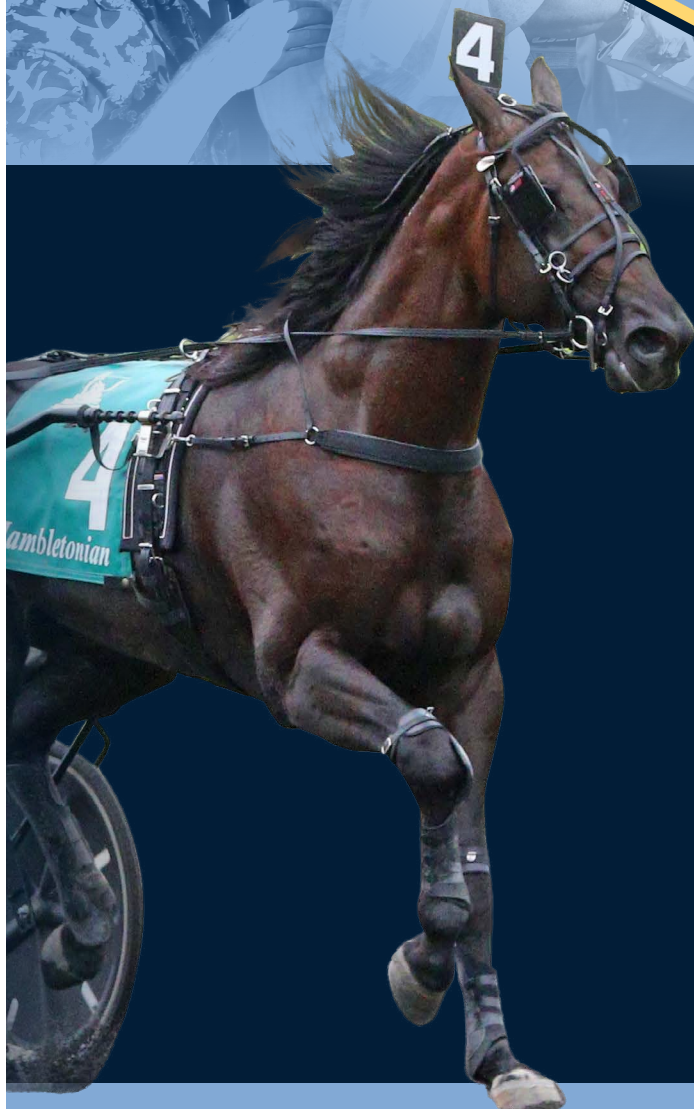


**5% REBATE ON
HAMBLETONIAN DAY
+ \$10 BONUS**

ONLY WITH DRF BETS

INSIDE THIS ISSUE | THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 2022

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 6

Gates Open 10 a.m.

First Post 12 Noon

OVER \$3.5 MILLION IN STAKES

8 wagers with 15% take out including:

Pick 6
\$50,000 G

Races 1-6

Pick 5
\$75,000 G

Races 3-7

Early Pick 4
\$100,000 G

Races 8-11

Late Pick 4
\$125,000 G

Races 12-15

For all Hambletonian day details visit playmeadowlands.com

RACING AND WAGERING SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Hambletonian, Oaks trophies on the line at The Meadowlands





\$1,000,000 HAMBLETONIAN - RACE 15 - AUGUST 6			
Post-Horse	Driver	Trainer	M/L
1-Rebuff	T.Tetrick	L.Wallin	9-5
2-Joviality	B.Sears	Mar.Melander	7-2
3-Fast As The Wind	Y.Gingras	T.Alagna	8-1
4-Keg Stand	D.Miller	N.Takter	10-1
5-Jiggy Jog	D.Dunn	A.Svanstedt	4-1
6-Cool Papa Bell	T.McCarthy	J.Campbell	15-1
7-Temporal Hanover	O.Kihlstrom	Mar.Melander	8-1
8-King Of The North	M.Macdonald	R.Schnittker	15-1
9-Periculum	Mat.Melander	Mar.Melander	15-1
10-Looks Like Moni	A.McCarthy	N.Takter	15-1

ORIGINAL PHOTO BY NIKKI SHERMAN

Undeclared in 2022, Rebuff was installed as the 9-5 morning-line favorite in the \$1,000,000 Hambletonian.

By Derick Gwerner

The moment is now for 20 of the best 3-year-old trotters in the sport as two fields of 10 will line up behind the starting gate at The Meadowlands on August 6 with their eyes on arguably the most coveted trophies in the sport. The \$1,000,000 Hambletonian headlined by Rebuff and the \$500,000 Hambletonian Oaks are the marquee races on a 16-race stakes-filled card showcasing the best Standardbreds on the continent.

By virtue of his 1:52 2/5 elimination win on July 30, Rebuff secured a good starting slot on the gate in the Hambletonian (race 15) and will leave from post 1 with regular driver Tim Tetrick in the bike. The Lucas Wallin-trained son of Muscle Hill bred by Steve Stewart and Michael Andrew is perfect in three starts this year and is just two weeks removed from a track-record equaling 1:49 4/5 win in the Stanley Dancer over the same surface.

While his elimination time came up more than 10 lengths slower than his career best on July 16, Tetrick has lost no confidence in Rebuff. "I just wanted to get through the first turn clean. I think I have the best horse and he is performing well and just having fun out there now," said Tetrick, who added that the final time was a combination of the track being a little deeper and the rest of the field showing his horse a lot of respect.

With just three starts under his belt this year, Rebuff would seemingly be ready to hit a new peak in terms of performance. Saturday will also mark the first time he has raced back in seven days since winning last year's Breeders Crown and Wallin expects that will only help his horse.

"It will be fine and this race will only get him sharper. I have no doubts," said Wallin, who admitted it is hard to tell if Rebuff has reached his peak because of his on-track demeanor. "He is not a horse that is going to win by 10 lengths because he starts playing with his ears and waiting on other horses."

Wallin competed in the 2021 Hambletonian as a driver behind Cuatro De Julio and ended up seventh after a tough parked-out trip. Perhaps due to that experience, the native of Sweden who co-owns Rebuff with Kjell Magne Andersen and Pieter Delis, is calm and collected despite being the trainer of the 9-5 morning-line favorite.

"It is amazing. It is a dream come true to have a horse in the Hambletonian final that is one of the favorites, but I don't feel any pressure except from myself," said Wallin, who will make no equipment adjustments on Rebuff heading into the final but will tinker with his fringe contender Manon (8-1) in the Hambletonian Oaks, removing her shoes, adding pop-out ear plugs and perhaps a bridle change.



DERICK GWINNER

(left to right) Trainer Lucas Wallin, caretaker Juan Perez Rojler and driver Tim Tetrick are the team behind Rebuff.

An American Trotting Classic, the Hambletonian is dominated by natives of Sweden on the training side in 2022. Marcus Melander has three contenders in Temporal Hanover, Joviality and Periculum. Two-time Hambletonian winner Ake Svanstedt has elimination winner Jiggy Jog and Nancy Takter sends out two longshots in Keg Stand and Looks Like Moni.

Melander, who also had three starters in the 2019 and 2020 Hambletonian with his best finish being a second with Greenshoe, is hoping that this is his year.

"It is not that easy to win. Everything needs to be 100%," said Melander. "You can be a trainer your whole life and never get one in the final or you

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 5](#)

WATCH THE HAMBLETONIAN

Saturday, August 6

1. FS1 (FOX Sports 1)

Saturday, August 6 • 6:00–7:00 pm
Hambletonian (post time 6:35 pm) Coverage on:
Saratoga Live presented by America's Best Racing

2. FS2 (FOX Sports 2)

Saturday, August 6 • 12:30–5:00 pm
Hambletonian Day coverage (Oaks post time 4:48 pm)

3. CBS Sports Network

Sunday, August 21 • 5:30–6:30 pm
Hambletonian retrospective & 2022 recap

4. Racetrack Television Network

(www.rtn.tv) Free streaming of Meadowlands In-house show from playmeadowlands.com; also available on Meadowlands Racetrack Facebook & YouTube page. RTN is available on PCs, mobile devices, on DISH Network, Roku and Amazon Fire TV.

PLUS...TVG Live onsite and ADW accounts:

Full card coverage of the Meadowlands

Central Ontario Stbd. Assoc. - <https://www.youtube.com/c/COSATV>

Race day coverage: 3:00–7:15 pm

Pre-Event Coverage - Social Media

Facebook

Hambletonian Society - <https://www.facebook.com/HambletonianSociety>

Meadowlands - <https://www.facebook.com/meadowlandsracetrack/>

U.S. Trotting Association - <https://www.facebook.com/ustrotting>

Twitter

Hambletonian - @hambletonian (<https://twitter.com/Hambletonian>)

Meadowlands - @TheMeadowlands (<https://twitter.com/TheMeadowlands>)

U.S. Trotting Association - @USTrotting (<https://twitter.com/USTrotting>)

YouTube

Hambletonian - <https://www.youtube.com/c/TheHambletonian>

Meadowlands - <https://www.youtube.com/user/MeadowlandsRacetrack>

U.S. Trotting Association - <https://www.youtube.com/user/ustrotting>



Hambletonian Information and History

Hambletonian Website: hambletonian.com





DERICK GIWNER

Marcus Melander has three starters in the Hambletonian for the third time in four years.

Kjellgren, R Wahlstedt and Heights Stable. "We Europeans like to take the shoes off and most of the time the horses get better. I hope it will be enough to win the race."

Undeclared in six 2022 starts heading into her Hambletonian elimination, Joviality was used to a 55 2/5 half to make the lead from post 10 before getting away with a slow 30-second third quarter and losing by a neck to Jiggy Jog and Temporal Hanover last Saturday. Melander of course wanted a victory but wasn't concerned about the Courant Inc.-owned daughter of Chapter Seven.

"You can always be disappointed by the result but I wasn't disappointed in the horse. I know she got that 30-second quarter but I'm thinking that maybe he shut her down too much, though [driver Brian Sears] was very happy with the way she raced," said Melander, who added that Joviality will likely wear ear plugs for the first time in the Hambletonian final. "I definitely think that can help her because when she has the closed bridle on she can't really see close."

Brian Sears will once again handle Joviality from post 2 while Orjan Kihlstrom, a Swedish driver with more than 7,000 career wins, will steer Temporal Hanover from the 7-hole.

Trainer Ake Svanstedt was a week early with his shoeing changes as he removed the footwear from Jiggy Jog and she flashed speed at both ends of her Hambletonian elimination mile to score a 6-1 upset with a sizzling 26 2/5 final quarter.

can get one in every year, and I'm proud of that.

"I think so," said Melander when asked if all three of his can win. "Periculum is ranked third of mine but if he gets the right trip like he had at Vernon, he can win. Realistically he would probably be third or fourth with a good trip but if he won and you asked me if I was surprised, I would say he's not a bad horse if things go his way."

In an effort to perhaps get a little more out of Periculum (Mattias Melander, post 9) on Saturday, the Muscle Hill colt owned by Holly Lane Stud, Brixton Medical and Howard Taylor will race barefoot, as will stablemate Temporal Hanover.

"We are going to pull his shoes and maybe that will improve him a couple of lengths," said Melander about Temporal Hanover, a son of Walner owned by Amg Stable, K

"She raced good," said Svanstedt of the Jorgen Sparredal-owned Walner filly. "Dexter [Dunn] said she won with a little power left also. He didn't need to ask her nothing. She just did it herself. That was good. This was her most impressive race."

Jiggy Jog (post 5), who has not been worse than second in six starts this year, will keep Dexter Dunn in the bike while Fast As The Wind, second behind Rebuff after a dull fifth in the Stanley Dancer, gets a driver change to Yannick Gingras.

"We've been fighting some bloodwork issues with him, which we went through last year with him a little bit, but [Saturday] he was much better," said trainer Tony Alagna about Fast As The Wind. "I think he's definitely on the improve."

A longshot who finished with trot and is hoping to step up in the final is Keg Stand. After winning his first two starts, trainer Nancy Takter took a shot by bringing Keg Stand to the big dance and he finished just 2 1/4 lengths back of Jiggy Jog while closing in 26 3/5.

"I was super happy with him," said Takter, who trains the Bar Hopping colt for her mom Christina Takter, Black Horse Racing and John Fielding. "That was only his third start of the year, so he definitely needed that start. He hasn't raced in this type of competition before, so it was nice to see that he seemed to belong."

Keg Stand retains driver David Miller and will start from post 4.

Returning Dan Patch champion King Of The North (post 8, Mark Macdonald) hasn't had much success in 2022 after winning six of 10 starts as a 2-year-old. The good news is that co-owner and trainer Ray Schnittker reported after his elimination that he scoped clean despite the subtraction of Lasix from his regime.

Perhaps the longest shots on the board at post time could be Cool Papa Bell (post 6, Todd McCarthy) and Looks Like Moni (post 10, Andrew McCarthy). Both were listed at 15-1 on the morning-line.

While the Hambletonian will be contested with a clear favorite in Rebuff, the Oaks picture became muddier after the first elimination saw three horses finish within a length of Venerable and the second had



NIKKI SHERMAN

Ake Svanstedt won the Hambletonian in 2021 with Captain Corey and looks for the repeat with Jiggy Jog.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



HAMBLETONIAN DAY!

AT THE MEADOWLANDS

Saturday, August 6
Post Time 12:00 EDT

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Trainer Mark Steacy (left) and driver Bob McClure will try to take home the Hambletonian Oaks trophy with Warrawee Xenia.

DERICK GWINNER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

heavy favorite Fashion Schooner upended by Warrawee Xenia.

Exclusively for 3-year-old fillies, the Hambletonian Oaks is slated as race 12 with the aforementioned Venerable getting the 9-5 ranking as the morning-line choice. The Oaks has proven to be a formful race as favorites have won three of the last five editions and the last double-digit mutuel winner was back in 2014.

The 2-year-old champion in the division, Venerable started the year slowly but has since won two of her last three starts including her elimination in 1:52 4/5 for driver David Miller. Although she came out victorious, her margin of victory was thinning nearing the wire, perhaps leaving some to wonder if she is a deserving post-time favorite.

"I think this run puts her to where she needs to be," said trainer Nifty Norman when asked if she was at 100%.

Venerable will start from post 5 for owners David McDuffee, Mel Hartman, Paul Bordogna and Steven Arnold. The group have all seen plenty of success in the Oaks as Norman has won the race three times and both McDuffee and Hartman have two wins each. Norman and McDuffee won the 2021 Hambletonian Oaks with Bella Bellini.

The firing line of filly trotters behind Venerable in her elimination – Yanaba (Andrew McCarthy, post 1), Bare My Soul (Yannick Gingras, post 2) and Selfie Queen (Orjan Kihlstrom, post 6) – will all try to step it up a notch in the final and each trainer feels like their horses belong.

"She's a trier and a better horse than they give her credit for because she's a Trixton," said Yanaba's trainer Dan Daley.

"She leaves like a hobbled pacer. She can really scat off the wings and that is probably her best attribute," relayed trainer Linda Toscano of Bare My Soul. "I don't know if she can beat them but she can go with them. She has the tactical speed to get her involved."

"I think definitely she should take a step forward with another start under her belt. It's just a matter of her wanting to do her work next week. That's what it comes down to. She's got the speed and the talent, she just needs to have it all come together at once," said trainer Nancy Takter on Selfie Queen.

While Fashion Schooner went down as the 1-5 chalk in her elimination when Warrawee Xenia came with a surprise late charge at 7-1, trainer Jim Campbell hasn't lost any faith in the quest for his second Oaks win with the daughter of his first (Broadway Schooner – 2009).



"I wasn't disappointed in her. That filly was coming strong. For whatever reason the track was not as fast tonight as it normally is, you saw that in the first division where Rebuff went in 52 and her race went in 52," said Campbell. "We were setting her up for this race and I think it is a good time for her to come back and race in seven days. We've spotted her races by design until this point."

Tim Tetrick, who as the driver of Rebuff seemingly has a serious chance of becoming just the third driver to win the Hambletonian and Oaks in the same year, will be in the bike behind Fashion Schooner and tasked with figuring out a winning trip from post 10.

Warrawee Xenia enters the final on a streak of seven straight wins and uncorked the fastest last quarter (26 4/5) of any Oaks starter in the elimination round. Her final time was a career best 1:52 2/5 despite the removal of Lasix since the race conditions don't permit the medication.

"She doesn't train on Lasix but she did bleed once at the end of last year and once training down this year," said co-owner/trainer Mark Steacy. "I was a little concerned but I was hoping it wouldn't be a problem."

Steacy is very confident in Warrawee Xenia's ability and believes if the track is faster, as has been the case most weekends due to weather conditions, his charge will respond.

"We think we can go 1:50. Speed isn't the issue with this horse," said Steacy. "She can get a little fumbly on the turns. You have to try to protect her, but she is probably faster than these horses."

Driver Bob McClure, already a Hambletonian winner as he scored in 2019 with Forbidden Trade, agreed with Steacy on her speed potential and felt that perhaps she is no longer as finicky as she was early in her career. "I can be more confident and leave with her. I think she's gotten to the point where she's over those issues from the past and Mark's gotten her to the point where you can drive her like a pacer."

Warrawee Xenia starts from the 3-hole for the ownership group of Steacy, David McDonald, Dale Larson and Diane Bertrand.

Other qualifiers from the second elimination include Pink Coco Chanel (Joe Bongiorno, post 8), Mon Cheval (Andrew McCarthy, post 9) and Baptism (Ake Svanstedt, post 7).

The Hambletonian is scheduled as race 15 with a post time of 6:35 p.m. EDT while the Oaks is race 12 and expected to start at 4:48 p.m. Supporting stakes on the card include the \$355,000 Jim Doherty and \$337,000 Peter Haughton for 2-year-old trotters, the \$278,000 Sam McKee and \$173,000 Lady Liberty for older pacers, the \$258,300 Cane and \$92,300 Shady Daisy for sophomore pacers, and the \$279,000 John Cashman and \$145,000 John Steele for older trotters.

The Meadowlands will offer four guaranteed wagers on the card: \$50,000 Pick 6 (race 1); \$75,000 Pick 5 (race 3); \$100,000 Pick 4 (race 8); and \$125,000 Pick 4 (race 12).

(some quotes courtesy Ken Weingartner/Hambletonian Society)

\$500,000 HAMBLETONIAN OAKS - RACE 12 - AUGUST 6

Post-Horse	Driver	Trainer	M/L
1-Yanaba	B.Sears	D.Daley	8-1
2-Bare My Soul	Y.Gingras	L.Toscano	15-1
3-Warrawee Xenia	B.McClure	M.Steacy	5-1
4-Manon	D.Dunn	L.Wallin	8-1
5-Venerable	D.Miller	R.Norman	9-5
6-Selfie Queen	O.Kihlstrom	N.Takter	10-1
7-Baptism	A.Svanstedt	A.Svanstedt	15-1
8-Pink Coco Chanel	J.Bongiorno	T.Alagna	12-1
9-Mon Cheval	A.McCarthy	N.Takter	15-1
10-Fashion Schooner	T.Tetrick	J.Campbell	4-1

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1 REBUFF		b c 3, by Muscle Hill, Meucci Madness by Yankee Glide										Last 5 Sts-\$443,325		*1:49.4 M1		22 M1	3 3 0 0	\$130,825 22 Tot	* 3 3 0 0	\$129,575						
31:49.4 (1) \$43,192 LEX-SEL \$200,000		Kelli Maize Andersen, Walchwil, St. Lucas Wallin, New Egypt, NJ, Pieter Delis, Almere, NE										1:52.2 Lx1		21 M1	5 3 0 0	\$321,875 21 Tot	11 4 2 1	\$444,095								
9-5 Ti. Treacy 47-53-48-56 (182)		L. Wallin 18-9-1-1 (500)										Br- Steve H Stewart, KY; Michael D Andrew, ME		20 M1	0 0 0 0	- Life	14 7 2 1	\$573,670								
30 July/22	9M1	fst83°	274	:56:1	:24:2	1:52:2	D-HAMBO E	100000	8	4 ³	2 ⁰ 1	1 ¹	12	11	1	TiTetrick	LuWallin	28 ³	28 ³	27 ⁴	28 ³	1:52:2	92	+5 7w	*20 RebuffFastAsTheCiPpBi	Brushed led, clear win-10
16 July/22	4M1	fst77°	274	:54:3	:12:3	1:49:4	S Dancer	125000	6	3 ⁴	1 ⁰ 1	1 ¹	12	11	1	TiTetrick	LuWallin	28 ³	28 ³	26 ⁴	26 ⁴	1:49:4	104	+11 5w	*50 RebuffTempHnvPretender	Brushed led, held sway-7
1 July/22	2M1	fst72°	262	:56:2	:12:4	1:51:3	REYNOLDS	36650	8	6 ⁷	6 ⁶ 3	6 ⁰ 3 ¹	4 ² 3	11	1	TiTetrick	LuWallin	29 ³	28 ³	27 ³	26 ²	1:51:3	93	+7 6w	3.90 RebuffFastAsTheFinPalma	3rd ovr, angld, got up-6
4 Jun/22	15M1	fst72°	291	:57:1	:1:25:1	1:52:4	Qua	2	3 ¹	3 ⁰ 3	3 ¹ 3	2 ¹ 1	1	1	1	TiTetrick	LuWallin	29 ³	28 ¹	28 ¹	27 ¹	1:52:4			nb RebuffKngOfHnvBonanza	Sat, angld, got up-6
29 Oct/21	6M1	sly56°	27	:56:1	:1:25:2	1:55	D-Br Crown F	600000	4	7 ⁸	5 ⁰ 3 ⁴	6 ⁰ 0 ⁵	2 ²	11	1	TiTetrick	LuWallin	28 ³	28 ¹	29 ³	28 ³	1:55	82	-3 7w	2.90 RebuffFastAsTheBrandLny	3rd ovr, up in time-10
22 Oct/21	8M1	fst61°	282	:57:1	:1:26	1:53:4	D-Br Crown E	25000	7	4 ¹	4 ⁴	4 ⁰ 2 ³	3 ¹	12	1	TiTetrick	LuWallin	29 ¹	28 ⁴	28 ³	27 ¹	1:53:4	82	+5 3w	*2.00 RebuffGiondasCiPpBi	2nd ovr, 3wide, clt win-8
2 JOVIALITYS		b f 3, by Chapter Seven, Pasithea Face S by Muscle Hill										Last 5 Sts-\$316,202		*1:50.2 M1		22 M1	2 1 0 1	\$62,000 22 Tot	* 7 6 0 1	*\$371,477						
31:50.2 (1) Q * \$53,068		Courant Inc, Delray Beach, FL										1:52.1 M1		21 M1	6 3 2 0	\$587,123 21 Tot	+ 12 9 2 0	*\$865,341								
7-2 B. Sears 135-18-14-11 (133)		M. Melander 72-17-14-7 (236)										Br- Am Bloodstock Inc, FL		20 M1	0 0 0 0	- Life	19 5 2 1	\$566,818								
30 July/22	11M1	fst83°	274	:55:2	:1:25:2	1:52:2	D-HAMBO E	100000	10	3 ¹ 1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	11	1	1	BrSears	MarMeindr	28 ³	27 ²	30	27	1:52:2	90	+5 7w	*80 JiggjyGogSTemprHnvJovialityS	2wide led, ovtank-10
16 July/22	4M1	fst77°	264	:56:1	:1:24:1	1:50:2	D Miller	100000	7	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	12	11	1	BrSears	MarMeindr	26 ⁴	29 ¹	28 ¹	26 ²	1:50:2	100	+11 5w	*30 JovialityS VenerableSiQn	Led, wld-td, held sway-7
1 July/22	3YR	fst80°	273	:56:4	:1:24:4	1:53:1	MGM TYROT	280904	9	1 ¹	1 ¹	1 ¹	11	1	1	BrSears	MarMeindr	28 ³	29 ¹							

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HAMBLETONIAN DAY HANDICAPPING



Race 1 NW \$20,000 in last 5 starts

(5) BILLY CLYDE is just too sharp for these and a three-peat looms.
(7) BETTORS DONTTELL
(8) SPEEDY DOMINIC A

Race 2 F&M Open Handicap Pace

(5) WATCH ME NOW N faces much easier today and she gets top call.
(7) KEEP ROCKIN A
(6) DRAMA ACT

Race 3 \$145,000 Steele Memorial

(2) BELLA BELLINI draws better here and she will be more aggressive.
(1) ATLANTA
(6) WHEN DOVESCRY

Race 4 \$50,000 Muscle Hill

(9) VILLAIN picked up Dunn at scratch time; big speed threat here.
(3) TESTING TESTING
(1) JUSTICE

Race 5 \$337,000 Peter Haughton Mem.

(1) KILMISTER undefeated colt will be tough from the rail today
(8) OH WELL
(5) CARTER MICHAEL DEO

Race 6 \$33,500 Continentalvic.

(3) DELILAH HANOVER will be tough in here if she stays flat
(2) MONKEY QUEEN
(1) GRACELYNN HANOVER



(4) VIRGO comes in primed for a big mile.
(5) BILLY CLYDE
(8) SPEEDY DOMINIC A

(7) KEEP ROCKIN A has the class and should thrive for McCarthy.
(4) MAJORCA N
(6) DRAMA ACT

(2) BELLA BELLINI will be too tough in the final sprint to the wire.
(1) ATLANTA
(6) WHEN DOVESCRY

(1) JUSTICE gets a minor consolation prize for missing Hambo final.
(3) TESTING TESTING
(2) TORRONE

(8) OH WELL should make the lead easily and be tough to catch.
(1) KILMISTER
(2) HERODOTUS

(9) PRIMADONNA DEO has stepped up her game and is poised for the upset.
(12) BRICKHOUSE BABE
(2) MONKEY QUEEN



(4) VIRGO has been on an upward progression and should continue.
(5) BILLY CLYDE
(7) BETTORS DONTTELL

(7) KEEP ROCKIN A comes off some sneaky-sharp Hoosier speed.
(6) DRAMA ACT
(4) MAJORCA N

(2) BELLA BELLINI is the best. I will die on this hill.
(1) ATLANTA
(6) WHEN DOVESCRY

(6) CASTLE HOUSE stretches out off good small-track efforts.
(3) TESTING TESTING
(2) TORRONE

(9) CELEBRITY BAMBINO raced from a bad spot. Will be in play today.
(1) KILMISTER
(3) WALLANDAR

(8) LILBITALEXIS has to go for the front. Now or never.
(2) MONKEY QUEEN
(6) PALERMO HANOVER



(2) MY PAL JOE ready to peak in third start back; Tetrick drives!
(5) BILLY CLYDE
(8) SPEEDY DOMINIC A

(5) WATCH ME NOW N is one of the few in here to do well on the big track.
(6) DRAMA ACT
(7) KEEP ROCKIN A

(2) BELLA BELLINI will be kept in striking position this week.
(1) ATLANTA
(6) WHEN DOVESCRY

(3) TESTING TESTING deserves another shot versus much softer foes.
(8) PRECISE FASHION
(1) JUSTICE

(8) OH WELL should be able to handle a difficult trip and still win as the chalk.
(9) CELEBRITY BAMBINO
(3) WALLANDAR

(3) DELILAH HANOVER faces easier this week.
(9) PRIMADONNA DEO
(1) GRACELYNN HANOVER



(5) BILLY CLYDE was a nose short of five straight with fast times.
(8) SPEEDY DOMINIC A
(4) VIRGO

(3) SLY ELEANOR N has a big kick; likes to win; gets a setup.
(5) WATCH ME NOW N
(6) DRAMA ACT

(1) ATLANTA just beat these and likely gets similar trip.
(2) BELLA BELLINI
(6) WHEN DOVESCRY

(3) TESTING TESTING loomed in Elim but faltered; drop will help rally.
(7) ANDOVER-THEWINNINGS
(1) JUSTICE

(5) CARTER MICHAEL DEO was airborne late in Elim; starting to figure it out.
(1) KILMISTER
(4) UPSTAGED

(3) DELILAH HANOVER has faced better and grabbed checks.
(8) LILBITALEXIS
(2) MONKEY QUEEN



(5) BILLY CLYDE is sharp & his front-end style should be even better today.
(7) BETTORS DONTTELL
(8) SPEEDY DOMINIC A

(5) WATCH ME NOW N should appreciate dropping out of stakes company.
(4) MAJORCA N
(6) DRAMA ACT

(6) WHEN DOVESCRY won't be sitting last this week like last time.
(2) BELLA BELLINI
(1) ATLANTA

(1) JUSTICE had trot but couldn't find space in Hambo elim.
(3) TESTING TESTING
(6) CASTLE HOUSE

(5) CARTER MICHAEL DEO flew home in elim; better post here.
(1) KILMISTER
(8) OH WELL

(3) DELILAH HANOVER should out-class these; has to mind manners
(6) PALERMO HANOVER
(8) LILBITALEXIS



(5) BILLY CLYDE fits this class like a glove; wins again.
(8) SPEEDY DOMINIC A
(7) BETTORS DONTTELL

(3) SLY ELEANOR N debuts for Burke and could step it up a notch.
(5) WATCH ME NOW N
(7) KEEP ROCKIN A

(1) ATLANTA should have a tactical edge on her main rivals.
(2) BELLA BELLINI
(6) WHEN DOVESCRY

(1) JUSTICE seems most accomplished of these Hambo also-rans.
(6) CASTLE HOUSE
(3) TESTING TESTING

(8) OH WELL is a \$530K yearling who looks the part thus far; Melander dominates here.
(1) KILMISTER
(4) UPSTAGED

(3) DELILAH HANOVER was primed to make the Oaks final but broke; rebounds.
(10) MISSWALNER FASHION



(7) BETTORS DONTTELL can win off a tough first-over trip last out.
(5) BILLY CLYDE
(8) SPEEDY DOMINIC A

(5) WATCH ME NOW N should appreciate getting away from the monster mares.
(6) DRAMA ACT
(7) KEEP ROCKIN A







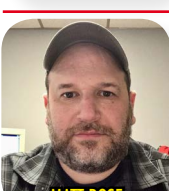

(4) WESLYNN QUEST adds hopples off the miscue; upset package
(2) BELLA BELLINI
(1) ATLANTA

(3) TESTING TESTING will appreciate this drop down in class.
(1) JUSTICE
(4) KOSHER MAHONEY

(8) OH WELL is the best freshman trotter we have seen so far.
(4) UPSTAGED
(1) KILMISTER

(3) DELILAH HANOVER has races two and three back that are too good.
(6) PALERMO HANOVER
(2) MONKEY QUEEN

\$100K GTD Pick 4 (8-11) | \$125K GTD Pick 4 (12-15)

	<i>Race 7</i> <i>\$92,300 Shady Daisy</i>	<i>Race 8</i> <i>\$258,300 Cane Pace</i>	<i>Race 9</i> <i>\$173,000 Lady Liberty</i>	<i>Race 10</i> <i>\$278,000 Sam McKee Mem.</i>	<i>Race 11</i> <i>\$60,000 Vincennes</i>	<i>Race 12</i> <i>\$500,000 Hambo Oaks</i>
 GARNET BARNSDALE	(6) MAX CONTRACT wins this with her exceptional late kick (1) GOTTHEGREEN-LIGHT (9) TREACHEROUS DRAGON	(3) MAD MAX HANOVER paired 1:47 4/5 miles here; call to upset. (6) BEACH GLASS (4) FOUREVER BOY	(7) TEST OF FAITH is just too good for these. She is a reliable single. (5) RACINE BELL (9) LYONS SENTINEL	(9) ROCKYROAD HANOVER controls it with "Bulldog" absent. (1) ABUCKABETT HANOVER (4) BACKSTREET SHADOW	(2) AMIGO VOLO benefits from the post draw; top call. (9) TAKE ALL COMERS (3) STORM IS RAGING	(5) VENERABLE should be faster today coming back to a 7-day cycle. (10) FASHION SCHOONER (3) WARRAWEE XENIA
 JAY BERGMAN	(6) MAX CONTRACT has a wicked burst of speed; hard to deny (7) BOUDOIR HANOVER (1) GOTTHEGREEN-LIGHT	(3) MAD MAX HANOVER gets the favorable draw in career form. (6) BEACH GLASS (1) ENERGETIC HANOVER	(7) TEST OF FAITH has been vicious and will only be better with pace to chase. (1) BLUE DIAMOND EYES (9) LYONS SENTINEL	(6) CATCH THE FIRE picks up Dunn for his return; can surprise. (9) ROCKYROAD HANOVER (1) ABUCKABETT HANOVER	(11) INCOMMUNICADO picks up a great driver and his luck is due for change. (9) TAKE ALL COMERS (2) AMIGO VOLO	(5) VENERABLE appears back to her old self at the right time. (3) WARRAWEE XENIA (6) SELFIE QUEEN
 RAY COTOLO	(1) GOTTHEGREEN-LIGHT has flown under the radar. She belongs. (6) MAX CONTRACT (7) BOUDOIR HANOVER	(3) MAD MAX HANOVER has hit his best stride. His turn on the throne. (6) BEACH GLASS (5) EARLY ACTION	(7) TEST OF FAITH is best until proven otherwise. Whenever that happens. (8) KOBE'S GIGI (10) GRACE HILL	(6) CATCH THE FIRE comes in hot. Don't forget he's good. (1) ABUCKABETT HANOVER (8) WORKIN ONA MYSTERY	(8) BALENCIAGA has talent but just needs to behave. (9) TAKE ALL COMERS (7) SCIROCCO ROB	(7) BAPTISM will be in play and aggressive. (5) VENERABLE (6) SELFIE QUEEN
 DERICK GIWNER	(6) MAX CONTRACT has proven herself as the best in the division right now. (7) BOUDOIR HANOVER (4) SWEET TREASURE	(3) MAD MAX HANOVER has come to form and should offer fair value. (6) BEACH GLASS (5) EARLY ACTION	(7) TEST OF FAITH can only be defeated by a brutal trip. (2) MIKALA (5) RACINE BELL	(1) ABUCKABETT HANOVER finds a field loaded with speed to set her up. (6) CATCH THE FIRE (9) ROCKYROAD HANOVER	(11) INCOMMUNICADO has been riddled with bad luck and gets a good driver change. (10) VENERATE (7) SCIROCCO ROB	(10) FASHION SCHOONER is the best in here and post helps the price. (4) MANON (5) VENERABLE
 MIKE PRIBOZIE	(6) MAX CONTRACT will be hard to deny; lots of speed in here. (7) BOUDOIR HANOVER (9) TREACHEROUS DRAGON	(3) MAD MAX HANOVER is getting good right now; won't be favored. (6) BEACH GLASS (4) FOUREVER BOY	(7) TEST OF FAITH is so fast and consistent; can overcome any trip. (9) LYONS SENTINEL (2) MIKALA	(9) ROCKYROAD HANOVER finds no "Bulldog" making him the one to beat. (1) ABUCKABETT HANOVER (6) CATCH THE FIRE	(1) HILLEXOTIC gets the big track, an inside draw and speed to chase. (2) AMIGO VOLO (9) TAKE ALL COMERS	(3) WARRAWEE XENIA's elim flash is hard to fault; Bob says she has more (5) VENERABLE (4) MANON
 GREG REINHART	(7) BOUDOIR HANOVER should carry her speed on today's track. (6) MAX CONTRACT (1) GOTTHEGREEN-LIGHT	(3) MAD MAX HANOVER was super in last two starts; post advantage. (6) BEACH GLASS (1) ENERGETIC HANOVER	(7) TEST OF FAITH is just too good for the rest of these right now (2) MIKALA (9) LYONS SENTINEL	(9) ROCKYROAD HANOVER has been sharp lately, gets away from "Bulldog". (1) ABUCKABETT HANOVER (6) CATCH THE FIRE	(2) AMIGO VOLO was performing well out of town; has versatile racing style. (3) STORM IS RAGING (9) TAKE ALL COMERS	(10) FASHION SCHOONER should be value from post 10; needs to trip-out. (5) VENERABLE (3) WARRAWEE XENIA
 MATT ROSE	(6) MAX CONTRACT upset in the Mistletoe Shalee; no surprises here. (7) BOUDOIR HANOVER (5) LYONS SERENITY	(6) BEACH GLASS shakes his main rivals today and converts as deserving chalk. (3) MAD MAX HANOVER (4) FOUREVER BOY	(7) TEST OF FAITH is the Queen here and she should find a way to score. (4) HOT MESS EXPRESS (5) RACINE BELL	(9) ROCKYROAD HANOVER doesn't have to face "Bulldog" and takes command. (2) NICHOLAS BEACH (6) CATCH THE FIRE	(1) HILLEXOTIC reunites with Gintgras; could be value in competitive affair. (3) STORM IS RAGING (7) SCIROCCO ROB	(5) VENERABLE was a 2YO killer and she's peaking again at the right time. (10) FASHION SCHOONER (4) MANON
 DARIN ZOCCALI	(7) BOUDOIR HANOVER will turn the tables on Max Contract today. (6) MAX CONTRACT (9) TREACHEROUS DRAGON	(8) NIGHT HAWK is a fresh horse and can upset the "Beach". (6) BEACH GLASS (3) MAD MAX HANOVER	(7) TEST OF FAITH is simply too dominant to pick against right now. (5) RACINE BELL (2) MIKALA	(9) ROCKYROAD HANOVER gets away from the fastest horse in history. (1) ABUCKABETT HANOVER (2) NICHOLAS BEACH	(9) TAKES ALL COMERS gets away from some of the best trotters around. (2) AMIGO VOLO (10) VENERATE	(4) MANON had the tough first-over trip and the price is right. (5) VENERABLE (3) WARRAWEE XENIA

HAMBLETONIAN DAY HANDICAPPING

Race 13
\$355,000 Jim
Doherty Mem.



GARNET BARNSDALE

(6) MAMBACITA
races best on the
engine. I see her
controlling this.
(1) UNA MADONNA
(4) MY ANNAS
DREAM

Race 14
\$279,000 John
Cashman Mem.



JAY BERGMAN

(5) INSTAGRAM
MODEL draws
perfectly and has a
world of ability.
(2) ROYAL FILLY
(6) MAMBACITA

Race 15
\$1,000,000
Hambletonian



RAY COTOLO

(7) GRACEFUL PATTY
has a great kick,
just needs the right
placement.
(6) MAMBACITA
(5) INSTAGRAM
MODEL

Race 16
Non-winners
\$10,500 in last 5



DERICK GWERNER

(2) ROYAL FILLY got
caught by surprise in
elim. She'll learn from
the experience.
(7) GRACEFUL PATTY
(6) MAMBACITA



MIKE PRIBOZIE

(6) MAMBACITA
kicked home in 27 in
her first two starts;
aggression now?
(2) ROYAL FILLY
(1) UNA MADONNA



GREG REINHART

(5) INSTAGRAM
MODEL gets a better
post than in elim,
hopefully a better
trip, too.
(6) MAMBACITA
(2) ROYAL FILLY



MATT ROSE

(6) MAMBACITA took
the bye, skipped
the elim and is
fast-tracked to the
winner's circle.
(2) ROYAL FILLY
(3) IN ITALIAN



DARIN ZOCCALI

(7) GRACEFUL
PATTY had trot last
time but hit a wall of
horses.
(6) MAMBACITA
(2) ROYAL FILLY

(4) ALRAJAH ONE IT
was terrific in
Massachusetts. He's
the one to beat.
(5) ECURIE D DK
(6) LOVEDBYTHE-
MASSES

(5) ECURIE D DK
should bring his
A-game today.
(1) RATTLE MY CAGE
(4) ALRAJAH ONE IT

(4) ALRAJAH ONE IT
appears the best.
Tough betting race
for value.
(5) ECURIE D DK
(3) CUATRO DE
JULIO

(4) ALRAJAH ONE
IT seems to be on
another level right
now.
(3) CUATRO DE
JULIO
(5) ECURIE D DK

(5) ECURIE D DK is
back after first loss
here; qualifier says
ready to rumble.
(4) ALRAJAH ONE
(2) AMBASSADOR
HANOVER

(3) CUATRO DE
JULIO is worth
another shot against
Ake's Army from an
inside post
(4) ALRAJAH ONE IT
(5) ECURIE D DK

(3) CUATRO DE
JULIO held firm in
the Hambo Maturity
and could be looking
at a perfect trip.
(4) ALRAJAH ONE IT
(5) ECURIE D DK

(3) CUATRO DE
JULIO finally gets a
good post and his
speed is a weapon.
(4) ALRAJAH ONE IT
(5) ECURIE D DK

(1) REBUFF is the
best horse leaving
from the
advantageous rail.
(7) TEMPORAL
HANOVER
(2) JOVIALITY S

(2) JOVIALITY S
finally draws well
and that should
make the difference.
(1) REBUFF
(7) TEMPORAL
HANOVER

(2) JOVIALITY S can
get the right setup.
Potentially her race
to lose.
(8) KING OF THE
NORTH
(10) LOOKS LIKE MONI

(1) REBUFF has
looked best since July
1 and nothing has
changed.
(7) TEMPORAL
HANOVER
(4) KEG STAND

(1) REBUFF is uber-
talented, fast, tacti-
cal, and a deserving
favorite.
(5) JIGGY JOG S
(8) KING OF THE
NORTH

(2) JOVIALITY S gets
a great draw to stalk
& pounce; likely
won't be favored
(7) TEMPORAL
HANOVER
(1) REBUFF

(1) REBUFF has
flawlessly prepped
for this and is the
deserving Hambo
favorite.
(2) JOVIALITY S
(7) TEMPORAL

(3) FAST AS THE
WIND flies under the
radar to get Gingras
his Hambo.
(1) REBUFF
(2) JOVIALITY S

(4) WHITECOOKIE
drops and should
pop here, likely set-
ting the pace.
(1) IMAGINARY LINE
(10) WES DELIGHT

(10) WES DELIGHT
has the speed and
class to overcome
draw.
(1) IMAGINARY LINE
(4) WHITE COOKIE

(1) IMAGINARY LINE
keeps improving and
now looks best of
the bunch.
(10) WES DELIGHT
(4) WHITECOOKIE

(4) WHITECOOKIE
double-drops and
draws well.
(1) IMAGINARY LINE
(10) WES DELIGHT

(4) WHITECOOKIE
takes a big drop;
perfect draw; no
excuses
(1) IMAGINARY LINE
(9) HAIL CHRISTIAN
N

(4) WHITECOOKIE
looks to be in a drop
and pop spot.
(10) WES DELIGHT
(1) IMAGINARY LINE

(3) DEALER'S TABLE
has been well-han-
dled by catch-driver
Svanstedt; steps up
sharp.
(1) IMAGINARY LINE
(6) TYGA HANOVER

(4) WHITECOOKIE
looks like a logical
drop and pop
candidate.
(1) IMAGINARY LINE
(10) WES DELIGHT

PLAY OF THE DAY
\$25 bankroll for each handicapper

Race 14

Take a \$25 Straight Pick 3 on Alrajah One IT, Rebuff and Whitecookie starting in race 14 and go home with some cash at the end of the day.

\$25 Pick 3: 4 / 1 / 4

Race 9

Lets key (7) TEST OF FAITH on top with (1) BLUE DIAMOND EYES for second and third. She should be well-rested after an aggressive schedule.

\$2 TRIFECTA KEY 7 / 1 / 2,3,5,6,11

\$2 TRIFECTA KEY 7 / 2,3,5,6,11 / 1

Race 7

(1) GOTTHEGREENLIGHT has dominated the New York circuit and is unexposed at the top level with loads of potential. She offers potential value against (6) MAX CONTRACT and the consistently speedy (7) BOUDOIR HANOVER.

\$12 TRIFECTA KEY 1 / 6,7 / 6,7

Race 11

(11) ICOMMUNICADO can't seem to catch a break lately. Today he picks up a Swedish driver who is used to competing in big fields and he should find a way to get him involved.

\$12 WIN/PLACE 11

Race 12

Late Pick 4 (Race 12) is the play of the day. Keying (1) REBUFF in the Hambo and spreading in Race 13 while using obvious contenders in races 12 & 14. Total is \$24.

\$1 Pick 4: 3,5 / 1,2,4,5,6,7 / 4,5 / 1

Race 10

The two sharpest horses in Race 10, the Sam McKee Memorial, are stablemates (9) ROCKYROAD HANOVER and (1) ABUCKABETT HANOVER. I will look for Rockyroad to finish ahead and play them in a straight exacta.

\$25 EXACTA 9-1

Race 15

I've been a big fan of the filly (2) JOVIALITY S and I'm excited to see her face the boys again, but I think (1) REBUFF is just a bit better.

\$15 EXACTA 1-2

\$3 TRIFECTA 1 / 2 / 6,7; \$2 TRIFECTA 1 / 6,7 / 2

Race 12

(4) MANON had to do the dirty work going a tough first-over in her elimination. She may go overlooked off that performance and now is the time to jump on board at a square price..

\$20 WIN 4 / \$5 EXACTA 4-5

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Future intentions can be the key to today's performance



JAYWALKING

By Jay Bergman [BergmanJay](#)

There have been constant complaints this year regarding driver strategy or lack of aggressive tactics among those who suggest that every race need be a competitive one. It's hard to fathom that in 2022 more people aren't aware that the product put out on a week-to-week basis can't replicate what we saw 25 years ago, and the cause is not just our drivers.

It's agonizing to listen to today's incessant bickering as to why a driver didn't leave or how in the world last week's winner in the class suddenly takes back to last and trails around the track. This common denominator in today's races is a reaction to what horses must do each week to compete while pacing or trotting at maximum speeds.

Just look at last Saturday's (July 30) Miss Versatility leg at The Meadows as a supreme example. While the betting public made known closer Bella Bellini the favorite expecting her to repeat her victory in the Hambletonian Maturity at a shorter distance, it's hard to imagine driver Dexter Dunn or the 4-year-old mare taking an aggressive stance in the early going. Thus, the race set up for the speed horses and Atlanta took advantage for Yannick Gingras and scored impressively out of the pocket in a 1:50 mile. To the surprise of some and perhaps too many out there Bella Bellini could not pass in the wicked final half. Others bemoaned the effort of When Dovescry as driver David Miller took her to the back and kept her there.

The problem as I see it is that you just can't have it both ways as a bettor, driver, trainer, owner or track manager. While some consider a \$40,000 race good enough to effect all parties will be going guns-a-blazing through a contested mile, it doesn't outweigh the bigger races down the road that will require more of a full-mile effort to get the job done.

So, in Saturday's Miss Versatility Atlanta got back on the winning track and Bella Bellini and When Dovescry prepared for future races. Is the public damned?

Here's where not enough information is being provided to the bettors. Given that we've asked the drivers and trainers to make comments in advance of the race, perhaps now is the time that we advise gamblers of what may be next on the agenda for some of these horses. In the case of the three contesting the Miss Versatility there is a much bigger race on Hambletonian Day that awaits and thus trainers' and drivers' foresight play a major part in their decisions.

Perhaps no effort this past Saturday better supports the strategy than the upset victory in the Adios achieved when Bythemissal surprised Beach Glass and Pebble Beach with an authoritative first-over grind for trainer Ron Burke and driver Chris Page. No one was more puzzled than me when the Ohio Sire Stakes winner looked to take the week off in his elimination race sitting far back and closing for a comfortable second behind Pebble Beach in the lower purse elimination race. Granted a good post was not a given using that strategy but at the same time it appears the easy trip in the elimination set Bythemissal up for an even better performance in the final.

While Burke himself suggested Bythemissal would be more aggressively driven in the final, the feeling from here is that it was more a combination of events that led to his victory. If there is one thing we've learned since miles routinely started going under 1:50 it's that 27-second quarters are no big deal and sometimes 26 quarters don't take everything out of a horse. On the other hand, go first quarters in 25 4/5 as Pebble Beach did this past Saturday and as Beach Glass remained parked on the outside through in the Adios, and no matter what the following fractions are, horses get softened up.

Beach Glass raced his heart out but just couldn't have the same pop he's displayed over the last month when Yannick Gingras called on him. Pebble Beach paid dearly for the opening quarter and when it came crunch time that blistering late kick was nowhere to be found.

Bythemissal deserves the credit for rising to the occasion most definitely and the strategy by Team Burke to point him for the second half of the season could work out perfectly for the Downbytheseaside-sired gelding.

While prep and elimination races fall into a different category for bettors, drivers must still hope to qualify horses regardless of the draw or trip. In the case of last Saturday's Hambletonian elimination where Joviality S had to overcome post 10, the race did not go as well as connections would have anticipated. King Of The North and driver Mark MacDonald raced hard the opening three-eighths of the mile that in turn left driver Brian Sears no options but to press on with the filly and make her work to the tune of a 55 2/5 opening half where she was parked much of the way. For Sears and Joviality S, the opening half time was significant. Though the driver did his best to slow the pace down with a third quarter of 30 seconds that would probably draw a fine at some tracks, Joviality S fought on bravely through the final quarter only to be edged late by Jiggy Jog S as well as stablemate Temporal Hanover.

This elimination touched on some of the obvious difficulty this sport has in showcasing its best horses while simultaneously trying to sell the public on "separate betting interests" as a real thing. It can't be lost on anyone with a pair of eyes that Temporal Hanover had no interest in forcing the third quarter or trying to outsprint his stablemate when Sears had put the field to sleep during the third quarter. The two worked in tandem but could not block the way of Dexter Dunn, who neatly threaded Jiggy Jog S through traffic in time to get up on the wire.

Those who raced contenders in the Hambletonian and Hambletonian Oaks appeared cognizant that the bigger races were the following week and every bit of energy needed to be preserved for the bigger payday. It shouldn't go unnoticed that driver Tim Tetrick was among those who looked to have Fashion Schooner going just enough to win her elimination only to be literally blindsided when Warrawee Xenia came out of the clouds to sail by her late. Tetrick was seen frantically trying to shake Fashion Schooner up but clearly his filly could not see or shift gears in time when the blur that was Warrawee Xenia sailed by.

On that subject, if Bob McClure was in fact serious when he offered with a deadpan expression that Warrawee Xenia was not at "her best" this past Saturday, then one can only conclude the Walner-sired filly could be set for something really special on Hambletonian Day.



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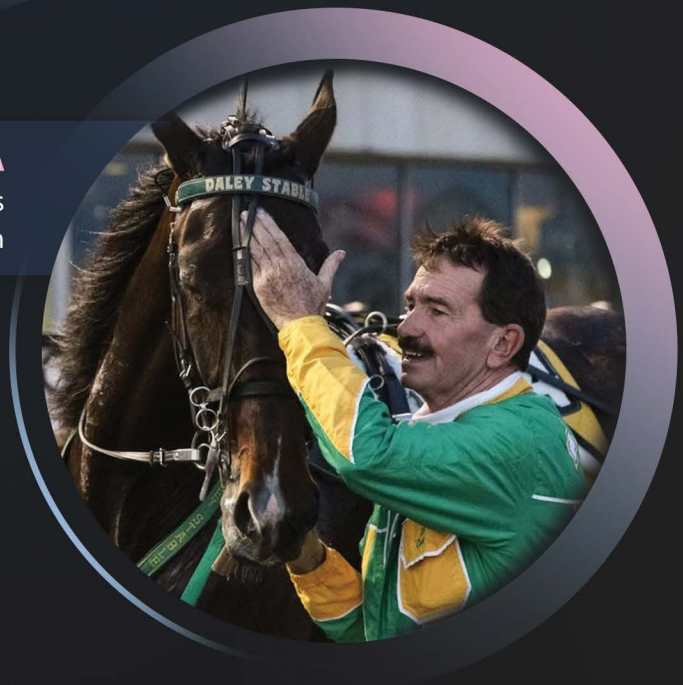
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Are surface changes in store on Hambo Day?

Hambletonian Day is upon us and you can't wait to cozy up to a set of your favorite past performance product to put your handicapping prowess to the test. While the process of using past performance to decipher today's winner is a cornerstone of betting on harness racing, doing so with regard to the Hambletonian or Hambletonian Oaks may leave you with the wrong impression in 2022.

The one constant from the eliminations of all races was that virtually every horse appeared to get slower. We say "appear" because a horse like Rebuff, the presumptive favorite in the Hambletonian, did not suddenly lose 13 lengths of speed as the time disparity of 1:52 4/5 versus his 1:49 4/5 mile would have you believe. Something was different and it was the surface of the track at The Meadowlands.

After a string of weeks where records were seemingly being wiped away over a lightning-fast surface, the track played much slower on elimination night for the two trotting classics. There was clearly a deeper cushion on July 30 and the times reflect it as horses that were routinely finishing their miles with 26-and-change quarter were struggling to get home in 28 seconds.

"I didn't think the track was bad. It had more cushion on it, but something felt wrong if you looked at those eliminations. They went [1:]52 2/5 and [1:]52 4/5 and most of them looked like they were all-out late. Maybe it bothered some horses more than others. I'm sure it will be a lot tighter Saturday," said trainer Marcus Melander, who had five horses in the Hambletonian elimination round with three making the final.

According to Meadowlands Director of Racing Properties and Track Ryan Napierala, what you witnessed last Saturday is the surface they look to offer the horses every week but haven't been able to due to weather.

"That's a normal track when the weather is good because the horses want a good cushion. There was no rain and we didn't have to change it 100 times like we normally would when there is weather," said Napierala, who went on to explain why the track had been so fast during previous weekends. "We've had rain every weekend for the last five or six weeks. It has been a crazy summer with the rain. When you get consistent rain the track will be tighter and harder because it is safer. God forbid you get a torrential downpour before the third race, if your track is set for a normal racing night it would be gone. It is more of a precaution."

The big question for those handicapping or even trainers looking to prepare for the stakes-filled Hambletonian Day card at The Meadowlands is what to expect on August 6 when more than \$3.5 million will be on the line. Will we see the fast track from Meadowlands Pace Night when Rebuff equaled the track record for 3-year-old trotters and Bulldog Hanover set a new all-age record for pacers at 1:45 4/5 or

will we get the Hambletonian eliminations surface?

"If the weather is good the track will have cushion on it. We are not out there for the times. We are out there to keep the horses racing. It is about safety and you don't want a horse breaking down," said Napierala. "Ideally the best track is not too deep and not too hard, a happy medium. That's what I try to shoot for because it keeps the pacers and trotters happy."

Although much of the New Jersey area around The Meadowlands is showing a rainfall deficit, unfortunately for Napierala, the precipitation that has hit East Rutherford tends to arrive on the weekends and the forecast is calling for similar this week. The National Weather Service is calling for dry weather until at least Thursday afternoon (Meadowlands races Thursday at 6:20 PM) and potential chances through the weekend, with Thursday evening at 30%, Friday at 60% and Saturday showing a 40% possibility of showers and thunderstorms after 3 PM. The good news for those hoping to avoid the heat is temperatures are expected to drop from 99 on Thursday to a more bearable 86 by Saturday afternoon.

The difficulty for everyone participating in the Hambletonian Day festivities is that racing starts at noon and concludes at 7:15 PM. Much can happen during the day and a track that starts somewhat soft with a cushion could turn hard by the time the Hambletonian rolls around at 6:35 PM.

"When there is live racing the horses have the track, you have to get off at a certain point whether the rain is going to start or not. It takes a little longer and I can't put my rollers out there like you would to prepare for bad weather normally," said Napierala. "Let's say we are in the third race and we are expecting rain in the eighth race, I'm going to start doing what I have to do as soon as possible. I'll start screening it and try to tighten it up as fast as I can. I'm not going to freak out and make it go from soft to concrete but you have to be cautious."

Handicappers are advised to check the sky or a trusty radar app on their phones when trying to decide how much weight to place on the Hambletonian and Oaks eliminations. Rebuff, although he finished in only 28 seconds, appeared to complete his mile easily with something left in the tank while a horse like Venerable, who went from a 25 4/5 final quarter in the Del Miller to 28 1/5 in her Oaks elim, looked a bit tired in the late stages despite winning. Manon was nearly perfect prior to the Oaks and came up flat over the "changed" surface. Warrawee Xenia clearly relished the surface and gobbled up ground late in her Oaks elim. How much weight do we put in that effort or the one put forth by the horse she beat Fashion Schooner, who looked nearly unbeatable over the fast tracks but more ordinary last weekend?

"I know when the track is lightning fast she has gone her best races over it," said Campbell, perhaps considering a rain dance to provide a slightly harder surface for the Hambletonian Oaks final.

One certainty come Hambletonian Day is that the situation is fluid. Weather, equipment changes, altered training schedules and more could turn a moderate contender or even an outsider into a winner, just as a track changing from one start to the next could make last week's stand-out this week's also-ran.



EDITOR'S EYE

By Derick Gwerner

[@harnessveguy](#)

Hambletonian Day Schedule & Wagering Menu

OFF TIME	RACE #	PURSE	CONDITIONS	WAGERING MENU
12:02	1	\$23,000	Non-winners \$20,000 in last 5 starts	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Double, \$50K GTD Pick 6
12:26	2	\$40,000	Open F&M Handicap Pace	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 3
12:52	3	\$145,000	Dr. John R. Steele Mem. - Mare Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, \$75K GTD Pick 5
1:16	4	\$50,000	Muscle Hill - 3YO C&G Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 3
1:39	5	\$337,000	Peter Haughton Mem. Final - 2yo Colt Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Survivor 7
2:05	6	\$33,500	Continental Victory - 3YO Filly Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 3
2:30	7	\$92,300	Shady Daisy - 3yo Filly Pace	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 3
3:00	8	\$275,000	Cane Pace - 3yo Open Pace	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, \$100K GTD Pick 4
3:22	9	\$173,000	Lady Liberty - FFA Mare Pace	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 3
3:48	10	\$258,300	Sam McKee Mem. - FFA Pace	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 6
4:16	11	\$60,000	Vincennes Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 3
4:48	12	\$500,000	Hambletonian Oaks Final - 3yo Filly Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, \$125,000 GTD Pick 4, Crossover Pick 5
5:26	13	\$355,000	Jim Doherty Mem. Final - 2yo Filly Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 3
5:59	14	\$279,000	John Cashman Mem. - FFA Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Pick 3
6:35	15	\$1,000,000	Hambletonian Final - 3yo Open Trot	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Double, Hi-5
7:14	16	\$15,500	Non-winners \$10,500 in last 5	WPS, EX, TRI, Super, Hi-5

*The all-stakes .50 Crossover Pick 5 includes races 12 & 15 at The Meadowlands and races 9, 10 & 11 at Saratoga Racecourse (TB).



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Amazons Bella Bellini, Test of Faith highlight Hambo undercard

By Jay Bergman

It has been said that 4-year-olds have a difficult time racing older horses. Historically, following stakes-heavy 2- and 3-year-old campaigns a 4-year-old lacks the maturity to compete with any consistency against older foes in what many term a “transitional” year. That said, two brilliant 4-year-old mares are set to compete on Saturday (August 6) at The Meadowlands in stakes events and are likely favored to beat the best in the division made up primarily of older foes.

Bella Bellini will try again to defeat past Hambletonian winner Atlanta in the \$145,000 Dr. John Steele Memorial (race 3) and Test Of Faith, the defending Horse of the Year, looks for her third straight stakes victory in the \$173,000 Lady Liberty (race 9).

“She’s definitely taken a big step up this year,” said Nifty Norman, who trains Bella Bellini, last year’s Hambletonian champion. “She’s just gotten bigger and stronger.”

A winner in last year’s Hambletonian Oaks for Norman, Bella Bellini is back a year later and has been one of the sport’s brightest stars in 2022, winning five times including an incredible performance in the Hambletonian Maturity where she not only defeated male rivals but was outside for a better part of the mile-and-one-eighth contest without the benefit of cover.

“She came out of that race [Hambletonian Maturity] great and we took it easy on her,” said Norman. “I was kind of happy with the way she raced last week.” The trainer was referring to a third-place finish behind Atlanta in a leg of the Miss Versatility at The Meadowlands on July 30. “It was a useful prep for this race.”

While Bella Bellini has mostly faced mares this year, Norman may put her in against the boys in the future. “We’ve got her eligible to the Maple Leaf Trot,” Norman said. “It’s scary going up against Ake’s [Svanstedt] group. But I’m fine with her doing so the big track at Woodbine Mohawk Park.”

On the board in all 10 of her starts this year, Bella Bellini drew post 2 in the Steele, directly outside of defending Steele champion Atlanta, who came to life in a big way last week scoring in a season’s best 1:50 mile. The small field also includes When Dovescry (post 6), who captured the Steele in 2020.

Bella Bellini’s impressive career résumé would appear to make her a worthy candidate for the October International Trot at Yonkers Raceway. “I think we’d go if invited,” said Norman. “It’s not the ideal track for her being that her strength is as a closer, but she’s been handling the turns a lot better this year.”

Trainer Brett Pelling couldn’t be happier with the way Test Of Faith has returned this year and is quite confident the daughter of Art Major will be sharp come Saturday afternoon.

“I think racing her those six straight weeks did her a lot of good,” said Pelling. “You can see it in her demeanor. It looks like she knows what she’s doing out there and is ready to kick ass.”

Test Of Faith has won five of nine races this year heading into the Lady Liberty with her last three miles indicative of the kind of talent she exudes. Second after racing parked the entire mile from post 10 in the Perfect Sting on July 2 at The Meadowlands, Test Of Faith followed that up with a pair of explosive miles, with a 1:48 1/5 victory in the Graduate (July 9) and then a career-best 1:47 mile in the Dorothy Haughton a week later.

“David [Miller] has the utmost confidence in her,” said Pelling of Test Of Faith’s regular pilot who generally allows the race to come to him as opposed to letting Test Of Faith dictate the action in each start.



(ABOVE) DERICK GIWNER; (BELOW) NIKKI SHERMAN

Bella Bellini (above) and Test Of Faith have proven once again that 4-year-olds can tackle older foes and take charge.



In the Lady Liberty, Test Of Faith (post 7) faces 10 others including Lyons Sentinel (post 9), who captured the event in 2021.

“She’s the one I’m most concerned with,” said Pelling of Lyons Sentinel, who enters the contest following a 1:50 2/5 victory in the Clara Barton at Plainridge Racecourse on July 25. The Lady Liberty has some other top mares in the field, with Perfect Sting winner Racine Bell (post 5) and Mikala (post 2) both conquerors of Test Of Faith at one time this year both inside her after the draw.

While it may be rare to see 4-year-olds compete successfully against older foes, both Bella Bellini and Test Of Faith appear to be different types and have used their 2022 campaigns to show the racing world that it is possible.

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With Bulldog Hanover away the rest hope to play in McKee

By Claudine Smith

With Bulldog Hanover absent, North America's best pacers will fight for the spotlight in the \$278,000 Sam McKee Memorial for older pacers on Saturday (August 6) at The Meadowlands.

In the past weeks, many horses have suffered defeats to the red-hot Bulldog Hanover. In the Haughton on July 16, Rockyroad Hanover finished second, two lengths behind Bulldog Hanover while Nicholas Beach finished sixth. The world-record holder's absence has some trainers optimistic about their chances in the McKee.

"One-thousand percent, yes," said Nicholas Beach's trainer Jenn Bongiorno when asked if she feels relieved that "Bulldog" isn't in the race. "You see a horse dominate like that, it all seems effortless. I'm extremely impressed by him and I appreciate Bulldog. He is a great horse."

Nicholas Beach became the fastest horse of the year on May 21 when he paced a mile in 1:47 at The Big M. However, he has faced some challenges in recent months. Due to an ulcer on his palate, he had to take three weeks off before the Roll With Joe on July 2.

"The truth is, Nicholas Beach, I've come to believe that he should be managed sort of like a thoroughbred would be managed [meaning fewer starts]," said Bongiorno, about Nicholas Beach a 19-time winner in 39 career starts.

Last year in the McKee, Nicholas Beach just missed the victory in a second-place finish behind Catch The Fire. He has had a good 2022 so far and Bongiorno is confident in the gelding.



LISA PHOTO

Rockyroad Hanover is the morning-line choice in Saturday's Sam McKee Memorial at The Meadowlands despite drawing post 9.



"I'm extremely impressed by him and I appreciate Bulldog. He is a great horse."

-Jenn Bongiorno

"This is going to be our race," said the trainer, who wasn't at all concerned about her horse having missed three weeks of action. "Last year, we were second in this race, by a neck. I'm hoping we can beat someone by a neck this year."

Others are not fazed by Bulldog Hanover's absence. "Yeah, it helps, but we are not here to ever dodge competition, that's for sure. If he was in there, we'd be in there as well," said trainer Tony Alagna, who trains both 3-1 morning-line favorite Rockyroad Hanover and 7-2

second-choice Abuckabett Hanover.

Only three horses in the history of the sport have gone faster than Rockyroad Hanover, who finished second in 1:46 1/5 in Bulldog Hanover's record-setting 1:45 4/5 performance. However, Alagna feels that his horse hasn't been given the respect he deserves because of Bulldog Hanover's success.

"He's been overshadowed by that horse," said Alagna. "That horse has done great things, of course, but there's no disagreeing with what my horse has done as well."

Rockyroad Hanover has gone in under 1:47 for three consecutive weeks.

"He's a big, strong horse and seems to be handling it very well," said Alagna about the son of Captaintreacherous who has won eight of his 33 races and earned \$855,602. "I think he's a versatile horse and does not necessarily have to come from off the pace to win."

Workin Ona Mystery's trainer Ron Burke is strictly focusing on his horse.

"I don't get too caught up in the hoopla. I don't worry about other people's horses. I worry about how my horses are coming into a race," said Burke, who is happy with Workin Ona Mystery, a winner of 18 races in 58 starts. "[Workin Ona Mystery] is right on the edge of being a very, very good horse."

In the lead up to the McKee, one question remains unanswered. Will Bulldog's record be challenged?

"It's almost impossible, 1:45 4/5. It's incredible. I don't think they'll go less than 1:45 4/5, no. But to expect horses to go faster than that? It's hard to say yes. But who knows? It's a horse race," said Bongiorno.

Post time for the McKee is 3:48 p.m. on the Hambletonian Day card that begins at noon.



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Rookie Downbytheseaside trotter a three-time winner in 2022



CONRAD PHOTO



CONFESSIONS

By Keith Gisser

From just two crops, Downbytheseaside has established himself not just as the top pacing sire in Ohio, but as a top stallion in the sport. And now he is establishing himself as a top trotting sire, albeit from the proverbial "limited opportunity".

Limited is the operative word as the sample size is one mare, Dw's Jasmine. The result has been a 2-year-old filly trotter who has already banked over \$20,000 and posted a lifetime mark of 2:00 at Scioto Downs. That filly's name is Doc's Boo Boo.

"We intended to breed to Deep Chip. I don't know if the wrong mare was presented or the semen got mixed up, but I was pretty surprised when the USTA called and said the DNA matched Downbytheseaside and not Deep Chip," explained Kathy Ratcliff, who bred the filly with partner Jerry Zossel under their JR Stable moniker. "The mare has a 3-year-old by Deep Chip with a mark of 1:59 3/5 and a yearling filly by Sebastian K. They said there is no way Deep Chip was the sire."

Once the ID was confirmed, there was nothing to do but wait. Trainer Mark Winters said there was never any question that Doc's Boo Boo would be a trotter. "She was all trot in the field – never took one step on the pace at any time, she has always been all trot," said Winters. "She has been a dream to work with . . . frankly I'm glad because not all of the Deep Chips are. I am fortunate I've got her. She has a great gait and a great attitude. She wears a head pole and a couple boots, but not much."

Doc's Boo Boo started her career with a show finish at the Circleville Fair after making a break at the start. She then qualified at Scioto Downs in 2:02 1/5, but it was her final 28 3/5 closing panel that opened some eyes. Doc's Boo Boo made her pari-mutuel debut on July 8, finishing third in line to Brett Miller and trotting her mile in 1:59 with a grinding first-over effort that got

Doc's Boo Boo has proven that Downbytheseaside can produce a successful trotter.

her within a head of the lead at the top of the stretch. She came back the next week to post her first win going gate-to-wire in 2:00 1/5 for Jeff Nisonger. The next week she posted her lifetime mark in a \$17,500 Buckeye Stallion Series leg and that prompted Winters to try her in the Ohio Sires Stakes.

"I dropped her in for Thursday, figured we would give them a try," said Winters. Sent off at odds of 9-2, Nisonger put Doc's Boo Boo on the engine and she raced gamely despite taking pressure early and often. Ultimately she finished fourth, beaten by just less than three lengths and race-timed in 1:58 1/5.

Doc's Boo Boo was right back at it Wednesday, August 3, facing a group of county fair performers at Xenia for a purse of \$10,600. Saddled with a second-tier start, she found no trouble, following cover and powering away to an eight-length win in 2:06.

For Ratcliff it's been a bit surreal since getting that phone call from the USTA. "It's kind of a shock. How could this have possibly happened?" Ratcliff asked. "We are glad she's doing well."

Winston Churchill once wrote, "Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." The American philosopher George Santayana said something similar. Now, I don't think Churchill or Santayana bred many trotters, but here in Ohio we are seeing a classic case of history repeating itself. Doc's Boo Boo was conceived at Midland Acres, one of Ohio's premier breeding operations.

Back in the early-nineties, Nobleland Sam was the dominant pacing sire in Ohio, just as Downbytheseaside is today. While not a star on the national scene, he did sire the good stakes performer Cinder Lane Sam among others. When Leonard Buckner sent his mare Miss Perception to Midland, he certainly did not expect her to be bred to Nobleland Sam, but somehow she was. Buckner, with a sense of humor and poking fun at John "Doc"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22

Mossbarger, who ran Midland, named the resulting foal Doc Mistake.

Doc Mistake was unimpressive at 2, but at 3 he won the Ohio Sires Stakes Championship. Trained by Jeff Fout and driven by Ohio Hall of Famer Tom Brinkerhoff, who passed away in late July, Doc Mistake continued to make no mistakes. At 4 and trained by Ohio Hall of Famer Brinkerhoff, the trotter won the Ohio Breeders Championship and finished second in the Scarlet and Gray and the Ohio Sires Stakes. He came back at 5 to win another Ohio Sires Stakes title. He won at least one race every year through his 10-year-old season and found the winners circle in 37 of 171 lifetime starts, banking nearly \$350,000 in his career.

Looking to catch lightning in a bottle, Miss Perception was intentionally bred to Nobleland Sam in 1998. That foal, No Mistake (get it?) ended up being her second best foal, but banked just \$58,000 in his career. Oh, and he was a pacer.

I asked Joe McLead, the master of Sugar Valley Farm, where Downby-theseaside stands at stud, if he would be bred back to this mare or other trotting mares and he deferred to Adam Bowden of Diamond Creek Farms, who manages the stallion. I reached out to Adam but did not hear back by deadline time. If I had to guess, given his tremendous success on the Grand Circuit, with top 3-year-old Pebble Beach and others, I would say Downby-theseaside will be servicing only pacing mares in the future.

Doc's Boo Boo, named as a tribute to Doc Mistake, still has \$325,000 to go to equal the older trotter. She may be a flash in the pan or she may prove to have the talent and longevity of the older horse. It goes to show that no matter how careful breeders are, they must remember (to quote Elvis Costello) accidents will happen. The story of these two trotters with pacing fathers is interesting and it still has chapters to be written.

That's it for this month. Now cash. Hopefully on Doc's Boo Boo. See you next month.

Trotter of the Year Jujubee qualifies

Jujubee, 2021's Trotter of the Year, returned to the racetrack this morning (8/3) at The Downs at Mohegan Sun, winning a qualifier in 1:55 4/5 with trainer Greg Wright Jr. in the sulky.

The 4-year-old son of Creatine, owned by Jon Erdner, made every pole a winning one in his morning session, going pedestrian opening splits of 29 4/5 and 59 3/5, increasing the speed down the backstretch to reach the three-quarters in 1:28, and then hitting a higher gear to come his last quarter in 27 4/5.

The winner of the Breeders Crown and Kentucky Futurity last season, Jujubee had put in a 1:56 1/5 qualifier at Spring Garden Ranch on April 13; after that, it was determined to delay Jujubee's 2022 racetrack campaign. The fast trotter's qualifier would give every indication that he is back on course to soon be meeting up with the sport's top trotters.

-edited release (Pocono/PHHA)

Ohio State Fair at Scioto starting Thursday

Starting Thursday early evening the Ohio State Fair will be in full swing at Scioto Downs and continue throughout the weekend.

Four events for 2-year-old fillies of both gaits starts in race 10 Thursday with purses ranging from \$67,000 to \$72,500.

Friday showcases 3-year-old fillies on both gaits along with 2-year-old colt trotters going for between \$46,000 and \$63,000.

The action culminates with 2- and 3-year-old colt pacers and 3-year-old male trotters on Saturday with six races going for \$60,000-plus.



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Kihlstrom hoping to add a Hambletonian trophy to his collection

By Ken Weingartner

Orjan Kihlstrom has won most of the biggest harness races in the world, including four Elitloppet, a Prix d'Amerique, and a Breeders Crown. On Saturday at The Meadowlands, he will have the opportunity to add the Hambletonian to his list of accomplishments when he drives Temporal Hanover in the sport's premier event for 3-year-old trotters.

No driver has ever won the Prix d'Amerique, Elitloppet, and Hambletonian — much less with a Breeders Crown as well. Three drivers have Elitloppet and Hambo victories: Joe O'Brien, John Campbell, and Ake Svanstedt. Campbell, who retired in 2017 with a record six Hambletonian trophies, and Svanstedt also have multiple Crowns.

Kihlstrom, a member of Sweden's Trotting Hall of Fame, has appeared in one previous Hambletonian final. He finished fifth with 42-1 longshot Evaluate in 2018. On Saturday, he will be with an elimination runner-up, Temporal Hanover, who is 8-1 on the morning line.

"The Hambletonian is one of the biggest races in the world," Kihlstrom said. "I've been fortunate to win most of the big races in Europe and some in the United States also. It would mean a great deal (to win). It would be huge."

Temporal Hanover is one of three finalists for trainer Marcus Melander, joining filly Joviality S, the 7-2 second choice behind 9-5 favorite Rebuff, and colt Periculum, who is 15-1. Last week, Temporal Hanover and Kihlstrom finished a head behind Jiggy Jog S in the second of two Hambletonian eliminations.

"He was great," Kihlstrom said. "He is a very nice horse to drive. He's the kind of horse that does everything you want. He seems to have all the qualities you want. He can leave if you want to, he's got a good mentality, and a good gait. He seems to pretty much have it all."

Temporal Hanover, a son of Walner-Think Twice, will start the final from post seven.

"It could have been better, of course, but it could have been a lot worse also," Kihlstrom said with a laugh about the draw. "It's OK by me."

Kihlstrom, known as the "Iceman" for his cool demeanor in the sulky, followed in family footsteps getting into harness racing. He grew up just a half-mile from Solvalla Racetrack, site of Sweden's Elitloppet, which is one reason his first win in the famed race there with From Above in 2003 ranks as one of his greatest moments.

"I've been watching the Elitloppet ever since I could start walking," Kihlstrom said. "I've seen all the great horses and drivers and trainers who came to the Elitloppet and won it. To be one of them myself was just fantastic. It was a horse I'd been driving all the way up, so it couldn't be any bigger than that at that moment."

Kihlstrom added Elitloppet titles with Magic Tonight in 2015, Nuncio in 2016, and Don Fanucci Zet in 2021. Prior to moving to Sweden, Nuncio was the 2014 Hambletonian runner-up to stablemate Trixton.

Another special victory was Maharajah's triumph in the 2014 Prix d'Amerique in his fourth trip to the prestigious event.

"That also was a great moment," Kihlstrom said. "I've had many great



ALN PHOTO

Orjan Kihlstrom has won the Elitloppet, Prix d'Amerique and Breeders Crown and will drive Temporal Hanover in Saturday's Hambletonian final at The Meadowlands.

moments, but if I had to pick two, it would be the first Elitloppet and the Prix d'Amerique."

In the States, Kihlstrom won the 2014 Breeders Crown Open Trot with Commander Crowe at The Meadowlands. The following year, he captured the Fresh Yankee with D'One on Hambletonian Day at The Big M and the Muscle Hill Mare Trot, also with D'One, at Vernon Downs.

On Saturday, in addition to his drive behind Temporal Hanover in the Hambletonian, Kihlstrom will drive Selfie Queen in the \$500,000 Hambletonian Oaks for trainer Nancy Takter, In Italian in the \$355,000 Jim Doherty Memorial for Ron Burke, Upstaged in the \$337,000 Peter Haughton Memorial for Melander, and Incommunicado in the \$60,000 Vincennes for Svanstedt.

"They are interesting horses to drive," Kihlstrom said. "Selfie Queen raced well in her (Oaks) elimination and finished strong. I hope we'll have some luck."

Racing begins at noon (EDT) Saturday for the stakes-filled Hambletonian Day card. Watch from 12:30-5 p.m. on Fox Sports 2 (FS2) with coverage including the \$500,000 Hambletonian Oaks at 4:48 p.m. Watch from 6-7 p.m. on Fox Sports 1 (FS1) with coverage including the \$1 million Hambletonian at 6:35 p.m.



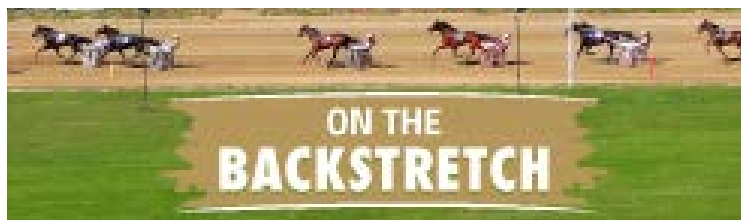
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BY DERICK GIWNER

Jessica Otten's life revolves around harness racing. The 25-year-old was raised in the sport via her dad's involvement and works in the industry full-time as the Marketing Coordinator and on-air talent for The Meadowlands. While some may be fooled due to her age, the Michigan native has proven knowledgeable and professional working not just on the in-house simulcast feed but also addressing thousands of others via the track's televised nights on Fox Sports.

On the eve of Hambletonian week where she can be seen anywhere from the farm to the track to the press conference, Otten took some time to discuss her path in the sport and what the future holds.



MEADOWLANDS MARKETING COORDINATOR JESSICA OTTEN

How did you get started in harness racing?

I'm a third generation horseman. My dad's dad [James Otten – Bud] is the one who got us all started. He was a groom in Canada and then my dad became an owner-trainer-driver-breeder, so I'm lucky enough to be born into it.

Was there ever a chance you would train or drive horses?

I have trained horses with my dad but I like to be hands-on. I always enjoyed being a groom. I would stay in the barn and my sister and my dad would be out on the track. I wouldn't be opposed to doing it but it isn't something I'm looking at now.

Your dad Peter owns over 1,350 career driving wins and 531 as a trainer but most of that was before casino-fueled purses. Was the life of a Michigan horse family hard?

Yeah, I guess you could say that. Before I was born the racing was pretty good in Michigan. My dad is actually from Canada so he raced a lot up there and when he moved to Michigan he did that circuit. When I was in high school he took a stable of 13 horses up to London and raced during their winter meet, which really sucked because Sports Creek was still racing at the time and we only lived 10 miles from there. I still had a couple of horses at home that I would tend to before and after school or race on the weekends. It was tough because in normal life your family doesn't have to split up and you only get to see your dad once every week or two, so he had to miss out on stuff.

Was harness racing always going to be your path in life?

I tried to make it so it wasn't. When I was younger I wanted to be a teacher but I was always that kid who missed school to go to the races with my dad or missed Friday night football games. As I got older the more I enjoyed school and extracurricular activities. I graduated high school with full intentions of not going into the business. The first summer out of high school I worked at a riding school farm instead of with my dad and I was going to go to college for criminal justice. I hated the riding horses, I hated school



LISA PHOTO

Jessica Otten will be one of the on-air hosts for Fox Sports on Hambletonian Day at The Meadowlands.

and I got an invitation to come to the Breeders Crown at The Meadowlands with Post Time with Mike and Mike. Right after that I switched my major to marketing and went back to work with my dad full time.

You're currently handling social media, on-air, marketing and perhaps other duties for The Meadowlands. Is it tough to juggle everything?

Yes and no. I feel like I'm a person that has to be prepared to the T, so I try to get ahead of things. Realistically I work Tuesday to Saturday but I'm working Sunday and Monday to get Tuesday and Wednesday's work done so when the draw comes out I'm prepared for the weekend. At first it was a lot to juggle, because when we came back from COVID I started doing more TV work, but then I got into a system with a checklist so I know what has to get done.

Coming from a horseperson background, is it sometimes difficult to ask a tough question now that you are on the media side?

Yes. I kind of have this problem where when I watch a race it is easier for me to understand what happened so when I talk to someone I already know the answers and wonder if the question matters. I also don't want to put anyone in a bad situation and have them say 'why would you ask me that?' or 'I'm not going to answer that.'

What kind of car do you drive?

I just bought a new car, a 2021 Ford Escape.

Favorite dinner meal? Snack?

Chicken tenders are my go-to. When I go out people tell them not to give me a menu because I have chicken tenders with ranch. For snack I just like fruits and vegetables.

Outside of The Meadowlands, what is your favorite track to visit? Why?

I love Lexington. I had the opportunity to go out there with Pete Wrenn for two weeks during the Grand Circuit before I started working at The Meadowlands and there is just nothing like it – everyone being located on the backstretch, the surface of the track, the crowd, the atmosphere. I also love

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 25](#)

going to Mohawk. I raced there a lot when I was younger and even growing up. I love the setup of it. The paddock is right next to the grandstand.

Outside of The Meadowlands, what is your favorite big event in racing? Why?

North America Cup night is one of my favorite nights of racing. To me it is so much fun.

How often are horses or racing on your mind?

Too much – 24/7. I can't go on vacation without going to a racetrack. I watch races every day of the week and if I'm not doing it for work I'm doing something for my horses at home. I eat, sleep and breathe horses.

What is your favorite sport to watch? Team?

Hockey. My sister and dad played hockey and I grew up learning how to skate. We went to hockey games all the time. Being from Michigan my team is the Detroit Red Wings, but they aren't very good and I like to follow players. I've been paying more attention to the Dallas Stars this year because my favorite player [Luke Glenden-ing], who my horse is named after, was traded to the Stars.

How many horses do you own?

Just the one.

You came to New Jersey in 2018. How hard has it been for a Michigan native to live on the outskirts of New York City?

It was a culture shock for sure. I come from a town with two-lane roads and the only time I hit traffic is when I'm stuck behind a tractor. Moving out here was so hard and it was a lot to adapt to. I really didn't know anyone but the horsemen and outside of the track I didn't really do anything for the first year or so. Then COVID hit and I made more friends when I came back. I really didn't enjoy living here. The only thing I enjoyed was my job. I'm getting used to it now almost four years in, but it was hard.

What is one thing about you most fans/bettors don't know?

I have had people come up to me in the paddock and ask how I became so knowledgeable about horses, so I don't think that people know I was a horseman and groom before getting into media.

What is one word that describes harness racing for you?

Passion.

What is the best advice you've ever gotten or given about harness racing?

That everyone does everything different so you have to be open for a new way of learning things. There is nothing I enjoy more than sitting down with someone and learning why they did something instead of taking a different route or why they used a specific piece of equipment. I was always told to keep your eyes open and listen because there is always a chance to learn.

What was your best moment in harness racing?

My dad drove quite a bit for this guy back home and they never had a state champion together. They had a 2-year-old filly trotter that raced good all summer long and it was one of the last big state champion nights at Hazel Park and he won. It was really cool because he had driven a lot for that guy and our whole family was there.

I was also given a horse [Juando] when I was 12 from Pete Wrenn when he first moved to Indiana. He was like "I don't know if the horse will make



COURTESY JESSICA OTTEN

Where else would Jessica Otten pose with her new car than at a track.

it but you can try'. My sister, dad and I owned the horse together and he was a pain in the ass to get to the races. He finally made it and he made us quite a bit of money on the 2- and 3-year-old fair circuit but he broke his coffin bone. He trained down and broke his other coffin bone. Then he finally made it back to the races and in his second start back he won in like the class below the Opens. I've never felt so much joy in my life as when I watched that horse cross the wire. People don't understand how much hard work and determination it takes to get a horse back to the races.

With Hambletonian week upon us, how much preparation is going on for you behind the scenes to prepare?

Quite a bit actually. Sometimes I think people think I only show up on the weekends to do TV [laughing]. I have to prep for interviews to be done Thursday, Friday and Saturday. I have to prep everything for FS1 and FS2 because the races will be shown Saturday. I have to prepare all of the graphics for social media, pick four tickets and stuff, so I have to make sure everyone gets those in on time. I have to be at the post draw and go to the farms for interviews and videos. Plus we have casino night here. Honestly, I'm part of the younger generation so I don't always know all of the history and I have to go back and refresh my memory so I know what I'm talking about.

One of your responsibilities at The Meadowlands has been as on-site host for Fox Sports. What has that experience been like?

It has been pretty cool. When the opportunity came about I wasn't going to do it. They were going to bring someone else in and I was going to stick to the social media, but it didn't work out and I ended up being on. It was fun and I was excited when they asked me to be a part of Hambletonian Day. We've had six shows this year and the people are really great to work with. It is really cool that we can broadcast and expand our product to a thoroughbred-centric world that might not know a lot about harness racing. Back in Michigan that is something I did avidly. Every weekend I would do conferences and stuff. If there is one thing I enjoy the most it is teaching people about the business. Fox has been easy to work with on that level. We had an incredible Meadowlands Pace night despite a few technical issues. We are actually going to be on Fox Sports 1 for the Hambletonian, so that will be really good.

What is your comfort level on-air now versus a few years ago when you got started?

I'm way more comfortable. I feel like I can get thrown in any situation and be ok. When I first started at The Meadowlands, the first interview I did I was literally pacing up and down the paddock saying 'why did you take this job? I'm not an on-air talent. What was I thinking?' I was so intimidated by the camera. After COVID I became 10 times more

ON THE BACKSTRETCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

comfortable because I had to stand six-feet behind the camera. I felt more comfortable and less intimidated by even the drivers and trainers because I had gotten to know them more. I feel like I've grown a lot.

You were the United States Harness Writers Breakthrough Award winner a couple of years back. Did you ever expect that could happen when you started on-air at The Raceway as a teenager?

I never did. I'd be lying if I said I paid much attention to Grand Circuit racing until about six years ago. I paid attention to racing around us. Even when the ballot came out I thought there were so many people that deserve it and had done much more. It was a surprise and I'm super grateful that people see the work I've done while trying to give back to the sport.

On the side you are working as co-host for PA Harness Week. What has that experience been like?

It has been so fun. Working with Heather [Vitale] has been like showing up and hanging out with your best friend on Wednesdays. When I first started I remember my mom telling me after watching the first episode, 'you are going to have to step up your enthusiasm a little bit if you are going to stand next to Heather.' I was like, 'she's got enough enthusiasm for like 10 people, so it will be hard.' After the first couple of shows last year to get into the hang of things, it has been a lot of fun. The crew and our camera guy is great, Rachel [Olszewski] from the PHHA is great and Heather of course is great. It is a lot of writing, but it is fun,

If you had the power to change one thing in the sport, what would it be?

Human interaction with the horsemen. Like I said, Mohawk's setup is incredible. People want to talk to the drivers and trainers. Obviously they are stars in our business, but they are regular people too. I did a promotion with The Meadowlands before COVID called Dine-Win-Tour. There is nothing more exciting than the look on a kids face when they get to meet the horses or their favorite driver or trainer. I wish there was a way that we could easily do that everywhere.

How do you view the future of harness racing?

I hope the future of the sport is great because I'm only 25, but I feel like there is so much going on that you never know. I'm going to be optimistic and say that it is going to be around for a long time because it is something I've always loved and it is my life.

You are only 25. Where do you see your future in the sport?

I try not to think about it to be totally honest. There are a lot of opportunities out there. I really enjoy what I'm doing right now and I wish I could stay 25 forever in the position I'm in, but we obviously can't. I've had offers from other places but I enjoy what I'm doing now. I try to live every day one at a time.

Time for the stretch drive.

Best Horse you ever saw: Bulldog Hanover.

Best Driver Ever: Tim Tetrick. I'm a big fan of his.

Best Trainer Ever: Nifty Norman. He has such great work ethic, he paddocks his own horses and he spends so much time in the barn. Maybe he isn't the best trainer ever but he is an incredible horseman.

Lasix – Yes or No?: Yes, I'm a firm believer.

Favorite TV Show?: Grey's Anatomy or whatever is on RTN.

Trotters or Pacers?: Growing up I only ever took care of pacers. There is nothing better than a classy trotter but I do love the pacers.

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 4

RACE 5

(4) BRONZE OVER N closed from eighth to fourth last time out at Pocono and drew an improved post tonight after starting from the eight-hole over there twice in-a-row. She also has a trainer change to Noel Daley.

-Greg Reinhart

EMPIRE CITY CASINO
YONKERS RACEWAY

FRIDAY, AUGUST 5

RACE 4

(4) BOND blazed down the road two back but caught one of the Doherty Memorial favorites last time and had to settle for second. She should take charge against this group.

-Derick Giwner

MEADOWLANDS RACING & ENTERTAINMENT

RACE 10

(4) MAGNIFICENT SEVEN dominated in the first leg and he should take beating her as the odds-on choice.

-Garnet Barnsdale

WOODBINE MOHAWK PARK

SATURDAY, AUGUST 6

RACE 12 - \$125,000 GTD PICK 4

While this sequence contains some odds-on chalks, there is certainly money to be made by going against the grain, which is what we'll do in the Hambletonian Oaks. Venerable seems vulnerable to me and if she goes down we should be in line for a good payoff.

-Giwner

.50 Ticket: 3,4,10 / 2,5,6,7,9 / 4,5 / 1,7 = \$30

MEADOWLANDS RACING & ENTERTAINMENT

FULL CARD ANALYSIS / PAST PERFORMANCES

Mohawk Park Analysis

[Thursday](#) [Friday](#) [Saturday](#)

Meadowlands Analysis

[Thursday](#) [Friday](#) [Saturday](#)

Yonkers Analysis

[Thursday](#) [Friday](#) [Saturday](#)

DHP PPS

HARNESS EYE PPS

TRACKMASTER PPS

FREE PPS

INSTANT RACING UPDATES VIA TWITTER: @DRFHARNES

NEWS FROM AROUND THE HARNESS INDUSTRY

HUMAN COCKTAIL PACES BATAVIA TRACK-RECORD MILE IN NYSS VICTORY

The New York Sire Stakes made their third visit to Batavia Downs on Wednesday night (Aug. 3) and featured the 2-year-old pacing colts and geldings competing for a total of \$107,000 in purses. The highlight of the night was when Human Cocktail (Huntsville-Lotsa Matzah) rallied late to win the second \$53,500 division in 1:53 3/5 and set a new Batavia Downs track record for 2-year-old pacing colts.

[READ MORE](#)

EARTHWINDFIRE, HUNTING SEASON TAKE NYSS FOR ROOKIE FILLIES

Two-year-old pacing fillies duked it out in New York Sire Stakes contests on Tuesday night (August 2) at Yonkers Raceway, and Earthwindfire and Hunting Season would win the pair of \$75,900 top-level splits.

Vivians Dream (Jordan Stratton) came into the first division with a four-for-four record and led through fractions of 27 3/5, 57 1/5 and 1:26 3/5, but Earthwindfire (Jack Pelling) vacated the pocket in the last turn, rallied in the lane, and was able to get by Vivians Dream in time to win by a neck in 1:54, a lifetime-best clocking. Alabama Hannah (Jason Bartlett) was the third-place finisher.

[READ MORE](#)

FAVORITES TOPPLED IN KENTUCKY CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES AT RED MILE

Two-year-old pacing fillies and three-year-old trotting fillies competed in Kentucky Championship Series, Commonwealth Series, and Golden Rod Series races on Tuesday afternoon at The Red Mile.

In the \$80,000 Championship Series test for rookie pacing fillies, Strong Poison (Yannick Gingras), sent off at 17-1, took the lead out of the pocket past the 27 1/5 opening quarter, and after hitting the half in 55 seconds and the three-quarters in 1:23 1/5, closed in 27 1/5 to defeat Twin B Joe Fresh (Dexter Dunn) by two lengths in 1:50 2/5. Caviart Marcella (Andy McCarthy) came in third.

[READ MORE](#)

SUPPLEMENTAL ENTRIES TAKEN FOR BLOODED HORSE SUMMER SALE

The Blooded Horse Sale is taking supplemental entries for its 67th Summer Mixed Sale on Tuesday, Aug. 23, in Springfield, Oh.

The sale features 100 black-type yearlings followed by over 100 racehorses and racing prospects, along with breeding stock. Supplemental entries are being taken now and will remain open until the day before the sale. Horsemen have the opportunity to come to buy and decide 24 hours out to bring one along to sell.

Enter the supplement or view the online catalogue at bloodedhorse.org.
-release (Blooded Horse Sale)

NOTICE ABOUT POCONO AUG. 20 SUN STAKES INVITATIONALS

Rick Kane, the Director of Racing at The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono, would like horsemen to note an updated item about the \$100,000 Invitational on each gait scheduled during the afternoon \$2 million Sun Stakes Saturday card on August 20.

The important update is that, in contrast to what had been announced earlier, places in these Invitational will NOT be based on seasonal earnings of the horses – the best and brightest will compete in these complementary races to the top events for the three-year-olds.

The two colt events, the Earl Beal Memorial Trot and the Max C. Hempt Memorial Pace, will have a top division of \$300,000, with entry level to the three-year-old races based on 2022 earnings, with \$200,000 and \$100,000 consolations, respectively, for the next highest moneysavers. The two filly events, the James Lynch Memorial for pacers and the Delmonica Hanover for trotters, will operate in the same fashion on a \$250,000 - \$125,000 - \$75,000 purse scale.

Horsemen are invited to direct any further questions to Rick Kane at 570 831 2228.

-release (Pocono/PHHA)

CAMILLE KOSTEK DEBUTS SIEGELMAN STABLE'S NEWEST COLLECTION

Straight off of Siegelman Stable's biggest collaboration to date, with Palm Tree Crew and Kygo, they're right back with the biggest harness race in the country this year.

Siegelman Stable and the Hambletonian Society have partnered to create a luxurious collaboration collection for the 97th Annual Hambletonian, after an immensely successful 2021 collection. The 2022 collection will drop exclusively on Siegelman Stable's website (www.siegelmanstable.com) on Friday, August 5th at 1pm ET.

Siegelman has enlisted Sports Illustrated Swimsuit cover model, Camille Kostek, as the face of the campaign. Siegelman and Kostek connected just weeks before the shoot.

Kostek became extremely interested in the brand from the aesthetic and vibe, but when she learned more about the equine therapy side of Siegelman Stable, she had to reach out to get involved.

Siegelman Stable, founded by New Yorker Max Siegelman, has been reaching new levels of young fashion stardom, giving the brand a reach that has become global.

Since names like supermodel Kendall Jenner, NBA legend Dwyane Wade, and rapper Future, have been seen in his looks, two and three-tone hats, the signature horse and carriage has taken off to the races. While continuing to stick to the brands roots and donating a portion of proceeds to equine therapy programs around the world.

"Camille has a background in equine therapy, giving back to a program in Los Angeles, California that support veterans. She expressed to me how she loved connecting to the horses while riding, bathing and brushing them. When I learned this, the synergy was spot on for us to work together and create something we really felt strongly about.

We've given Camille the opportunity to donate a portion of this drops proceeds to an equine therapy program of her choice," says Max Siegelman.

This collection will include elements of the history and tradition of the Hambletonian (97th annual), America's classic trotting race, merged with Siegelman Stable's already iconic looks. The collection consists of five pieces; two fully embroidered hats, a matching crew-neck sweatshirt and sweat-short set fully embroidered and a classic print tee.

To see a preview of the collection, make sure to follow @siegelmanstable on Instagram.

-edited release (Hambletonian Society)

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