

PP 1 Gaines Hanover (Cantab Hall-Gatka Hanover-Muscle Massive)

Once moving to trainer Richard Moreau's barn after three qualifiers, Gaines Hanover had one second-place finish in a preliminary of the Millard Farms Series before trying Grand Circuit company in the William Wellwood Memorial. He qualified for the final off a third-place finish in the elimination, but broke stride in the final and finished ninth. Less than a month later, he scored his first Grand Circuit victory in a \$95,352 Champlain division (beating **WINNERS BET**) and tightened for the Breeders Crown with a fifth-place finish in an overnight race on Oct. 7. He easily took his Breeders Crown elimination going coast to coast in 1:53 as the 5-2 second choice.

Richard Moreau sends his first starter in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot after five tries in other Breeders Crown events, all for older pacers. He also tries for his first Breeders Crown trophy along with driver Louis-Philippe Roy, who has had seven previous Breeders Crown final appearances.

Owner Gestion J Y Blais Inc. makes its first Breeders Crown final appearance after its lone starter, The Boss Said, failed to make the 2-Year-Old Colt Pace Final in 2021.

This gelding was bred by Hanover Shoe Farms, the all-time Breeders Crown leader by earnings but one trophy shy of winningest breeder Brittany Farms.

In the 38 editions of the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot, only two were won by geldings: Armbro Officer in 1995 and Pinkman in 2014.

Trainer Richard Moreau:

I was surprised. I never expected a performance like this. I like the horse, don't get me wrong, but it's getting late in the season and there are bigger, stronger horses. He is kind of medium sized. But he for sure did what he had to do, and he made my day. I'm happy for those (owners) in Montreal because they've always been in the business, they own their own farm, and every year they have a young horse coming up. They deserve this.

One quality I like about him is that he's safe, especially with a young trotter. With this one, staying safe is not an issue, not a problem.

Driver Louis Roy:

On the elim: It wasn't really the plan, leaving. But I had (Winner's Bet) on the outside and I felt that if I didn't keep going, he was going to make the front and I was going to have to sit the four hole and come first up against him. I thought he was the one to beat.

PP 2 The Gruffalo (Chapter Seven-Clementine Dream-Infinity)

Racing primarily in New York for the early part of his career, The Gruffalo racked up three wins in his first five starts before leaving the state – two in New York Sires Stakes prelims and one in a \$78,700 stake at Yonkers Raceway. He disappointed with a sixth-place finish in his Kindergarten Classic prelim on Sept. 1 but rebounded with a 6-1 mild upset in the \$200,000 New York Sires Stakes Final at Tioga Downs and an easy win in a \$31,650 Reynolds Memorial division on Sept. 23. Sitting a pocket trip to **GAINES HANOVER** in his elimination, The Gruffalo finished second at odds of 10-1.

He is only the third starter in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot for veteran trainer Mark Harder, who last appeared in the final in 2007 with Yankee Matthew (finishing 10th).

In 33 Breeders Crown Final appearances, Harder has only won once – aptly in 31-1 stunning fashion when Lily Stride upended world champions Atlanta and Plunge Blue Chip in the 2018 3-Year-Old Filly Trot.

Driver Todd McCarthy still tries for his first Breeders Crown win in now his second full season driving in the U.S. and is 0 for 7 in his finals appearances.

Mark Harder co-owns this colt with Racing Team Of America, Deena Frost (a co-owner on Crown champs and greats Continentalvictory and Art Major) and Emma Pettersson (Harder's significant other and the caretaker of **THE GRUFFALO**, as well as the caretaker of Crown champ Cantab Hall and Hambletonian winner Self Possessed.

Bred by Concord Stud Farm, which has bred one Breeders Crown winner from eight finalists – Kissin In The Sand, winner of the 2020 Open Mare Pace. Concord Stud Farm also bred **OH WELL**.

The Gruffalo is one of the world's best-loved monsters in a series of British children's books.

Trainer Mark Harder:

I'm very happy. I was a little concerned because he really hadn't had a good mile since the New York (Sire Stakes) final; it's the first real head out he's had in quite a few weeks. I think that will do him a world of good.

On his season: He really doesn't like the half-mile tracks, but we chose not to go to Lexington, so that was the hand we dealt ourselves. It looks like we might have done the right thing. We'll see. We thought we did the right thing not starting him up too early. We kind of spaced some races there early on. It worked out; we won the New York final, which was one of the main goals. If he showed himself to be good enough, we would give him a shot at this. My one little trotting colt against all the (bigger stables). It's OK

PP 3 Kierkegaard K (Chapter Seven-Gone Baby Gone S-Muscle Hill)

This 18-1 shot in his elimination qualified for the final with a third-place finish behind **CELEBRITY BAMBINO** to notch his sixth on-the-board finish from eight starts. However, the colt only has one win to his record, which came in a \$53,500 New York Sires Stake preliminary at Monticello Raceway on Aug. 1.

Trainer Ake Svanstedt ended a 36-starter drought in Breeders Crown finals last year when winning his first trophy with Felicityshagwell S (the lone Breeders Crown win for owner Knutsson Trotting Inc.) in the Mare Trot and later securing his second with a victory in the Open Trot with Ecurie D DK.

Now from 44 starters in Breeders Crown finals, Svanstedt tries for his third trophy both as a trainer and a driver.

A homebred for Knutsson Trotting Inc., which makes its first Breeders Crown appearance with a horse it bred. As owner, Knutsson Trotting has one trophy from six finals appearances.

Trainer Ake Swanstedt:

He is doing better and better. He had a good race to make the final.

PP 4 Celebrity Bambino (Muscle Hill-Celebrity Ruth-Archangel)

From the mare Celebrity Ruth, who finished ninth in the 2018 Breeders Crown Mare Trot Final at Pocono Downs after breaking stride to the final turn. Celebrity Bambino had a quiet start to his campaign with a win in a New Jersey Sires Stakes prelim before finishing fourth-placed-third in the \$240,000 New Jersey Sires Stakes Final on July 22. He then scratched sick from the Peter Haughton Memorial Final and racked three starts before his Breeders Crown elimination, which included a second-place dead heat in the \$275,000 New Jersey Classic "A" division. In his Breeders Crown elimination, Celebrity Bambino overcame post 9 to win by 2-3/4 lengths in 1:53.2 at odds of 7-1.

He will try to give trainer Ron Burke his second win in this event, having won the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot in 2015 with Southwind Frank. In the series, Ron Burke sits second all-time with 18 Breeders Crown trophies, trailing Jimmy Takter's 34 trophies.

Driver Yannick Gingras tries for his fourth win in this event to tie John Campbell for most wins in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot. Gingras is the only driver to win this event three years in a row – in 2013 with Father Patrick, in 2014 with Pinkman and in 2015 with Southwind Frank.

Celebrity Bambino competes for owners Burke Racing Stable LLC, J&T Silva Stables LLC, Knox Services Inc. and Phillip Collura; collectively, those owners have 22 Breeders Crown trophies to their name (Burke Racing with 13, J&T Silva Stables with 5 and Phillip Collura with 4. Knox Services Inc. does not have a Breeders Crown win).

Bred by White Birch Farm, which has seven Breeders Crown trophies to its operation – its most recent coming in 2020 with Peaky Sneaky in the 3-Year-Old Filly Pace. White Birch Farm has not won in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot.

Driver Yannick Gingras:

I had to get him in the race somehow. Leaving the gate, I wasn't sure if I was going to get away mid-pack or make the front. We weren't going that fast and people were juggling for position, and I figured the front was the place to go. I didn't expect (International Man) to come, I thought maybe (Oh Well) would, but either way, I was happy with the two hole.

He's such a nice horse. He was my favorite baby training down. I absolutely loved him. I thought he had the potential to do this, and a whole lot more. I thought he was a top, top horse. He got sick there, and Ronnie (Burke) did the right thing. All credit goes to Ronnie, he gave him the time he needed, and the horse is back.

Trainer Ron Burke: It's what we've expected all along from him. We've had big hopes. He was great starting out and then he got sick and couldn't get over it. It was a lot of patience for me to skip a lot of races I didn't want to skip, but it was all to prep him for this week and the Valley Victory. I think he's the real deal. I've thought it all along training down.

He's ready. Next week I'd be very surprised if he throws in a bad performance.

PP 5 Kilmister (Chapter Seven-Treviso-Muscle Massive)

Kilmister will try and become just the seventh horse to complete the Peter Haughton Memorial-Breeders Crown Double. Others who have accomplished that feat are Express Ride (1985), Giant Chill (1992), Wesgate Crown (1993), Donato Hanover (2006), Muscle Hill (2008), Father Patrick (2013) and Southwind Frank (2015). Winning the Peter Haughton Memorial granted him a guaranteed spot in the Breeders Crown final. He has won four other races outside of his Peter Haughton victory, two coming in New York Sires Stakes preliminaries, one coming in his Peter Haughton elimination and one coming in a Kentucky Championship prelim on Aug. 21.

He is the seventh starter in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot for trainer Marcus Melander, who won in this division in 2018 with Gimpanzee and altogether has four Breeders Crown trophies. Melander also trains finalist **OH WELL**.

Gimpanzee also was Brian Sears's last win in this event, but Sears holds one other win in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot with Muscle Hill (2008).

He competes for owner Courant Inc., which has four Breeders Crown trophies and co-owned 2018 winner Gimpanzee.

Bred by Moni Market Breeders, which has one Breeders Crown trophy from 10 starts; the late Snow White in the 2007 2-Year-Old Filly Trot.

Trainer Marcus Melander:

He's good. He made a break in Kentucky the one week he raced. The gate goes very slow sometimes at the Red Mile and he just got very excited. He had been there for almost two months, so it was good for him to get home (in New Jersey). He's a lot more relaxed at home.

He's feeling good. I'm not going to qualify him or anything, we're just going to go straight to the final. He feels sharp enough. (Post five) is perfect. It couldn't have been better. I didn't really want one or two with him because he can be a little excited behind the gate. The five hole is perfect.

PP 6 Spitfire Oversees (International Moni-Legal Lady-Deweycheatumnhowe)

He holds just two wins, both coming against overnight competition. He collected checks in every Pennsylvania Sires Stakes appearance except the \$252,000 Pennsylvania Sires Stakes Final, where he finished sixth. He also was second in a \$20,000 division of the Arden Downs on July 29. He just qualified for the Breeders Crown final with a fifth-place finish behind **GAINES HANOVER**

First starter for trainer Dominic Gladu and the second Breeders Crown finalist for TheStable partnership, which started Lawmaker in the 2018 3-Year-Old Colt Trot. Racing for Thestable Spitfireoversees.

This colt was bred by Caroline Gerry and is her first Breeders Crown starter.

Driver James MacDonald, the 2021 O'Brien Driver of the Year and Woodbine Mohawk Park's reigning leading driver, tries for his first Breeders Crown trophy after nine previous appearances. James MacDonald makes his debut in this event.

TheStable.ca Owner Anthony MacDonald: He's sharp right now. His first start, he looked very promising. Allergies bothered him quite a bit through the summer and it plagued him. We did add Lasix to his program. We trained him up, and he trained very good, and then he just looked so explosive off of five weeks in his last start (winning Oct. 10). I think if James (MacDonald) puts him in play next week, and we get a trip, who knows. I don't think he's going to be embarrassed. I would be foolish and naïve to say he's a winner next week, but it's the Breeders Crown, and they do sometimes not go the way they're supposed to.

He's strong. He's a powerful colt and he likes his work. The best attributes of any horse are that they want to do their work, they want to beat other horses, and they have talent. This colt checks all three boxes. He's going to be a longshot, but make no mistake, if he's in a position to win and gets an opportunity, he'll walk through that door.

On The Stable.ca: It's been a good year. We have almost 1,000 clients in 13 countries. And every single one of them was cheering for our horses today. If nothing else, even if people in the sport may not understand it yet, (Spitfire Oversees) finishing fifth was a big deal for horse racing.

PP 7 Osceola (Muscle Mass-Armbro Exquisite-Conway Hall)

All three of this colt's wins have come in Ontario Sires Stakes Gold preliminaries. But in all but one stakes appearance, he has broke stride and finished off the board. His lone Grand Circuit check came with a fourth-place finish to **GAINES HANOVER** in a \$95,352 Champlain Stakes division at Woodbine Mohawk Park. Winning in his first start on Lasix on Oct. 10, he followed that effort with a third-place finish in his Breeders Crown elimination (to **GAINES HANOVER**).

Trainer Gregg McNair has started 28 horses in Breeders Crown events but has YET to win a trophy despite banking over \$600,00 in purse money.

Osceola is his third starter in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot and his first appearance in the event since Muscles For Life finished seventh in the 2015 Final. His closest Breeders Crown trophy came in 2000 with a second-place finish by George Scooter in the 3-Year-Old Colt Pace.

Gregg's son, driver Doug McNair, tries for his second Breeders Crown trophy from 27 starters. He won his first in 2017 with Stay Hungry in the 2-Year-Old Colt Pace.

Osceola is owned by Gregg McNair, breeder Willow Oak Ranch and Paul Hawman, all of whom try for their first trophy with only Gregg McNair having owned previous Breeders Crown finalists (three to be exact). This is first starter for breeder Willow Oak Ranch.

Trainer Gregg McNair:

He raced good. It didn't surprise me that he got in the final. He's run over a lot of money all summer. He jumped it off at the head of the stretch (in the Ontario Sire Stakes final). He's wearing hobbles now. I started the year without any, but he's still made mistakes with the hobbles on. They're probably a little longer than they were (in his previous race) and I put aluminum shoes on in front. It seemed to help him this week. He raced big.

You really grit your teeth when you race him. One of the partners on him said last week (about the Ontario Sire Stakes final) that he had the deposit slip all made out and had to tear it up. It wouldn't shock me if he wins (the Breeders Crown final) and it wouldn't shock me if he made a break and finished last.

PP 8 Winners Bet (Walner-Side Bet Hanover-Donato Hanover)

Taking the \$512,050 William Wellwood Memorial, Winners Bet will attempt to join a five-horse club (since the Wellwood / Campbellville Trot moved to an elimination-final format in 2001) of colts who won both the Wellwood and Breeders Crown in the same year. Most recently, On A Streak in 2020 achieved the double while other winners include Southwind Frank in 2015, Father Patrick in 2013, Wheeling N Dealin in 2012 and Ken Warkentin in 2004. He faced post 9 in his Breeders Crown elimination and finished fourth to **GAINES HANOVER**.

Domenico Cecere, who took over the training operation for the Antonaccis and Lindy Farms of Connecticut, is trying for his first Breeders Crown trophy after having started in four other Breeders Crown finals – including a third-place finish in the 2021 2-Year-Old Colt Trot with Branded By Lindy.

Driver Dexter Dunn has won eight Breeders Crown trophies in his 31 starts including in this event with Amigo Volo in 2019. Lindy Farms Of Connecticut and Robert Rudolph own Winners Bet – Lindy Farms has one Breeders Crown trophy with My Dolly in the 1997 2-Year-Old Filly Trot while Robert Rudolph tries for his first – he came close in 2017 with a second-place finish by Lindy The Great in the 3-Year-Old Colt Trot.

Breeder S R F Stable has only had one prior Breeders Crown finalist with Six Feet Apart in the 2021 2-Year-Old Colt Pace.

Trainer Domenico Cecere: It was good. They went (1):53. He was set up in a good spot and put in a little step going in the last turn, caught a little bit of a knee, but after that he was fine. He came second over and when (Gates Hanover) made the break in front of him, he kind of lost himself and didn't know what to do. But he came back and finished strong. Dexter (Dunn) was very happy with how strong he finished. He's showed this year he has a lot of speed and talent.

PP 9 Oh Well (Muscle Hill-Fine Tuned Lady-Cantab Hall)

The Mohawk Million had its inaugural running in 2020, but since then has not produced a Breeders Crown winner. Venerate, winner in 2020, finished third in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot and Venerable, winner in 2021, failed to make the final of the 2-Year-Old Filly Trot. Oh Well, winner of the 2022 Mohawk Million, will try to become the first to win a Breeders Crown in the same year. He has finished no worse than second in seven starts with four of those being wins. He finished second in his Breeders Crown elimination to **CELEBRITY BAMBINO**, whom he beat in the \$275,000 New Jersey Classic "A" Division on Sept. 16 at The Meadowlands. Oh Well's dam, Fine Tuned Lady, competed in the 2017 Breeders Crown 3-Year-Old Filly Trot, finishing seventh to Ariana G.

He is the eighth starter in the 2-Year-Old Colt Trot for trainer Marcus Melander, who won in this division in 2018 with Gimpanzee and altogether has four Breeders Crown trophies. Melander also trains finalist **KILMISTER**.

Driver Tim Tetrick tries for his second win in this event, having won in 2016 with Walner. Tetrick ranks seventh all-time in Breeders Crown driving victories with 22 trophies. Owned by S R F Stable, which has three Breeders Crown trophies courtesy of Gimpanzee.

Bred by Concord Stud Farm, which has bred one Breeders Crown winner from eight finalists – Kissin In The Sand, winner of the 2020 Open Mare Pace. Concord Stud Farm also bred **THE GRUFFALO**.

Trainer Marcus Melander: He raced super. I'm very happy with him. He had a four-week layoff, so he should improve a lot with that start. He'll improve a lot with this race under his belt. He will be a lot sharper. (Post 9) isn't ideal, but he's a strong horse and I think he can overcome it.

PP 10 Dire Straits (Muscle Hill-Southwind Cocoa-Chocolatier)

His dam Southwind Cocoa finished third in the 2013 Breeders Crown 3-Year-Old Filly Trot to Bee A Magician. Dire Straits has three wins to his nine-start record, one coming in a New Jersey Sires Stakes preliminary and two in Kentucky Championship preliminaries. He finished fourth from well off the speed in his Breeders Crown elimination to **CELEBRITY BAMBINO**.

Trained by Mattias Melander, brother of Marcus Melander. Mattias makes his Breeders Crown debut as a trainer, having driven in two Breeders Crown finals and finishing second with Rome Pays Off in the 2019 2-Year-Old Colt Trot.

Bred and co-owned by Richard Gutnick, who sends his first starter as a breeder. As an owner, Gutnick has four Breeders Crown trophies, and he shares ownership of Dire Straits with Thomas Pontone and Gary Cocco. Pontone owned 2020 2-Year-Old Filly Trot champ Lady Chaos for his only Breeders Crown trophy while Gary Cocco co-owned Chapter Seven, winner of the 2011 3-Year-Old Colt Trot and 2012 Open Trot.

Trainer Mattias Melander: He raced super. After the Kentucky Sire Stakes, I took him home because he wasn't staked down there, and I trained him a little heavier. I qualified him at (Philly), and he needed that for sure, and (in his elimination) he finished awesome. He's very quick. When he gets a good trip, he can close very good. He's a very fast horse, that's what I love about him.