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BITS ON BREEDING

Dean Hoffman

Muscle Hills Tops Sires of Hambo Hopefuls

Muscle Hill hit a home run with a Hambletonian winner Trixton in his first crop and he has a line-up of 34 male eligibles to this year's Hambo that will try to make it two in a row.

Muscle Hill, now only nine years old, leads the list of male Hambletonian eligibles with the son-and-father team of Donato Hanover, with 25 eligibles, and Andover Hall with 23, ranking in second and third place respectively. After the top trio comes Cantab Hall, leading trotting sire in North America last year. He has 18 Hambo hopefuls. He is followed by Muscle Massive(14), Credit Winner(11), and Yankee Glide(10). They are the only trotting stallions in double figures.

Of these top stallions, Muscle Hill, Andover Hall, and Yankee Glide are the only ones that have sired Hambletonian winners. Muscle Hill sired Trixton; Andover Hall sired Donato Hanover; and Yankee Glide sired Glidemaster.



The progeny of super-sire Muscle Hill could dominate this year's Hambletonian

Of the seven leading sires of Hambo eligibles, only two---Muscle Hill and Muscle Massive---are sons of the same stallion, and that is, of course, Muscles Yankee himself. Muscles Yankee was a rompaway winner of the '98 Hambo.

This list of stallion was compiled by

Nikolaus Matzka of the excellent web site

www.breedingtrotters.com

Matzka compiled a separate list of the leading sires of 2015

Hambo Oaks fillies. The leading stallions are the same three: Muscle Hill, Donato Hanover, and Andover Hall---all ties for the lead with 10 filly hopefuls.

Consider that Muscle Hill had 82 registered foals in 2012 and that 44 of them have been sustained to the sport's greatest trotting events. That's a remarkable feat considering that some of those 82 foals have surely been exported and that five of his 2012 foals died before last July.

In addition to Trixton 3, 1:50.3 (\$947,057), Muscle Hill's top first-crop stars were E L Titan, Southwind Spirit, and Muscle Network.

His top colt from last season was Muscle Diamond, a 1:53.4 winner last season for popular trainer Brett Bittle. It's not surprising that Bittle would take a shine to this colt since he trained Muscle Diamond's mother Windylane Hanover, winner of the Hambletonian Oaks and more than \$1.1 million in her career.

Ironically, perhaps the two most dangerous Hambo hopefuls sires by Muscle Hill are the fillies Mission Brief and Jolene Jolene. Fillies can, of course, cross gender lines by skipping the Hambo Oaks and challenging the males in the big dance. (Additional payments must be made to make up the difference between the payments for male and female Hambo eligibles.) No filly has won the Hambletonian since the meteoric Continental victory in 1996.

Mission Brief, of course, startled the world of trotting last fall when she won in 1:50.3 at Lexington with a 16 length margin over her pursuers.

Like the little girl with the curl, when Mission Brief was good, she was very, very good: she later won the breeders crown by almost five lengths.

But when mission brief was bad she was horrid: she raced in the goldsmith maid at 1-5 odd and she was distanced after breaking stride.

The muscle hill filly jolene jolene is another product of the team jc trotting kindergarten as trainer jonas czernyson developed and campaigned her to a promising season, including a 1:52.1 score at the red mile.

(Jolene jolene is, of course, named after the wonderful dolly parton song about an evil woman who tried to steal dolly's husband. Trainer jonas czernyson's wife christine says that the four-legged version has her evil ways, too. Christine notes that caretaker jerome brown is the only person allowed in the filly's stall, "unless they want to sign a liability waiver.")

Last year's hambo winner trixton sports a blue-blooded background as his dam emilie cas el is a sister to the famed "band of brothers" (conway, angus, and andover--all with the surname hall).

Emilie cas el is a member of the vast maternal family known as medio. This family is closely associated with the early success of hanover shoe farms, and a half-century ago this family was often casually called the "hanover sisters" or the family of miss bertha c. The "hanover sisters" designation stems from the fact miss bertha dillon foaled daughters in 1926-27-29 and each one took a 2:00 trotting mark, an incomprehensible accomplishment during

the depression era.

Mission brief is from the family of small family of blanche. Mission brief's dam southwind serena, a 2007 breeders crown winner, is a daughter of the vaunted varenne, an international superstar. Southwind serena is not the only good trotting lass in mission brief's pedigree. If you turn over enough leaves in mission brief's family tree, you find that her fifth dam is noccalula, a top free-for-aller in the late 1960s and the dam of stakes stars ima lula and kading. Looking at mission brief's pedigree, you find the inbreeding that characterizes many successful trotting pedigrees. Within mission brief's first five generations, she has three crosses to speedy somolli, and two crosses each to bonefish, super bowl and speed crown.

Brett Sturman's Meadowlands

Pick 4 Analysis

Race 7, f&m n/w \$16,000 15 pace

Mattie terror girl was empty last week when hiked up to this level but alagna has her right back in so we should be able to expect a more true effort. She makes her fourth start of the year and will offer a square price to bounce back. Bettor chill out steps up in her third start of the year but was game last week and much better than I thought she'd be; certainly something to build from. That woman hanover makes her first start since january and her best would certainly give her a big chance; in all likelihood will be campbell's choice for lundell. Icommandmyspirit hasn't been able to get close of late and now rates a longshot. Beautiful lady paid an overlay mutuel of \$24 last week when she was able to sweep off a contentious pace up front but this field is much different than that one; at least should offer another good price to repeat the trick. Hot list got the second over trip last week but didn't have the pop; starters from this barn have been uncharacteristically cold much of the season.

Race 8, n/w \$7,500 15 trot

Pounce hanover went first start for mcdermott last week off the claim from virgil morgan jr. and honestly couldn't have looked any better. This one was able to hold sway against bl class act en route to that down the road 1:54 score and there's no question speed will be coming again. Simaz goes first start a new stable and that qualifier doesn't look bad; might have something to offer in his first start since december. Prove up returns after a couple races at dover and was a winner the last time he raced here a month ago. Looking hanover ran out of steam late as those 11-year-old legs got tired; not worth a short price. Tiger's too good owns a history here but he looked very slow in his return; needs to show signs of life first.

Race 9, f&m g-note dash pace

Lightning paige blasted from the outside post last week, was shuffled back to almost where she started from and then somehow came back on again to just miss in a

herculean effort. You can toss her trip from two back when she was three wide at the half and seems long overdue for some better luck; she's more than good enough to handle these. Art ideal was an easy winner in this print last week at 2/1 when she was able to win by coming home in :26 flat on a night when the final quarters were ridiculous. She's one of the main contenders but will get a tougher test tonight. Janie bay has now one two of her last three for harmon and may only need some of the favorites to mix it up early so that she sweep past them again late. Angels delight is a sneaky longshot making her second start back for croghan and sir lehigh z tam becomes a threat on the move inside.

Race 10, f&m n/w 2 pace

Bossers joy did all she could last week to close after they all let didomenico's filly crawl to the half in :59:1, at which point the race was essentially over. This one makes her second start back since november's matron and was callahan's pick over #9. American truth had it all her own way last week on the front but still sprinted home quickly; she won't be as overlooked this time around. Knockem for a loop hasn't shown much but now goes from hans to foulk; could be worth noting. Swinging cami will probably take action due to the alagna and zeron connections and for the glory can build from that recent qualifier.

\$9 ticket (\$0.50 base): 3-4 / 8 / 2-8-10 / 2-6-7

\$18 ticket (\$0.50 base): 3-4-8 / 2-8 / 7-8-10 / 6-7

For trackmaster pps for the meadowlands pick 4 click [here](http://www.trackmaster.com). for all other pps go to www.trackmaster.com

Dover Report

Monday's Results

4, DD, \$20,000, T, DELAWARE STANDARDBRED
BREEDERS FUND 3 Year Old Fillies Consolation, 28.0,
58.1, 1:27.4, 1:59.3, FT

Sign N Drive (f, 3, Cr Commando--Tybridge, by Garland Lobell) O-Scott D Woogen. B-Winbak Farm. T-Duane Wagner. D-Corey Callahan, \$10,000, Lifetime Record: 11-5-2-1, \$83,900

8, DD, \$100,000, T, DELAWARE STANDARDBRED
BREEDERS FUND 3 Year Old Fillies Final, 28.1, 59.3,
1:29.0, 1:58.1, FT

1-Callmemza (f, 3, Great George Two--Endorphan Annie, by Enjoy Lavec) O-William B Roberts & Graham Grace Stables LLC & M & W Stables, LLC. B-William B Roberts & Graham Grace Stables LLC & M & W Stables, LLC. T-W Bib Roberts. D-Jonathan Roberts, \$50,000, Lifetime Record: 11-6-3-1, \$160,221

2-My Fire Cloud Too (f, 3, Cr Commando--Winbak Flame, by Donerail), \$8,000 2013 CHICKS O-Richard M Lombardo & J&M Stable. B-Winbak Farm. T-Josh Green. D-Eddie Davis Jr, \$25,000