



**Bella Bellini (Bar Hopping-Bella Dolce-Kadabra)**

Sent off as the favorite, Bella Bellini finished second to Lady Chaos in the first Hambletonian Oaks elimination. She battled with Lady Chaos from first-over around the last turn and through the stretch but came up a head short in the 1:52.4 mile.

Winless in seven starts last year, Bella Bellini has won six times and been second on four occasions in ten appearances this year. Her stakes victories include a leg of the Weiss Series, a PA All-Stars division, and a PA Sire Stakes split, all at Pocono. She has total earnings of \$136,983 and a mark of 1:52.1 taken in an overnight race at the Meadowlands on July 3, 2021.

### Quotes

**Trainer Richard “Nifty” Norman:** “She was OK, not at her best. She will have to be better [in the final]. I thought she raced good, just the tactics didn’t work out.”

Prior to the elim, Norman said: “She’s got a fantastic attitude and high speed. She can catch them in three steps. When she makes her move, it’s a pretty undeniable move. She can go from fourth to first like that. We’ll see [how good she can be]. The next couple weeks are going to tell us. It’s easy to be confident now, but you’ve still got to get there. You’ve got to show up two weeks in a row and be really good two weeks in a row.”

### Breeding Notes

Bella Bellini is the first Hambletonian Oaks finalist for sire Bar Hopping, whose initial crop are 3-year-olds this year. Her dam, Bella Dolce, didn’t race in the Hambletonian Oaks, but enjoyed a successful career, winning 15 times and banking \$730,384. Bella Bellini is her eighth foal and fourth \$100,000 earner.

David McDuffee bred and owns Bella Bellini. He has not bred a Hambletonian Oaks winner to date.

### Driver Bio

**DEXTER DUNN**

**Born: 9/1/1989 – Birthplace: New Zealand – Resides: Swedesboro, NJ**

**Dan Patch Award Driver of the Year: 2020, 2019.**

Dexter Dunn has driven in two Hambletonian finals. He finished fourth in both, with Soul Strong in 2019 and Amigo Volo in 2020. Both horses started from post 10.

Amigo Volo went on to win the Kentucky Futurity and Breeders Crown and received the Dan Patch Award for best 3-year-old male trotter. He was one of six Dan Patch Award winners driven by Dunn in 2020.

A native of New Zealand, Dunn moved to the U.S. in the summer of 2018. Since arriving in the States, he has won more than 1,200 races and earned \$29 million in purses.

He led New Zealand's premiership in wins for 10 consecutive years from 2008 through 2017. During that span, Dunn won at least 200 races on six occasions and twice finished with 199. He was the first New Zealand driver to win at least 200 races in a season.

**Trainer Bio**

**RICHARD "NIFTY" NORMAN**

**Born: 10/21/1960 – Birthplace: New Zealand – Resides: Allentown, NJ**

**Hambletonian Oaks wins (2): Bee A Magician, 2013; Personal Style, 2012.**

Nifty Norman is a two-time winner of the Hambletonian Oaks, training 2012 winner Personal Style, driven by David Miller, and 2013 champion Bee A Magician, driven by Brian Sears.

Bee A Magician was Horse of the Year in both the U.S. and Canada in 2013. She was 17-for-17 and earned \$1.54 million. Her earnings were a record for a 3-year-old filly trotter. She retired with multiple Dan Patch and O'Brien awards and her \$4 million in career purses put her among the richest trotters in history. She was voted to the Hall of Fame in 2020.

Norman's stable set a career high in 2020 with \$4.45 million in purses and ranked fifth in the category among all trainers in North America. In 2019, Norman's stable surpassed \$4 million for the first time, with \$4.26 million, and was 10th.

For his career, Norman has won more than 1,400 races and \$42 million in purses. He has exceeded \$1 million so far this season, giving him 16 consecutive years with at least \$1 million in earnings.

**Owner Bio**

**David H. McDuffee, Delray Beach, FL**

Bella Bellini would be owner David McDuffee's second Hambletonian Oaks winner, as he also co-owned Norman-trained Bee A Magician in 2013.