



### **Iteration (Chapter Seven-Steamy Windows-Muscle Massive)**

Racing in the second Hambletonian Oaks elimination, Iteration took the lead after the opening quarter, parked out a rival through the middle-half, dispatched her before turning for home, and held second after being passed by eventual winner Awesome Trix inside the final eighth of the mile. Iteration finished one length behind Awesome Trix and was timed in 1:53.

As a 2-year-old, Iteration was the New York Sire Stakes champion and picked up Grand Circuit wins at The Red Mile and Harrah's Hoosier Park. So far this year, she's won a6 New York Sire Stakes leg at Vernon Downs, her Empire Breeders Classic (EBC) flight at Vernon, and the final of the New York New York Mile at Yonkers Raceway. In total, she's compiled a record of 8-2-2 from 16 appearances, banked \$483,792, and has a mark of 1:53.1 taken in that EBC tally.

#### **Quote**

**Trainer Marcus Melander:** "I was super happy. She was a little short, in my opinion. First, she had that bad performance at Tioga and then she made that break in the Delvin Miller, so I didn't really know where I had her. She really raced good. She needed that race and she fought everyone off except one that came very fast. I think that will do her good for the final. Everything was great. I think she can definitely be a contender in the final."

On break in Miller: "She got too grabby behind the gate. It was just an equipment issue that we changed this time. It is what it is. But [in the Oaks elim] she was perfect."

Earlier this year, Melander said: "She's filled out very nicely and she feels like she's more mature. She had speed and she had ability last year, but she didn't really understand everything. The money she earned was almost like a bonus because she was a little bit immature mentally. She could definitely go, but [driver Brian Sears] had to work with her and teach her. When she had a closed bridle, sometimes she got a little too grabby. And sometimes when we opened her up, she got a little bit too lost. Otherwise, she was a real nice 2-year-old.

"She proved she could go on the Grand Circuit, and I'd be surprised if she wasn't that kind of horse this year as well."

## **Breeding Notes**

Iteration would be the first Hambletonian Oaks winner for sire Chapter Seven, who has a total of three finalists this year (Darlene Hanover, Contested Hanover, and Iteration). Iteration is a full sister to Gimpanzee, who finished fourth in his elimination and third in the final of the 2019 Hambletonian. Gimpanzee returned as a 4-year-old in 2020 and won Trotter of the Year honors.

Bred by Order By Stable, Iteration sold for \$250,000 as HIP 76 at the 2019 Standardbred Horse Sale in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. She would be the first Hambletonian Oaks winner bred by Order By Stable, but they did win the Hambletonian in 2018 with the filly Atlanta.

## **Driver Bio**

### **BRIAN SEARS**

**Born: 1/21/1968 – Birthplace: Fort Lauderdale, FL – Resides: Secaucus, NJ**

**Hall of Fame: Class of 2017.**

**Dan Patch Award Driver of the Year: 2009.**

**Hambletonian wins (3): Pinkman, 2015; Royalty For Life, 2013; Muscle Hill, 2009.**

**Hambletonian Oaks wins (2): Bee A Magician, 2013; Broadway Schooner, 2009.**

Brian Sears leads all active drivers in Hambletonian wins with three. John Campbell holds the record with six. No other driver has won the race more than four times.

In 2009, Sears became the first driver to win the Hambletonian and Hambletonian Oaks in the same year. He won the Hambletonian with Muscle Hill for trainer Greg Peck and the Oaks with Broadway Schooner for trainer Jim Campbell.

Sears doubled again in 2013, capturing the Hambletonian with Royalty For Life for trainer George Ducharme and the Oaks with Bee A Magician for trainer Richard "Nifty" Norman.

His third Hambletonian triumph came with Pinkman for trainer Jimmy Takter in 2015.

Sears ranks No. 5 in career driving purses with \$203 million. He led the sport in earnings in 2005 with a then-record \$15 million.

He ranks 18th in lifetime driving wins with more than 10,200.

Sears has driven four Horse of the Year award winners: McWicked in 2018, Bee A Magician in 2013, Muscle Hill in 2009, and Rocknroll Hanover in 2005.

A native of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Sears is a third-generation horseman, following in the footsteps of his grandfather Gene and dad Jay. Both are in the Florida Harness Racing Hall of Fame.

## **Trainer Bio**

### **MARCUS MELANDER**

**Born: 7/1/1992 – Birthplace: Sweden – Resides: New Egypt, NJ**

**Dan Patch Award Trainer of the Year: 2019.**

Marcus Melander had three starters in each of the past two Hambletonian finals.

Melander's top finisher in the 2020 final was Hollywood Story, who was fifth. In 2019, Greenshoe finished second, Gimpanzee was third, and Green Manalishi S was fifth. Greenshoe and Green Manalishi S were elimination winners.

His first Hambletonian was in 2017. He saw Enterprise win his elimination and finish fourth-placed-third in the final. In 2018, Melander-trained Evaluate finished fifth in the final.

Melander had his best Hambletonian Oaks finish in 2020 with Hypnotic AM, who was second.

Greenshoe was the 2019 Trotter of the Year. Greenshoe and Gimpanzee both earned more than \$1 million that year and Melander became only the second trainer to have two million-dollar-earning trotters in the same division in the same season, joining Jimmy Takter.

Melander, at the age of 27 in 2019, was the youngest trainer ever voted Trainer of the Year by the U.S. Harness Writers Association. The recognition came one year after he was named the Rising Star Award winner by the same organization.

A native of Sweden, Melander came to the U.S. and worked for four-time Hambletonian-winning trainer Takter before starting his own stable in late 2014. He is based in New Egypt, N.J., at a farm that was home previously to each the legendary Stanley Dancer, a five-time Hambletonian winner, and Continental Farms stables.

Melander has won more than 300 races and \$15 million in purses in his career.

His uncle, Stefan, won the 2001 Hambletonian as trainer and driver with Scarlet Knight.

### **Owner Bio**

#### **Courant Inc., Delray Beach, Florida**

Anders Strom's Courant Inc. has captured the last two Trotter of the Year Awards with Greenshoe and Gimpanzee but remains in search of its initial success in the Hambletonian or the Hambletonian Oaks