



By Ray Cotolo (Chris Gooden Photo)

NEXT LEVEL STUFF (Sebastian K S—Nantab—Cantab Hall)

Breeder: Runthetable Stables, *Montvale, NJ*

Owners: Runthetable Stables, *Montvale, NJ*

Trainer: Jim Campbell

Driver: Tim Tetrick

Purchase: Homebred

From the first crop of world champion Sebastian K S, **Next Level Stuff** competes in the Hambletonian Oaks just under a week after her sire passed away from colic.

Next Level Stuff began her career racing in Pennsylvania, failing to keep stride in her first three starts. Eventually she managed to keep herself together, winning six of her next seven starts including the \$147,600 Matron Stakes at Dover Downs.

“She was just a little immature mentally and everything like that, but then we made a few little changes on her,” trainer Jim Campbell said. “Then she more just needed to get her confidence built back up again and once she did that she was very good after that.”

Like many trainers in the 2020 season, Campbell had his plans thwarted with the shutdown of racing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However Campbell managed to keep **Next Level Stuff** toned heading into her first start on June 25.

“We never knew when we were going to get the word to start back up again,” Campbell said. “We had to kind of keep them up somewhat—we backed them up a little bit to just train them once a week so that if we did get word they were going to start back up we weren’t too far behind the eight ball.”

In her first starts back, **Next Level Stuff** raced from off the pace, a tactic Campbell said was “by design”.

“We trained her back and kept her in behind another horse,” Campbell said. “She’s been good that way and been good in her races like that, so it makes her more versatile. You can race her any way you want to race her.

Next Level Stuff won her first three races as a three-year-old, her most recent victory coming in a \$63,462 division of Pennsylvania Sires Stakes. She made her last start before the Oaks in the \$42,700 Tompkins-Geers, where she sped to a :54.3 half before getting nosed at the finish as the 2-5 favorite.

“I wish she was going slower to the half,” Campbell said. “I think she was just got away too much from Timmy in that second quarter.”

Because the Hambletonian as a race does not allow the use of medication, **Next Level Stuff** will have to race without Lasix, which she has used since the start of her three-year-old season.

“She’s qualified and raced a bunch of times off Lasix, and usually [if] you keep them quieted down they stand a real good chance to be okay in the race,” Campbell said. “I won the race with Broadway Schooner in 2009 and she was a Lasix horse too, and she had to go in an elimination and a final. This year, with no eliminations and just having to go the one race, I don’t see it being a problem.”

Campbell tries for his second victory in the Hambletonian Oaks. Last year he sent Millies Possession into the Oaks undefeated in eight starts, but she finished second in the final as the 6-5 favorite to When Dovescry.

Driver Tim Tetrick—inducted into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame in 2019—tries for his third victory in the Oaks. He previously won the event with Danae (2007) and Bar Slide (2010). Last year, he finished third with Asiago for trainer Per Engblom. Tetrick led the sport in purses in 2019 with \$15.6 million. He also led in 2018 and for seven consecutive years, 2007 through 2013. He ranks No. 3 all time in earnings, with \$221 million. Tetrick has topped \$10 million each of the past 13 years, which is a record.