

### All Hail: "Royalty" Wins The Hambletonian

The big news advance about the 2013 Hambletonian was the return to heat racing after a 16-year absence. So much had changed in the racing world and the world of information dissemination in that time that the Hambletonian Society and Jeff Gural, the new owner of the Meadowlands, felt the return of heat racing could be appealing to fans and bettors alike and the obstacles to getting a racing program page out to people quickly could be easily overcome.

The 88th Hambletonian would also be bittersweet as it was the last trotting classic raced in front of the "old" Meadowlands Grandstand. After 37 years of racing and 32 Hambletonians, the sparkling steel structure of a new state of the art building was rising rapidly directly across the infield, to open in November of that fall.

After a three-year run of dominating trotters in the division: Donato Hanover in 2007; Deweycheatumnhowe in 2008 and Muscle Hill in 2009, the next three years were wide-open in advance of the Hambletonian, and Muscle Massive (2010), Broad Bahn (2011) and Market Share (2012) emerged triumphant on the first Saturday in August. Perhaps that had something to do with 23 trotters entering the 2013 edition, necessitating three \$70,000 heats before a field of 10 could reconvene for the \$1 million final.

Each elim had a standout.

The winner of the first elimination heat in 1:52 was the favorite, Royalty For Life. After a stand-out freshman year that saw him win seven of 14 starts and more than \$300,000, the homebred son of RC Royalty proved to be fast but frustrating for trainer George Ducharme. A slow start to the season was followed by a break in the Earl Beal Memorial final, but Royalty For Life regained favored status after winning the Stanley Dancer at The Meadowlands in 1:52 by a head over rival Spider Blue Chip, then jogging in 1:53 at his home track of Vernon.

Driver Brian Sears sent him straight for the lead in his elimination, and he was a safe length and three-quarter winner over early season sensation Smilin Eli.

Creatine was the well-rated winner of the second elimination heat in 1:52.4 for driver Mike Lachance, trainer Bob Stewart and owners Diamond Creek Racing. Finishing second as the favorite was Wheeling N Dealin, who parlayed a perfect 9-9 record, a Breeders Crown championship and nearly \$700,000 in purse money into a 2012 Dan Patch and O'Brien divisional titles. His 2013 start on the year was sporadic, though, while Creatine was coming on strong. Third in that elim was 2012 Peter Haughton winner Aperfectyankee, with

Dontyouforgetit, the richest fourth-place finisher, also advancing to the final.

Speed held once again in the final heat as Spider Blue Chip took the third elimination in 1:53.4. Ron Pierce drove for trainer Chuck Sylvester and owners David Mc Duffee and Melvin Hartman.

Starting from the rail in the final, Royalty For Life fired away strongly, forcing Smilin Eli to drop in second.

Spider Blue Chip ranged up to challenge but Sears was sitting confidently.

"My intention was just to get him out on his best foot and get everybody seated," Sears said. "That's the way it worked out."

Sears maintained a comfortable lead, and had a three-length buffer on the field at the wire in 1:52.1, rewarding the bettors who had confidence in the fastest elim winner.

Royalty For Life beat Smilin Eli by 3 1-4 lengths in the final with Corky third.

It was the Hambo debut for trainer George Ducharme, and a victory that was considered a miraculous turn of events for him and owners Al Ross, Ray "Chip" Campbell and Paul Fontaine.

A rough start to the season for Royalty For Life led to a smooth finish in the sport's richest race.

Royalty For Life was stuck in quarantine for several weeks in May at Vernon Down when that track was hit with an outbreak of an equine virus.

When he got to the races, Royalty For Life couldn't stay on gait, making breaks in his first three starts.

While concerned about the miscues, Ducharme believed a steady diet of racing was cure for what ailed the Massachusetts-foaled colt.

Turns out Ducharme was right.

"I wasn't sure we'd get this far," Ducharme said. "It took a few starts to get going but now he's back to the horse I thought he'd be."

Royalty For Life got his first win of the campaign in the Meadowlands' Stanley Dancer Memorial. From there, the colt was better, stronger and more confident with each subsequent race.

It culminated with a pair of powerful wins on Hambletonian Day.

Royalty For Life improved to 11 for 21 for the New England-based ownership team of Alfred Ross, Raymond Campbell, Jr. and Paul Fontaine.



- "Chip" Campbell operates a Standardbred breeding farm in Belchertown, Massachusetts and owns a horse trailer manufacturing company. A homebred, Royalty For Life was a result of foal-sharing partnership between Ross' mare Bourbon N Grits, a \$45,000 yearling purchase for Ross in 2004, and the New York based stallion RC Royalty, who Campbell also bred and owns. RC Royalty was born at Ross' farm in Belchertown and won \$665,681 and took a mark of 1:55.1 as a three-year-old. He started in the 2006 Hambletonian, but finished seventh in his elimination and did not advance to the final. RC Royalty now stands at Morrisville College near Syracuse, New York. Fontaine joined the partnership shortly before the colt's first start as a two-year-old.
- Paul Fontaine is a domestic relations attorney from Woonsocket, RI. He's owned horses for 45 years, though the first 30 of those years he owned only pacers, one of whom was the first Woodrow Wilson winner at the Meadowlands, No No Yankee in 1977.
- Alfred Ross is a co-owner/investor in Plainridge Racecourse in Plainville, Massachusetts. He has also owned Thoroughbred

and Greyhound tracks in the past, including Lincoln Downs, in Rhode Island.

- George Ducharme trains a small group of trotters pointed towards the New York Sire Stakes program each year. He says that Royalty For Life was somewhat of a handful early in his training, but he started to show some maturity and promise at the time stakes payments were due, around March of his 2-year-old year. "He's definitely the best horse I've ever trained," said Ducharme.
- Driver Brian Sears had a banner day, winning both the Hambletonian and the \$500,000 Hambletonian Oaks for trotting fillies with Bee A Magician. He also pulled off the same double in 2009, winning the Hambo with Muscle Hill and the Oaks with Broadway Schooner. "I thought I had an opportunity to have a really good day," Sears said. "It could also be a bad day, if you don't have any luck."
- Sears came to the Meadowlands in 2003 having amassed about \$25 million in his driving career. 10 years later he's banked well over \$100 Million. He has steered both Trotting (Muscle Hill & Bee A Magician) and Pacing Horse of the Year

## Royalty For Life

**ROYALTY FOR LIFE**, bay colt, 3, by Rc Royalty-Bourbon 'n Grits, by Donerail  
 Driver: Brian Sears  
 Trainer: George Ducharme  
 Owners: Al Ross, South Dartmouth, MA; Chip Campbell Jr, Belcher-town, MA; Paul Fontaine, Woonsocket, RI  
 Breeder: Alfred Ross, MA... 1-X-X-1

**SMILIN ELI**, bay colt, 3, by Muscles Glide-Gerri's Joy, by Enjoy Lavec  
 Driver: Tim Tetrick  
 Trainer: David M Smith  
 Owners: Nicholas F Cimino, Pompano Beach, FL  
 Breeder: Nicholas F Cimino, Pompano Beach, FL... 2-X-X-2

**CORKY**, bay colt, 3, by Muscles Yankee-Clarice Marie, by Balanced Image  
 Driver: David Miller  
 Trainer: Jimmy Taktter  
 Owners: Christina Taktter, East Windsor, NJ; John D & Jim H Fielding, Toronto, ON, CA  
 Breeder: Lynn M Baker... X-X-2-3

**APERFECTYANKEE**, brown colt, 3, by Yankee Glide-Asixpakfromperfect by Window Song's Legacy  
 Driver: Jim Oscarsson  
 Trainer: Jim Oscarsson  
 Owners: Jim Oscarsson, Vero Beach, FL  
 Breeder: Robert S Detweiler, KY... X-3-X-4

**Spider Blue Chip**, brown gelding, 3, by Andover Hall-Southwind Catlin, by Muscles Yankee  
 Driver: Ron Pierce  
 Trainer: Chuck Sylvester  
 Owners: David H McDuffee, Delray Beach, FL; Melvin Hartman, Ottawa, ON, CA  
 Breeder: McClain L Ward, NY... X-X-1-5

TIME BY QUARTERS	1/4	1/2	3/4	MILE
<b>1ST ELIMINATION</b>	<b>:26.4</b>	<b>:54.3</b>	<b>1:23.1</b>	<b>1:52.0</b>
<b>2ND ELIMINATION</b>	<b>:27.0</b>	<b>:55.0</b>	<b>1:23.4</b>	<b>1:52.4</b>
<b>3RD ELIMINATION</b>	<b>:27.1</b>	<b>:56.2</b>	<b>1:25.2</b>	<b>1:53.4</b>
<b>FINAL</b>	<b>26.2</b>	<b>:55.0</b>	<b>1:22.3</b>	<b>1:52.1</b>

### PAYOFFS

FIRST ELIMINATION	SECOND ELIMINATION	THIRD ELIMINATION	FINAL
ROYALTY FOR LIFE 3.40 2.40 2.40	CREATINE 13.80 5.80 4.00	SPIDER BLUE CHIP 3.80 2.20 2.20	ROYALTY FOR LIFE 3.60 3.40 2.60
SMILIN ELI 2.80 2.40	WHEELINGNDEALIN 3.40 2.40	CORKY 2.60 2.40	SMILIN ELI 7.60 4.80
HIGH BRIDGE 3.80	APERFECTYANKEE 3.60	LAUDERDALE 5.40	CORKY 4.40

(Rocknroll Hanover) and in 2009 became the first driver to ever win both the Hambletonian and the Hambletonian Oaks in the same year. His \$1.667 million day in 2009 remains the high water mark for the industry for any driver any day in history.

- Though Royalty For Life would go on to win the Zweig, Canadian Trotting Classic and a heat of the Kentucky Futurity, he did not fare well in the Colonial or Futurity final, was fourth in his Breeders Crown elim and ended up scratched from the final with an injury that delayed his return to the races until July of 2014, when in a rare occurrence both the Hambletonian and the Oaks winner Bee A Magician faced off in the Hambletonian Maturity for 4-year-olds. (She was 2nd and he was interfered with and finished eighth.
- Nonetheless his record of 14-7-2-0 with earnings of \$1,620,166 were enough to earn him Dan Patch title for 3-year-olds.
- The brightest star to emerge from Hambletonian Day was Oaks winner Bee A Magician, who devastated the competition in her elim and the \$500,000 Oaks final, the middle mark of an undefeated season that was capped with horse of the Year honors.
- Trained by Richard "Nifty" Norman and driven by Brian Sears for owners Mel Hartman, Herb Liverman, and David McDuffee, this was Mel Hartman's and Nifty Norman's second consecutive Oaks win, as they took the 2012 version with Personal Style.
- Bee A Magician was unbeaten in 17 races last season at age 3 and earned a divisional record \$1.54 million, bested pacers Foiled Again and Captaintreacherous for the honor.
- At year's end, Bee A Magician became the first 3-year-old filly trotter to receive the Horse of the Year Award since Continentalvictory in 1996. She got 94 votes, followed by Foiled Again with 19 and Captaintreacherous with 16. In addition, Bee A Magician was named Trotter of the Year by a 120-vote margin over both Market Share and Royalty For Life,

who received three votes apiece. She was a unanimous pick for her divisional title as her wins included the Breeders Crown for 3-year-old filly trotters, Hambletonian Oaks, Elegantimage Stakes, and Delvin Miller Memorial.

- Her \$1.54 million in purses were the most ever for a 3-year-old filly trotter, breaking the record of \$1.17 million set by Continentalvictory in 1996, and her winning time of 1:51 in the Miller Memorial at Meadowlands Racetrack is the fastest mile ever by a 3-year-old filly trotter.
- Bee A Magician joined Muscle Hill and Syrinx Hanover as the only trotters to go unbeaten at age 3 and receive divisional honors dating back to 1975.
- She posted the fastest sophomore time on the year of 1:51, a world record.
- Owner Dave McDuffee and co-owner Mel Hartmann, who also have Spider Blue Chip, had the fastest male and female sophs of 2013.

