

CELEBRITY BAMBINO

Bay colt, 3 by Muscle Hill – Celebrity Ruth - Archangel



OWNER: Burke Racing Stable, Fredericktown, PA; J&T Silva Stables, Jericho, NY; Knox Services [Carolyn Brechler], Mt. Vernon, OH; Phil Collura, Mountain Top, PA
BREEDER: White Birch Farm, NJ
SALE INFO: \$120,000 Lexington Selected
TRAINER: Ron Burke
DRIVER: Yannick Gingras

YEAR	STARTS	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	EARNINGS	MARK
2023	6	2	0	1	\$99,576	3,1:50.4 M
2022	12	5	3	2	\$311,719	2,1:53.0 M
LIFETIME	18	7	3	3	\$411,295	3,1:50.4 M

- Drew post one in the final.
- Celebrity Bambino took the lead past :27.4 first quarter with French Wine securing the pocket and Up Your Deo in third. Gingras had the 7/2 third choice rolling to the top off a :55.3 half, while Winner's Bet, attempting to overcome post 10, found himself first over, with Tactical Approach tracking second over. Celebrity Bambino continued to rate the pace past three-quarters in 1:23.3. Gingras chirped at the Muscle Hill colt and he held safely in a career best of 1:50.4.
- "I think he's the real deal. I've thought it all along training down," said Ron Burke.
- "He was full of trot and I chirped to him in the middle of the last turn and he went like a good horse," Gingras said after the race. "All through the wire he was trotting strong."
- First win of his three-year-old season came in a Reynolds division at the Meadowlands in 1:51.3 on July 1. He then finished fourth in his Stanley Dancer division after being parked for half the mile.
- "We didn't do as well as we had hoped at the end of the year, but he raced well in the Fall. I expected a lot from this colt all along, and even this year – trip hasn't really worked out; there was always an excuse. But every time he went through the wire he had the bit in his mouth. He's nice."
- As a freshman, he then captured the Garden State Stake at the Meadowlands in 1:55.1, which was followed up with a win in his Valley Victory elimination in 1:53.4. He ended his year with a break in the Valley Victory Final.

- “It’s what we’ve expected all along from him,” Burke said. “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.”
- He captured his Breeders Crown elimination in 1:53.2 and finished second in the final.
- Celebrity Bambino hit the board in ten of twelve starts as a two year old. He began in the NJ Sire Stakes ranks earning a second place finish, a win in 1:53 and a fourth-placed-third in the NJSS Final.
- “Last time I won both eliminations I picked the wrong one,” Gingras said with a smirk after winning the second elimination. Gingras famously had a difficult choice following the first heat of the 2015 Hambletonian where he chose to drive Burke trainee Mission Brief, who finished second to the horse Gingras opted off of in winner Pinkman for trainer Jimmy Takter.
- Regarding his driving choice in the final, Gingras also said, “I don’t need to wait for Tuesday. It’s going to be [Celebrity] Bambino.”
- Yannick Gingras, who was inducted into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame in Goshen, N.Y., on July 3, 2022 holds the record for most driving wins in the Hambletonian Oaks with six.
- He won the 2020 Hambletonian Oaks with Sorella for trainer Nancy Takter. His previous five victories came for Takter’s father, Jimmy, in consecutive years, 2014 through 2018.
- Gingras has finished second in the Hambletonian on three occasions. He was runner-up with Ready For Moni in 2020, Southwind Frank in 2016, and filly Mission Brief in 2015. Southwind Frank’s setback came by a nose to Marion Marauder, who went on to win the Trotting Triple Crown (Hambletonian, Yonkers Trot, Kentucky Futurity).
- A third-generation horseman from Quebec, Gingras arrived in the U.S. in 2001 and established himself as a top driver at Yonkers Raceway. In 2003, he received the Rising Star Award from the U.S. Harness Writers Association and in 2004 he moved his base to the Meadowlands. He has won multiple Big M driving titles, most recently in 2022.
- Gingras, who has won more than 8,500 races lifetime, ranks fourth in career driving purses with \$221 million. He led the sport in earnings four consecutive years, 2014-2017, and he is wrapping up his second straight driving title at The Big M.
- He has sat behind three Dan Patch Award Horse of the Year winners: Tall Dark Stranger in 2020, Hannelore Hanover in 2017, and JK She’salady in 2014.
- Among his many other accomplishments, Gingras is known for his association with pacer Foiled Again, who retired in 2018 as the richest horse in harness racing history with \$7.63 million in lifetime earnings.
- Ron Burke, 53, finished second in the Hambletonian in 2016 with Southwind Frank, beaten by a nose by Marion Marauder, and second in 2015 when filly Mission Brief was defeated

by Pinkman by three-quarters of a length. He watched What The Hill cross the finish line first in 2017, but the colt was disqualified for interfering with a horse in the stretch. It was the first disqualification of a winner in Hambletonian history.

- Mission Brief, Southwind Frank and What The Hill all were Dan Patch Award winners during their careers.
- Burke has had four previous Hambletonian Oaks finalists, with a best finish of fourth in 2020 with Crucial.
- In 2020, Burke-trained filly Sister Sledge who finished eighth in the final after breaking.
- No trainer in history comes close to Burke's production in terms of wins and purses. He is on his way to leading the sport in both categories for the 15th consecutive year. His nearly 14,000 lifetime victories are more than 6,600 ahead of second-place Virgil Morgan Jr. and his \$306 million in career purses are more than \$175 million ahead of retired Hall of Famer Jimmy Takter.
- In May, Burke became the first person to reach \$300 million in North American purses in harness racing history.
- Burke took over the family's training stable from his father Mickey, the 2006 Trainer of the Year, in late 2008. In his first full year, he won 762 races and \$14.8 million in purses, totals that he has exceeded every year since. No other trainer has ever won more than 663 races or \$13.4 million in purses in a year.
- He has topped 1,000 wins in a year four times and \$20 million in purses nine times. His record totals both came in 2014 when he had 1,093 victories and \$28.4 million in purses.
- Burke's past stars include 2017 Horse of the Year Hannelore Hanover, 2014 Pacer of the Year Sweet Lou and 2011 Pacer of the Year Foiled Again, who retired following the 2018 season as the richest harness racing horse in history with \$7.63 million in lifetime earnings.
- He was named Trainer of the Year in 2011, 2013, and 2018.
- In addition to Burke's success as a trainer, Burke Racing was named Owner of the Year (with partners Mark Weaver and Mike Brussemi) in 2013 and 2018.
- Burke trained 2017 Horse of the Year Hannelore Hanover, a 2023 Hall of Fame inductee. His other many stars have included 2014 Pacer of the Year Sweet Lou and 2011 Pacer of the Year Foiled Again, who retired following the 2018 season as the richest harness racing horse in history, with \$7.63 million in lifetime earnings. Foiled Again, who was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2019, won 109 races and joined fellow Hall of Famer Rambling Willie as the only pacers with at least 100 wins and more than \$2 million in purses in the past 40 years. Sweet Lou was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2021 and Foiled Again was inducted in 2019.

- Sire Walner, was a standout trotter sidelined in his three-year-old year due to injury. His other notable offspring include older trotter Venerable, 2022 Hambletonian Oaks winner Fashion Schooner, 2022 Breeders Crown winner King Of The North and standout four year old mare Jiggy Jog S. Walner sends out four Hambletonian finalists.
- Celebrity Bambino is from the family of Breeders Crown champions Master Lavec and Housethatruthbuilt.