

2004 Hambletonian



The Meadowlands – East Rutherford, New Jersey



Start the festivities... The 2004 Hambletonian was kicked off with Constance Lanpher, 3rd generation horseperson and Univ. of South Florida graduate in 2000. She sang the US national anthem to the live on-track crowd and the rest of the worldwide simulcast nation. She is currently trying to pursue a career in music. She stated, "I'm excited to be here, it's a great opportunity as a vocalist and I'm proud to represent this sport."



Overcast and pleasant... A nice day for racing, it was a nice day to simply walk around the apron and enjoy the buzz and atmosphere at The Meadowlands in East Rutherford, New Jersey.



Enjoy it live... Besides the carnival rides for kids of all ages there was live entertainment, radio personalities live on-site as well as a variety of food and beverages to enjoy. Live music was also available throughout the day which created an all-around family atmosphere.



Zoo at the racetrack?... Children were able to enjoy the petting zoo which featured an assortment of animals to keep the little kiddies and the animal lovers in us all occupied.



Grooms central... Grooms for the horses in the 2004 Hambletonian chat amongst themselves and await the arrival of their steed after their warm-up a few races before the final showdown.



Horsemen Check Your Bikes & Hold Onto Your Lines!



The moment of truth... The field is set and ready to hit the outdoor paddock in preparation for the 79th edition of The Hambletonian.



IN POST POSITION ORDER...

The field of 10 trotters who reached the final for the \$1,000,000 purse, the 1st leg of the Trotting Triple Crown:

Post Position 1: Cantab Hall SELF POSSESSED-CANLAND HALL-GARLAND LOBELL

Foaled January 20, 2001 in Lexington, Kentucky
 Owned by Lindy Racing Stable, Sampson Street Stables, Brittnay Farms, Jerry Silva
 Trained By Ron Gurfein
 Driven by Mike Lachance



After the eliminations.....

"I'm glad to have this one under my belt," Trainer Ron Gurfein said after the race, "It was do or die. Under normal circumstances, I think he's the best horse. I'm thrilled with the effort, he could have easily finished tenth, considering the troubles he's had. He raced great and Mike (Lachance) said he was perfect," Gurfein added, "You didn't see the best of him. I'm guessing he was about 80%. The dehydration problems had to have taken something out of him. I've never lost a race and been happier in my life. He'll be much better this week."

"I was very happy with him," Driver Mike Lachance said, "He hasn't been driven like that in his whole life. He has always been close or on the front. I had to take him back around the first turn, which was something new for him. But he was really digging in at the end. I know it wasn't the most impressive mile, but he trotted really strong and after the way he raced two weeks ago I was really happy with him."

At the press conference.....

"The elimination; I took him off the gates. I raced him from behind. I think it was the first time really in his career that I completely took him off the gate there, so he wasn't used to race that way. The way he was the week before, like he wasn't healthy for five, six days. I was pretty pleased with the way he performed last week. Well, the rail, it's not my favorite position," Lachance continued on drawing the 1 hole, "But in this case here, it's pretty good because there's speed on the outside. He's pretty handy. I can do whatever I want. He can leave like a rocket if I want with the rail. I think it's going to be a plus for me."

"The Hambletonian is always the most special race in harness racing," Lachance added his thoughts on the race, "You know, you just can't wait to race in The Hambletonian."

In the paddock.....

"We hit a major bump in the road with his health (but) he's back on track," said Gurfein.

"It's up in the air. There are five horses that can win it. I got a nice horse; in that field just another horse," said Lachance.

"He feels real good, back to normal. Hope for the best (and) get a good trip," said Groom Emma Pettersson.

Post race thoughts.....

"It's a tough loss," said Gurfein, "We had the best horse. It was just bad luck. Two weeks we didn't know if we'd have a horse. We're just happy to be back racing. He was excellent coming into the race. The race set up perfect for us. It was just bad racing luck."

"This was a tough loss today because we have the best horse in the race," stated Lachance after the race, "I am just grateful to have our horse back. Three weeks ago we didn't know what to expect from him. He felt great today, definitely his old self. He was just trotting 100 miles per hour. The race set up the way I expected. I thought John's [Campbell] horse would be first up and Trond (Smedshammer) would be in the back."

Post Position 2: Castle of Fortune FAME N FORTUNE-ICE CASTLE K-SPEEDY CROWN

Foaled March 28, 2001 in Worthington, Pennsylvania

Owned by Robert J. Key

Trained By Charlie Norris

Driven By Luc Ouellette



After the eliminations.....

"Castle of Fortune raced well," said Trainer Charlie Norris, "He let the other horse [Classical Man] ahead of him and he was checked, but he was okay. He raced better than American Mike [Norris' other Hambletonian entry]. He's still a little green but is improving every week. Hopefully he will prevail Saturday in the final.

"He can leave, but you can't really stop and start with him," Norris added, "He was good Saturday and I thought he raced better than my other horse.

"I like being the underdog in a race," Norris continued, "You can play every strategy in the books but until the gate parts you don't know what's going to happen. I definitely have a better shot to win this year than I did last year with Mac's Crown K. These are all good horses, but every one of them has a flaw. This year my odds are better. I have two horses in; two is always better than one."

At the press conference.....

"I'm sure he will be," Norris added on being in the mix early after drawing the 2 hole, "Hasn't decided who is driving yet. The horse raced better last week than he has [recently]. I've always liked the horse because he's beautiful. If you've ever seen him, he's just a spectacular-looking horse. You know, I hope he can be there. We're just fortunate to have them both in [referring to both Castle of Fortune and American Mike]. I mean, we got to race the race on Saturday. We got a shot."

In the paddock.....

"He's got good gate speed; he's got to leave and he in the hunt. Anything can happen. Every horse I've ever seen, there's no sure thing. Hopefully you can get a good trip. He definitely has to be in the hunt up close," said Norris.

"He's feeling fine, a nice horse. He'll be in there I believe," said Groom Ruurdje Veenstra.

Post Position 3: Eilean Donon ANGUS HALL-LEGEND QUEEN-LEGEND HANOVER

Foaled March 7, 2001 in Paris, Kentucky

Owned by Steven H. Stewart, Joseph L. Taylor Estate, Benjamin G. Taylor

Trained by Robert Stewart

Driven By David Miller



After the eliminations.....

"I was very impressed with him last week," Driver John Campbell said after the 2nd Hambletonian elimination victory, "I thought that was a big effort for coming off the surgery. He came back with a big effort today. I think he's going in as good a shape as he possibly can for next week. My horse still felt strong. I thought I could get Lantern's Law, but it took the whole stretch to do it. I still thought I had a chance at the head of the stretch."

"He doesn't have a lot of experience racing like this," Trainer Bob Stewart commented on his horses' limited experience, "He raced on the front end last year. He did very well tonight. He had to track a horse down. He was quite a ways back at the half and he was pretty much parked the whole way. I would have liked to have been second over instead of third over."

"It was about three weeks ago, he got colicky one morning after jogging," Stewart continued, "We thought he just had a stomach ache but (Dr.) Stephen Dey diagnosed him with a scrotal hernia. [Dr.] Patty Hogan did a very good job [with the surgery on July 8 to remove a testicle and repair the hernia] at her clinic and everything went smoothly after that, which it would have had to have done and we're just blessed to be here. I told my brother that we were 50-50 and everything just had to go perfect. He came back to eating very well very quickly and we're just lucky to be here. This is what you work for, to be right here. We've been blessed to be here for a while with a few horses and it's especially nice he's by Angus Hall. Angus Hall is a very good horse and has transcribed into a very good sire."

"Fortunately, they didn't have to take any intestine out, which is the best-case scenario," Stewart said after the surgery, "They did remove his left testicle."

"I was a little worried at the half but he was good and strong and raced well," Stewart added, "He didn't get in during the stretch like the week before which is a good deal. Dave Miller is going to drive him since John (Campbell) has Cash Hall."

At the press conference.....

"Yeah, I'm surprised to be here actually," Stewart laughed on being in the final, "I was down there at that clinic like three or four weeks ago. I was thinking, 'I could head back to Lexington because it doesn't look like this trip is going to work out.' But they're a durable breed. Amazing what they can overcome."

"We sure hope so," Stewart continued on his horse coming back stronger in the final, "There was a little bit of concern that the first start back from the surgery might have taken something out of him. But he ate the next day and that is always a good sign. He came back strong in the elimination. He's not really used to racing that way either. It's good for him to learn that because that is going to bode well in the future."

"We're very happy with the draw," Stewart explained on drawing the 3 hole, "But the draw has a lot to do with how the race is going to go. If you could look back and see how the race went, then it would be very easy to know which would be the best post position to have."

On new driver David Miller taking the lines in the final, Stewart concluded, "The horse has become very easy to drive. I've got a lot of worries this week but the driver is not one of them."

Driver David Miller added his thoughts on the horses to beat in the final, "I think with the draw, it really helped Cantab Hall. Tom Ridge, Cash Hall; they're the three that I think you got to beat. You know at least we got a good spot [with the 3 hole]. Should be able to stay close."

In the paddock.....

"I think it's pretty wide open. This is no big surprise. No argument. (It's) how the race unfolds. I think he has a chance. One month ago no chance. I was concerned too much (with the) 16-day setback. He did well in the elimination. I don't think any of us can feel confident. I like our chances as well. We lost our driver (which was) a lateral move," said Stewart.

"I'm excited about the race. I love it more than anything; to be a part of it. I would love to be in a winning spot turning for home," said Miller.

"He's doing really fine (and) hasn't changed at all; he's the same horse he was before. (This is) my 1st Hambletonian with a racehorse. He feels good. He couldn't be any better," said Groom Katja Airas.

Post Position 4: Justice Hall GARLAND LOBELL-JUST HAVING FUN-ROYAL PRESTIGE

Foaled May 7, 2001 in Lexington, Kentucky

Owned by Mary C. Katz, C. Kevin Thomas, Berto Stable, Nathan G. Fink

Trained by C. Kevin Thomas

Driven By Jim Morrill, Jr.



After the eliminations.....

"We're so happy to be here," said Trainer C. Kevin Thomas after the elimination, "I have raced races millions of times and when you look at this race, it's just exciting. Justice Hall gives everything that he's got. If you look at his lines, he never disappoints; he just gives as much as he can. I gave him a week off thinking he would do better after a long Summer. He'll be better next week. I'm only going to train him once on Wednesday. We're looking forward to Saturday. He was only a \$15,000 yearling (purchase) and I'm looking forward to next weekend."

"He wasn't okay," said Driver Jim Morrill, Jr., "We were looking [to make the final]. We're looking to get him a little better for next week. We're looking for a little money."

"This is a great, great thrill to be here," added Thomas, "I could've had him a little tighter and he definitely has a big chance in the final. He's got more raw speed than any horse I've ever had, even pacers. We've protected him and tried to be conservative his entire career."

At the press conference.....

"Like last year, we started him four times," Thomas stated on getting Justice Hall ready for the final, "We wanted to really plan for this year. We just shut him down and waited for this day. It worked. We're here. First goal for us was just to be here. We're just honored to be with this group."

"I'm hoping you see earlier speed from the other guys because we always like it off the back end," Thomas added on his horses' best style of racing, "The faster they are on the half, the better it is for us."

Driver Jim Morrill, Jr. added his thoughts on simply being in the Hambletonian, "It's unexplainable. We finished fourth. We was crying from joy. We were just so honored that we get a shot."

In the paddock.....

"We need something to go right. We need a speed duel (as) he likes it towards the end. He was a little flat last week. This is the most important day in my life and the horses'. I've been in the Jug and the Governor's Cup. It's hard to get here. If I do win I've got my victory speech from thirteen-years-old. In reality we need some good things to go our way," said Thomas.

"He's normal, he feels good and pretty relaxed," said Groom Ronald Waller.



Post Position 5: Cash Hall SELF POSSESSED-CHATTY HANOVER-SUPER BOWL

Foaled April 8, 2001 in Lexington, Kentucky

Owned by Robert McIntosh Stables Inc., C S X Stables, Michael Kohler, Cash Hall Stable

Trained by Robert McIntosh

Driven By John Campbell



After the eliminations.....

"I'm very pleased with him," said Trainer Bob McIntosh, "He went a big mile and he was parked most of the way. He picked up cover late and never saw the rail. He finished a strong second. The horse on the lead [Tom Ridge] got away with strong fractions. We couldn't catch him. He backed it down pretty good. He's a work in progress at the gate but is getting better. John (Campbell) had to shut him down hard on the backstretch waiting for cover and had him wrapped at the wire. The draw is definitely important. I'll take anything but the dreaded 10 hole."

"He's still big and green but he's starting to figure it out now," said McIntosh, "He won't stop growing at the same time he's learning so fast that it makes it a bit tough. But he's a big tough thing, has a great set of lungs and can trot fast a long ways. Last year, I thought I was going to have a great year with him. He won those two races, then went on a growth spurt. He must have grown four inches in the space of a month. Then he was like a gawky teenager falling over his own feet. I wanted to do the right thing with him, so we just turned him out at Kentuckiana Farm, I think he'll be an even better horse next year."

"I'm real happy with him," said Driver John Campbell, who has driven Cash Hall in his last six starts, "He was really strong finishing to the wire. Hopefully he'll be better next week."

At the press conference.....

"He's very talented and he is a work in progress, no question about that," Campbell stated on Cash Hall's chances in the final, "He's not as seasoned as some of these other colts. I think that's been obvious here a couple times. But he does have a tremendous amount of ability. I think the best for Cash Hall is yet to come."

"Well, he schooled really well last Saturday here before the eliminations. When we went up to the gate the other day, he kind of forgot everything we taught him," Campbell added on the horses' progression, "I hope he clicks in. He did recover better and he did get out of the gate a little better once he found his gait again. But I was kind of disgusted when we went up to the gate, totally different than when we schooled him. You're dealing with horses and nature. That happens."

"Well, they're always competitive," Campbell commented about the Hambletonian, "Any time going into the race they're always competitive. Afterwards everybody says, 'I knew that horse would win'; that's hindsight. I think the four or five top horses in this race are very close in ability. I think post position, I said before the draw, was going to be an important part. I think everybody is going to have a decent shot at it. I anticipate a very competitive race and I think it will be an aggressive race."

In the paddock.....

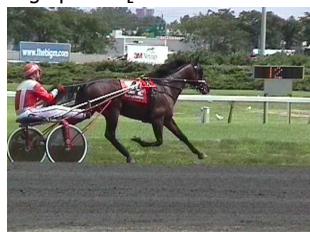
"He has a lot of ability and speed. It depends on how the race shapes up. We've got the best guy driving. Rest up the horse, it's the best we've done. John handles pressure; hand him the lines. I think the horse will get better with age. He'll be better as a four-year-old," said McIntosh.

"Good to be in it, we'll see," said Groom Brian Biekx.

Post race thoughts.....

"The race didn't go as good as I hoped. He did break from the gate exceptionally well. That's the best he's been all year coming from the gate," said Campbell, "We were coming up getting good cover until Lantern's Law broke. That made our trip a little harder. I knew that Trond was right behind me with a horse that closes well. I was very happy with our race."

"He had a good race. He was parked out and we were given good cover until Trevor Ritchie's horse, Lantern's Law, broke," stated McIntosh after the race, "We had to take a lot of air. That took a lot out of him. He's a green horse and we had to put a lot of pressure on him coming up here [to The Hambletonian] but we'll be back in the fall."



Post Position 6: Tom Ridge MUSCLES YANKEE-ASTORIA LOBELL-JOIE DE VIE

Foaled May 3, 2001 in Cream Ridge, New Jersey
Owned by Christina E. Takter, R. Peter Heffering, Banjo Farms, Kenneth Ross
Trained by Jimmy Takter
Driven By Ron Pierce



After the eliminations.....

"That was the type of drive he needs to get if he is going to be a great horse," Trainer Jimmy Takter said after winning the 1st Hambletonian elimination, "But he's still not at his best yet, he is still a week away. The horses in the barn have all been a little sick and he was suffering from a low-grade cough and was a little congested. But after a mile like that I don't plan to train him this week, just get him to 100 percent healthy."

"The aluminum bar shoes were off," Takter added, "I raced him in regular Queen's Plate shoes. He's getting better even with the blind bridle as far as being relaxed. Having a few races under him makes a big difference."

"He was good and straight and had plenty of trot," Driver Ron Pierce said after the elim, "A quarter crack was bugging him the last couple of months and it finally cracked open and Jimmy went to work on it and it wasn't bothering him today."

"He was just awesome," Pierce continued, "He was unbelievable. He had a lot left in the tank and I'm looking forward to next week very much. Just because he was on that line and running out a little bit and wasn't trotting like himself, I think everyone was getting down on the horse. But Jimmy had him straight today."

"He likes the front and I'm sure we'll try to give him an aggressive drive," Takter explained, "Right now it's just about my horse staying healthy. He'll give a good run."

"I was obviously very happy with the horse," continued Takter, "He's not 100% yet but time is in our favor with the quarter crack patch. He's getting better and even with the blind bridle is more relaxed now that he's had some races."

"I'm really looking forward to this Hambletonian Day," said Co-Owner Irv Storfer, "We have a very good chance. Everybody scares me, and I'm really scared of at least four or five of them. I don't remember a stronger trotting field than this one. Tom Ridge definitely deserves to be the favorite but does his front-end style make him a Hambletonian winner? When you're on the lead that's when you get all the pressure. They're going for \$1 million, it's the Hambletonian, and those drivers are not going to sit back. They're going to make their horses trot. Personally, I'd always rather have a horse coming from a little off the pace."

At the press conference.....

"It was a big setback. The horse had been traveling hard on the left line," Takter continued on the quarter crack injury, "We weren't able to do the right work on him. He missed some trainings. But, you know, it's like all great horses. All the great horses find a way to not make too much excuses. This horse is a real special deal."

"It's hard to say," Takter added on the competition in the race, "I mean, elimination, I'm sure the competition goes, the horses mainly try to get to the final. Right now the only thing is that my horse staying healthy. I think he's going to give a good run."

"I'm sure other horses will try to stop him there," Takter said on Tom Ridge securing the lead, "You always like to be in front and I'm sure that we're going to try to drive an aggressive drive."

In the paddock.....

"He warmed up good; best form I could have. I'm excited, a great feeling. (There's a) bunch of good horses in the race. We need racing luck. Lots of things (are) going to happen. Depends on the fractions," said Takter.

"I'm happy to be here, we're going to win this thing. I'm very confident: great trainer, good driver, the best horse. We're going to go for a record this week. Jimmy picked him out called me and told me (he was a) great horse who could be anything," added Owner Kenneth Ross.

"We have a good shot, he's stayed sound and as good as last week. The race is more important (as) our tactics are pretty set. He races best on top," Takter's 2nd Trainer Per Engblom remarked.

Post Position 7: Windsong's Legacy CONWAY HALL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS

Foaled April 20, 2001 in Hanover, Pennsylvania

Owned by Ann Jeanette Brannvoll, Theodore Gewertz, Patricia M. Spinelli

Trained by Trond Smedshammer

Driven By Trond Smedshammer



After the eliminations.....

"He was a little different than last time," said Windsong's Legacys' Driver and Trainer Trond Smedshammer after the elimination, "I wouldn't say he's not himself but he threw in a couple of steps early. Cash Hall was behind me. I couldn't sit any longer and no one else was going to go. He started getting aggressive on me and Pierce [Ron Pierce with Tom Ridge] stepped on it but he held strong."

"Every time we've tried to work him [Windsong's Legacy] it's been raining," added Smedshammer on recent weather affecting the horses' training schedule, "I haven't been able to get (him to) the strip since the Haughton and Dancer. He should be much better next week."

"He was okay," continued Smedshammer, "I got the toughest trip. Cash Hall was on my back and I was forced to move early. Coming first over wasn't something I wanted to do. I don't know what Ron Pierce would have done if I drove right at him. I didn't want to get in that duel. We're in the final and that's all we wanted. I didn't fine-tune him before the eliminations just like the Dancer and was just concentrating on qualifying. I was forced to go first over but saved him as much as possible. He was fine."

At the press conference.....

"Could have been worse but it could have been better," Smedshammer commented on post position 7 for the final, "At least it doesn't look like we're going to have to go first over this Saturday."

"Well, obviously depends on – you actually are a victim of how the race goes," Smedshammer stated on his horse being a closer, "I don't know if I'm going to find out this Saturday or not. I had the feelings all along that this horse needs to be raced this way. That's why I (did) that. He's done well this way. I think we probably (are) going to stay with that routine for now."

"We had a lot of rain in July here. Kind of held us back from training and prepping them on the straight track like I usually do," Smedshammer remarked on the horses' training regime, "Between the Dancer and Hambletonian elimination, I was not able to train him even one time down there. Hopefully tomorrow we'll have good weather."

"I don't know if it's the most competitive I've seen," Smedshammer continued, "It definitely looks like on paper the best one we've had in a the last few years."

In the paddock.....

"He seems good. He warmed up good, nice and fresh. Everything (is) good. Gotta good shot, (we) need racing luck. Not the best horse (but) one of the best ones. You can't predict. He feels good, got a good shot. We need racing luck," Smedshammer said just after warming up Windsong's Legacys' for his first trip.

"Nice horse to work with, always behaving. He's good today. He [Windsong's Legacy] don't know what's happening," said Groom Emma Johansson.



Post Position 8: American Mike AMERICAN WINNER-SWEET MICHELLE-MAC BRETON

Foaled January 28, 2001 in Worthington, Pennsylvania

Owned by Robert J. Key

Trained by Charlie Norris

Driven By Brian Sears



After the eliminations.....

"I like being the underdog in a race," said Trainer Charlie Norris, "You can play strategy in the books but until that gate parts you don't know what's going to happen. I definitely have a better shot to win this year than I did last year with Mac's Crown K. These are all good horses but every one of them has a flaw. This year my odds are better. I have two horses in; two is always better than one. He was good early this year but all my horses got sick in Canada in June. His blood work is good but it has been a battle trying to get him right. I'm not sure yet what I'm going to do about drivers for my colts in the final."

"He's all right, there's just something hindering him," continued Norris, "I don't think that he's a superstar but I know that he can race better than he did Saturday night."

At the press conference.....

"My whole barn got sick last week," Norris stated after drawing the 8 hole, "He's kind of bouncing back from that. He seems really sound. I'm hoping he can be a little bit stronger. We're trying."

"It's not Saturday yet," Norris continued on the possibility of equipment changes after going with a blind bridle in the elimination, "When the equipment guy comes around, I'll decide then. But, yeah, I mean, he's been really aggressive before. But it's kind of going the other way, plus he's in better competition. He's got to go on top of his game."

In the paddock.....

"The outside post. He's OK, no quirks on him. He's definitely going to have to be 3rd or 4th over in the lane. (We need) enough early speed. Brian (Sears) is having a good meet; they know the track better than us," said Norris.

"He's feeling real good. He's always ornery (but) he's relaxed now; a bit anxious walking up. I hope we win for America. We want to win," said Groom Carrie Norris.

Post Position 9: Lantern's Law PINE CHIP-ARMBRO LANTERN-DREAM OF GLORY

Foaled March 7, 2001 in Sunbury, Ohio
Owned by Arlene L. Siegel, Jules J. Siegel
Trained by Jim Campbell
Driven By Trevor Ritchie



After the eliminations.....

"He raced very well," said Driver Trevor Ritchie, "The trip went okay. He got away third. He was real comfortable. I just moved him over; he got out there ahead of them. For a moment there I thought we were getting our picture taken."

"I was real happy with him," Trainer Jim Campbell said after the elimination, "We just wanted a chance to get into next week. Trevor got along with his horse real well and we just hope we draw decent in the finals. He was out third on the list of Hambletonian possibles behind Show Me The Monet and Great Challenger but this horse rose to the occasion rather than the other two."

"He warmed up as straight as I'd ever seen him and got a chance to race how he likes to race," added Campbell, "Trevor (Ritchie) got along with him great."

At the press conference.....

"He raced against a few of the colts down in Lexington last fall. He's kind of a big colt that last year he had a little hard time coming around to himself," Campbell said after drawing the 9 hole, "But he's starting to come around right now. We're obviously very happy with the race he ran last week. He ran a good race in a cheaper overnight the week before that, as well."

"You can't control the post position," Campbell continued on the draw, "I'd much rather have a nine hole than not be here at all. It's not where you start; it's where you finish."

On prepping horses at The Meadowlands before the big race, Campbell stated, "It's just my belief that if you're getting a trotter ready for a race like The Hambletonian, you might keep him right here on the mile track. It just eliminates a lot of bad stuff that can happen on a smaller track, horses getting jammed up. Same with the pace. If I ever have a pacer I think has a good shot for The Meadowlands Pace, he'll make all his starts at The Meadowlands before the race."

In the paddock.....

"We got the same shot as anyone else. There's ten possible (horses) to win it. These horses have to go such demanding speeds. Thoroughbreds have two to three weeks or a month break. Standardbreds are less durable now; they're more fragile than even five years ago. It's hard to say. We're a long shot. (We need) to make our own trip," said Campbell.

"He feels good. Really happy to be here," said Groom Christa Lied, originally from Germany; she previously had worked 15 years for the worlds' winningest harness Driver Heinz Wewering.



Post Position 10: Coventry MR LAVEC-LADY LEESUN-CROWNING POINT

Foaled February 14, 2001 in Wallkill, NY
Owned by Douglas J. Ackerman, Ada Jean Ackerman
Trained by Douglas J. Ackerman
Driven by Douglas R. Ackerman



After the eliminations.....

"The race was good but not spectacular," said Trainer and Co-Owner Doug Ackerman, "At least he still had a little bit of trot left in the end. He'll be better next week, he better be. He's about as good as [we] can get him right now. So we'll just have to look forward to next week."

"He might be a cut below some of these, but he was good," said Driver Doug R. "DR" Ackerman, "He was steady and he finished good. What he lacks in talent he makes up by trying hard every week. He's an extremely consistent horse and gives you everything he has."

"We raced his dam, his dam's sire and his grand dam," continued DR Ackerman, "Coventry is Lady Leesun's eighth foal and fourth to top \$100,000 in earnings."

"He always finishes well and he stayed with the good ones," added DR Ackerman, "He can't leave all that much. We need a good post for the final and need them to mix it up pretty good on the front end."

At the press conference.....

"I thought he had a little chance, but he's a little far out there right now," Trainer Doug Ackerman stated on his chances for his 1st Hambletonian victory, from the dreaded 10 hole, "There's a lot of horses that won from the 10th position, you shouldn't be here anyway."

"Yeah, very nice horse," Doug Ackerman added on Coventry, "Maybe not quite the tops, but not bad."

In the paddock.....

"We got to have a lot of luck and fast clips up front. We might have a chance. That's the way it is when you draw the ten hole. We just got a chance. Good horses, good drivers; we didn't drive in here in a load of pumpkins." said Doug Ackerman.

"He feels good; he don't know the number," said Groom Jose Rangel.





SPECIAL EDITION

2004 Hambletonian – The Meadowlands Orphaned Horse Wins For Driver/Trainer



The Meadowlands, East Rutherford, New Jersey...
Site of the 79th Edition of The Hambletonian,
an international masterpiece.

The Hambletonian, the 'jewel' for standardbred trotters. Horses competed in two eliminations the week before to vie for a piece of history in the trotting of the 79th Edition of "The Hambo".



They're off... The start of the 2004 Hambletonian.

WINDSONGS LEGACY followed live cover second over through the final turn, tipped three-wide and got the jump on this field, and held safe as a solid winner. CANTAB HALL protected the rail, followed the favorite in the two-hole behind pedestrian fractions for this class, and was all over the track looking for room, finally getting clear four-wide and could not get up. CASH HALL was left first over when his cover broke stride, challenged through easy fractions, finally reeled in the leader only to be caught from behind. COVENTRY followed the winner third over, and only trotted evenly off that cover. JUSTICE HALL was fourth in along the rail, managed to slide out in the stretch, and had no shot from well back off these fractions. AMERICAN MIKE was fourth over behind excess cover, and was never really in it. CASTLE OF FORTUNE was third in along the cones, and made no moves. TOM RIDGE reached the front easily, tossed off easy fractions, and spit out the bit when challenged as a disappointing favorite. LANTERN'S LAW floated out looking for a tuck that never materialized was driving for the lead first-over when he broke on the backstretch. EILEAN DONON broke stride before the start. (Recap Courtesy of www.hambletonian.org)



Down the stretch... Driver/Trainer Trond Smedshammer 'let's his voice be heard' to Windsong's Legacy in the drive for the wire.
(Photo Courtesy of www.ustrotting.com)



The perfect drive... Smedshammer puts the finishing touches on the stretch drive of Windsong's Legacy in their 2004 Hambletonian victory.
(Photo Courtesy of www.ustrotting.com)



View from the infield... The reverse angle from the infield at The Meadowlands Racetrack in the stretch run of Driver/Trainer Trond Smedshammer and Windsong's Legacy.

CONWAY HALL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS
(Photo Courtesy of www.ustrotting.com)



Excitement turns to Tears... Emotions were running high for the connections of Windsong's Legacy. Owned by Ann Jeanette Brannvoll of Suedsmo, Norway, Theodore Gewertz of New York, New York and Patricia M. Spinelli of Oyster Bay Cove, New York, the scene turned from cheers of joy to tears of the excitement and climax of the victory.



International Exposure... Driver/Trainer Trond Smedshammer, originally from Norway, answered questions for international media from all over Europe, more specifically from Scandinavian countries.



The chill of victory... Smedshammer enjoys the limelight and soaks in the thoughts of his hard work and perseverance, which put him in the winners' circle with the colt he both trained and drove to victory.

2004 Hambletonian (79th Edition)



The Meadowlands – East Rutherford, New Jersey



**Driver/Trainer
Trond Smedshammer
both trained and piloted
Windsong's Legacy
to victory.**



(Photo Courtesy of www.ustrotting.com)

Saturday, August 7, 2004

PURSE \$1,000,000

TRACK CONDITION - Fast

HORSE	PP	Finish	TIME	LAST Q
Windsong's Legacy	7	1-1	1:54.1	27.1
Cantab Hall	1	2-1	1:54.2	27.3
Cash Hall	5	3-3 1/4	1:55	28.2
Coventry	10	4-6 1/2	1:55.2	28.0
Justice Hall	4	5-8 1/4	1:55.4	28.1
American Mike	8	6-8 1/2	1:56	28.2
Castle of Fortune	2	7-13 1/4	1:57	29.3
Tom Ridge	6	8-18 1/4	1:57.4	31.1
Lantern's Law	9	9-23	1:58.4	30.0
Eilean Donon	3	10-32 1/4	2:00.3	...

Time – 28.2; 57.2; 1:26.3; 1:54.1m



Windsong's Legacy... Groom Emma Johansson and the winners' circle attendant take Windsong's Legacy on his victory lap at The Meadowlands racetrack.

CONWAY HALL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS

WINDSONG'S LEGACY
The Legend Lives On



(Photo Courtesy of www.hambletonian.org)



The Hambletonian Cup, THE coveted trophy.

The connections of Windsong's Legacy...



Tom Chambers (/) of **The Hambletonian Society** and the connections of Windsong's Legacy after the presentation of the cherished Hambletonian trophy awarded each year to the winner of this prestigious race for trotters worldwide.

(Photo Courtesy of www.ustrotting.com)

"It's a joyous occasion for all the connections. Ann (Brannvoll) is the major owner. Ron Spinelli and I were equal partners originally," stated Co-Owner Ted Gewertz, "We sold a large portion of the horse earlier in the year. Ron, unfortunately, did not live to see today. He died last Saturday night [August 1, 2004], so (his wife) Pat Spinelli had a poignant moment. Trond's dad also died of lung cancer last year and it's only fitting that we made a contribution of part of the purse money."



\$25,000 to the American Cancer Society... Tom Chambers of The Hambletonian Society, Peter Porcelli of the American Cancer Society, Driver/Trainer Trond Smedshammer and Windsong's Legacy (/ to /) after the presentation of their 5% donation from the 2004 Hambletonian.

(Photo courtesy of www.thebigm.com)

2004 Hambletonian



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW – Trond Smedshammer

Thoughts from Trond Smedshammer on his victory in the 2004 Hambletonian with the horse he both trained and drove to victory on August 7, 2004.....

THE BEGINNING

I saw him [Windsong's Legacy] at the Hanover sale, he caught my eye then. He was a Conway (Hall) colt; he was very reasonable to buy. The colts were really high that year, they sold through the roof. I don't think anyone knew he was an orphan. His maternal lines from his mother were old. It wasn't exactly what the top buyers (at the sale) were looking for; he was overlooked. I bought him myself.



An eye for a future champion?... The yearling Windsong's Legacy stands in the ring for the bidding at the 2002 Hanover Sale where Trond Smedshammer had chosen and purchased the colt himself.

(Photo Courtesy of Dr. Paul E. 'Pete' Spears)

BRINGING HOME THE NEW YEARLING

I broke him right away (after the sale). We started him late and he showed a little bit of ability. My second trainer drove him the first couple of times. He said the horse had some go. He was just on the lines; we couldn't get him off of the lines. I drove him in the Grand Circuit (at The Red Mile in

Lexington, Kentucky) in 1:57.2m. We couldn't steer the horse. He had five starts and made \$30,000 (as a two-year-old) then we turned him out.

As a three-year-old he didn't change that much. He got stronger. He was a small horse as a two-year-old and was a medium-sized horse as a three-year-old.

He's kind of a lazy horse who doesn't pay attention when training. He was sold in May 2004 before he qualified. He was better than I anticipated and he showed me he was good. He's getting better every start. We went to The Meadowlands and went right to Canada.

DURING THE RACE

The only time I was worried was when John (Campbell) put the pedal down just before the half. I was never tempted to pull before three-quarters. I was just waiting until we straightened out (down the stretch).



The stretch of The Meadowlands racetrack.

POST RACE COMMENTS

This is the biggest win of my career. You can't beat this. It means everything to win this race. It hasn't sunk in yet. It feels good now, but I am sure it will feel even better tomorrow. Going into the race, I was actually considering going around Cash Hall. When (Eilean Donon) made a break on the inside and (Lantern's Law) left from the outside, I decided just to stay behind John (Campbell). The only time I was worried was when John put the pedal down just before the half before I knew what Ronnie (Pierce) was going to do.

I was never tempted to pull before he came off the three-quarters. I knew this horse was going to give me a good run. I was just waiting until it straightened out. I did pop the earplugs. You don't

take a chance in a race like this, but it turned out to be pretty easy.

THE FUTURE OF WINDSONG'S LEGACY?

Nothing has been decided as of yet. He's going to be more valuable as a stallion than a racehorse. Everything is up in the air.



(Photo Courtesy of www.ustrotting.com)

Windsong's Legacy

CONWAY HALL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS

Foaled April 20, 2001 in Hanover, Pennsylvania

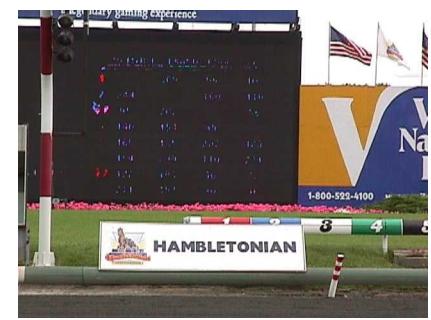
Owned by Ann Jeanette Brannvoll,

Theodore Gewertz

and Patricia M. Spinelli

Trained by Trond Smedshammer

Driven By Trond Smedshammer



THE FINISH LINE AND TOTE BOARD AT THE MEADOWLANDS RACETRACK.

The Horseman's Voice

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW – DR. PAUL F. SPEARS

Windsong's Legacy – The Legend

The People and Events Behind The Dream



The 'connections'... Dr. Paul F. Spears and Trond Smedshammer

The breeder and original buyer turned driver/trainer of Windsong's Legacy pictured after the horse won the 2nd leg of the Trotting Triple Crown, The Yonkers Trot at Hawthorne Racecourse on August 28, 2004. The final leg, the Kentucky Futurity is at The Red Mile on Oct 9.

The original first-hand account and story as seen from the eyes of the original breeder of Windsong's Legacy PRAKAS-YANKEE SCOTTIE-HICKORY PRIDE.

Yankee Windsong was my first broodmare, purchased at Harrisburg in 1996. By then, I was well established in my medical practice of Gastroenterology, and I wanted to start an active role in the Standardbred horse business. I had grown up in the Hanover Shoe Farms family, and I wanted to begin as a small breeder and owner of a few racehorses.

As the universe of knowledge in harness racing is large, I wanted to concentrate on trotters. I made a list of desirable broodmares I could afford in the \$20-30,000 range from the 1996 Standardbred Horse Sales Black Book catalog. I chose Yankee Windsong PRAKAS-YANKEE SCOTTIE-HICKORY PRIDE for multiple reasons. Yankee Windsong came from a dense 'black type' family, which was accessible from a cost standpoint because her family was an older one. She was by Prakas SPEEDY CROWN-PRUDY HANOVER-STAR'S PRIDE, in the Speedy Crown line.

Although not a generally successful sire, Prakas has turned out to be a fine broodmare sire. She was in foal to Super Bowl, which I thought was a great plus.

I purchased Yankee Windsong for \$23,000. My brother-in-law was assigned to do the bidding, and took the mare to \$20,000. Someone else bid \$21,000, and he signaled that he was out. I quickly stepped up and bid \$23,000, and she was knocked down to me. So I almost lost her that day!



Let The Dream Begin... Yankee Windsong, the dam of Windsong's Legacy, pictured here at Hanover Show Farms in Hanover, Pennsylvania, just after her purchase at the Harrisburg sale in November 1996. At that time she was in foal to Super Bowl with Moonlight G SUPER BOWL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS.

(Photo Courtesy of www.windsongstable.com)

We shipped Yankee Windsong home to be boarded at Hanover. Her picture is from her very first days there. Her first pregnancy went uneventfully, and she foaled a very good-looking Super Bowl colt that we named Moonlight G SUPER BOWL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS. Moonlight G was named after the character 'Moonlight Graham' in the movie *Field of Dreams*.



Hey brother... ½ brother to Windsong's Legacy, Moonlight G SUPER BOWL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS, shown in a confirmation shot outside White Birch Farm [Team Nordin stables] of Allentown, New Jersey. Moonlight G appears to be 'handsome' but light-bodied in comparison to his ½ brother Windsong's Legacy as he was gelded as a two-year-old. (Photo Courtesy of www.windsongstable.com)

We kept him to race. 'Moonie' is wonderfully conformed horse with tons of speed, but has a nervous temperament that has kept him from realizing his potential. He had his moment of glory in the \$100,000 Connors Final at Hazel Park when he set a blistering pace that cooked Plesac ARMBRO CHARGER-ASTUTE YANKEE-SPEED BOWL and Brumal Hanover AMERICAN WINNER-BRITTANY'S DREAM-WORKAHOLIC. He has made close to 150 starts, and has never taken a lame step in his life. He's seven now, and still racing at Yonkers, with a lifetime mark of 1:58.2f; 1:59h and earnings over \$140,000.

Yankee Windsong's second foal was a colt we named Can't Forget You SUPER BOWL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS. His name (and the original name of her next foal) came from the jingle for Windsong perfume: 'I can't seem to forget you, your Windsong stays on my mind.' He probably had even more speed than Moonie. Mark O'Mara bought him, and the horse had a terrible habit of breaking at the gate. Although Mark finally gave up on him, Can't Forget You was Stakes Placed, timed in 1:57+, and won over \$40,000.

Disaster struck soon after the birth of Can't Forget You. Yankee Windsong developed symptoms of progressive colic, and was rushed to a veterinary hospital in Northern Maryland where she underwent surgery by Dr. Jim Juzwiak. Dr. Juzwiak performed an incredibly heroic operation. He found that the foal had kicked out during birth, and tore a hole in Yankee Windsong's diaphragm. Her small intestine herniated through this tear up into her chest. Dr. Juzwiak practically had to climb into the abdominal incision to pull her small intestine back into her abdomen, and then sewed the gaping and ragged hole in her diaphragm. Dr. Juzwiak was not optimistic that she would live, but somehow Yankee Windsong made a truly miraculous recovery. Her injury and subsequent survival were so unusual that Dr. Juzwiak wrote a case report to be published in a veterinary journal. I was so relieved that she had lived, and visited her very frequently during her recovery when she returned to Hanover.

After her initial recovery, I faced a very difficult dilemma – should I ever try to breed her again?

Dr. Juzwiak thought that she should be able to breed just fine, as there had been no injury to her uterus or bowel. He said that if she were his horse, he would try it. I truly did not want to hurt her, and yet I really

thought she could produce a great horse with the right stallion. I decided to give her the year off to recover, and would breed her the next year.

Yankee Windsong was bred in 1999 to Balanced Image NOBLE GESTURE-WELL MOLDED-SPEEDSTER. To my relief, the birth of this third colt went like clockwork with no problems for either the foal or mare. That foal was named You're On My Mind BALANCED IMAGE-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS, and was sold as a yearling to Ed Lohmeyer and his wife, Dr. Patti Hogan [the vet who saved Smarty Jones, the 2004 Kentucky Derby winner, and performed hernia surgery on Eilean Donon, who raced in the 2004 Hambletonian]. His name was changed to Pacific Cheers. Ed never really got him going. The colt has won in 2:04.3h, but never distinguished himself at the track. This colt was a little short coupled, and Patti told me that he wasn't too smart. He was recently sold at the Blooded Horse sale in Ohio, so he's still out there somewhere.

My family bought a share in Conway Hall GARLAND LOBELL-AMOUR ANGUS-MAGNA FORCE when he was originally syndicated by Walnut Hall Ltd. I was in Lexington for the races at the Red Mile in the fall of 1999, and visited Walnut Hall to look at Conway Hall as an individual. I liked the fact that he was medium-bodied, and very well muscled. Most importantly, Conway Hall seemed to be a very intelligent and personable horse. By the end of the visit, I decided to breed Yankee Windsong to him in 2000. I thought the mating might produce a similar body type to Yankee Windsong's Super Bowl colts, but with more muscle and a better temperament. A really top yearling might come from that cross!

Yankee Windsong's pregnancy and foaling of a handsome Conway Hall colt in 2001 went just fine. All was well in that little world for a while. However, about two months later she developed another episode of colic. This time she was shipped with her foal to the University of Pennsylvania for surgery. I was called from the operating room. The surgeons did not find any major abnormalities that could be repaired. They thought that adhesions up near her diaphragm might have caused her problems, but felt more of a surgical exploration would be too dangerous. They recommended antibiotics, and hoped for the best.

Yankee Windsong initially seemed to recover, and was shipped back home to Hanover with her colt. I

visited her several times after her surgery. She seemed weak, but in good spirits. I thought that she might recover, and promised her that I would never breed her again after all she had suffered. Tragically, she soon re-colicked badly enough that we humanely euthanised her.

She left an orphan colt that was two months old. Because of its size, Hanover must raise a few orphan foals every year. Dennis King, who has worked with foals for over 30 years and has to be the very best in the business, takes great personal interest in orphan foals. He feeds them by hand from a bucket, or bottle or syringe feeds the newborns as necessary. Dennis spends time socializing the foals, and helps them to become companions for each other. A special paddock outside the Hanover foaling barns is used to keep the orphans together.

The Conway Hall colt seemed to grow normally, and was a happy and not overly nervous foal. He was eventually placed in a field with other weanlings, and seemed to fit in with the herd. As you know, there has been prejudice against orphan foals. Conventional wisdom says orphans don't grow up to be good racehorses, because mares teach foals things that orphans never learn. At least as a yearling, he did not seem in my mind to be behind other yearlings in his overall development.



A future champion... Windsong's Legacy as he's being 'prepped' behind the auction ring at the Harrisburg sale in 2002. The horse was sold for \$27,000 to a group headed by Trond Smedshammer.
(Photo Courtesy of www.windsongstable.com)

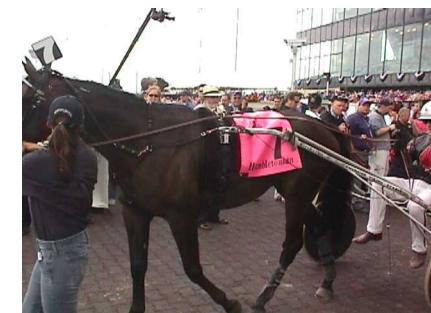
His name was chosen for obvious reasons. None of Yankee Windsong's other colts could expect to be breeding stallions. She never had a filly, so whatever good could go forward from her life would have to come from this colt. He would have to be her legacy. That's why I named him Windsong's Legacy CONWAY HALL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS.

COMPARING CONFIRMATION.....

Here's an interesting look at two of the foals out of Yankee Windsong, dam of the 2004 Hambletonian and 2004 Yonkers Trot champion Windsong's Legacy.



Compare and contrast... ½ brother Moonlight G as he's hooked to a jog cart outside the Jim Doherty stable at The Meadowlands racetrack.
SUPER BOWL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS
(Photo Courtesy of www.windsongstable.com)



Contrast and compare... Windsong's Legacy as he heads out to the track for the 2004 Hambletonian.
CONWAY HALL-YANKEE WINDSONG-PRAKAS