



# Sister Sledge

Brown filly, 3 by Father Patrick – Behindcloseddoors by Andover Hall

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**OWNER:** Burke Racing Stable, Jason Melillo, Jerry & Theresa Silva, Purnel & Libby, Weaver Brussemi  
**BREEDER:** Sergent Stables LLC & Andray Farm, PA  
**SALE INFO:** Standardbred Horse Sale – Harrisburg \$35,000  
**TRAINER:** Ron Burke  
**DRIVER:** Brian Sears

YEAR	STARTS	1 <sup>ST</sup>	2 <sup>ND</sup>	3 <sup>RD</sup>	EARNINGS	MARK
2020	5	3	1	0	\$70,745	1:51.2 M
2019	12	8	3	1	\$555,313	1:53.1 Wbsb
LIFETIME	15	3	4	4	\$392,934	3, 1:51.2 M

- Finished fourth in her Hambletonian elimination behind Ready For Moni, Threefiftytwo and Capricornus. She drew post nine in the final and is listed at 12-1.
- “I looked at the races and basically it came down to they were equal, “ said trainer Ron Burke. I feel the fillies are as tough as the colts this year. I saw one race goes for \$500,000 and the other goes for a million (dollars), and since they’re equal races, then I’ll go for more money. To me it was simple math. She’s been real good; her whole career she’s been good. I want to give her a chance. I wouldn’t put her in there if I didn’t think she was competitive. She’s competitive with any of them. Off a trip, she’ll be even better.”



- Won her Tompkins Geers division at the Meadowlands in a new lifetime mark of 1:51.1 at the Meadowlands on July 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Finished second in her PASS behind Solsbury Hill at Harrah's Philadelphia on July 15<sup>th</sup>.
- "She's like all the great ones," Dave Palone said after her win in the Arden Downs on June 27<sup>th</sup> at the Meadows. "Not only is she blessed with ridiculous speed, but her manners and her intelligence are what make her a great horse. They'll put her in the right spot every week. She's one you remember for sure."
- Won her first two starts of the year including the \$26,764 Aden Downs & \$32,297 Curier & Ives at the Meadows.
- Finished her freshman year with over \$500,000 in earnings and finished second to Ramona Hill in Dan Patch voting.
- Sister Sledge's final race of the year came in the Goldsmith Maid at the Meadowlands. She was edged out by a head by Seniorita Rita.
- Won her Breeders Crown elimination in 1:53.1. She finished second in the final behind Ramona Hill.
- At the Red Mile she finished third in her Bluegrass division and picked up a second place finish in the International Stallion Stakes behind fellow filly Hambletonian contender Ramona Hill.
- Won her first seven starts as a 2 year old including a sweep of the Pennsylvania Sire Stakes.
- Brian Sears, 52, is a three-time winning driver in the Hambletonian and two-time winner of the Hambletonian Oaks.
- In 2019, Sears finished second in the Hambletonian final with Greenshoe, who was an elimination winner. Forbidden Trade won the final by a neck.
- Sears won both the Hambletonian and Oaks in 2009, earning his Hambletonian victory with Muscle Hill and Oaks triumph with Broadway Schooner. He became the first driver to win the Hambletonian and Oaks in the same year. In 2013, he repeated the double, winning the Hambletonian with Royalty For Life and the Oaks with Bee A Magician.
- In 2015, Sears won the Hambletonian with Pinkman. Yannick Gingras drove Pinkman to victory in his elimination, but opted to drive filly Mission Brief, also an elimination winner, in the final.
- Sears is among five drivers to win the Hambletonian three times. John Campbell holds the record, with six, and there are four drivers tied for second place, with four. They are Ben White, Billy Haughton, Stanley Dancer, and Mike Lachance.

- For his career, Sears has won more than 10,000 races and \$199 million in purses. He ranks 18th in North American history for wins among drivers and fifth in purses. He led the sport in earnings in 2005, with a then-record \$15 million, and has finished among the top 10 in purses 14 of the past 16 years.
- Sears has driven four Horse of the Year award winners: Rocknroll Hanover in 2005, Muscle Hill in 2009, Bee A Magician in 2013 and McWicked in 2018.
- He received the 2009 Driver of the Year Award from the U.S. Harness Writers Association and was the 1991 Rising Star Award recipient from the same organization.
- 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.
- Sears was inducted into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame in Goshen, N.Y., in 2017.
- Ron Burke, 50, 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.
- In 2019, Burke-trained Swandre The Giant finished sixth in his elimination and failed to advance to the final. Sonnet Grace raced in the Hambletonian Oaks final, finishing eighth.
- Burke took over the family's training stable from his father Mickey, the 2006 Trainer of the Year, in late 2008 and pushed the operation's success to record-setting heights. He is in the process of leading all trainers in wins for the 12th consecutive year. He has won no fewer than 762 races a year since 2009 and topped 1,000 victories three times, with 1,090 in 2013, 1,093 in 2014, and 1,013 in 2018. He is the only trainer in history to win 1,000 times in a season. In 2019, he finished with 981 victories.
- Already the sport's all-time leader in training wins, Burke is nearing 11,000 wins. Only one other trainer, Virgil Morgan Jr., has surpassed 6,000.
- Burke also is in the process of leading all trainers in purses for the 12th straight season. His \$239 million in lifetime earnings leads all trainers in history. He has topped \$20 million each of the past seven years, including a record \$28.4 million in 2014. He is the only trainer in history to reach \$20 million in a season.
- 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. 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.
- His sire Father Patrick was the prohibitive favorite going into the 2015 Hambletonian. He was five-for-five that year and riding a 15-race win streak dating back to the previous year, he drew the outside post 10. Father Patrick became the shortest-priced horse to not capture the trotting classic when he went offstride for the first time in his 17-start career. He sired 2019 prohibitive favorite and runner-up Greenshoe.
- 162 fillies have started in the Hambletonian. Sister Sledge is looking to become the 15<sup>th</sup> filly to beat the boys and win the coveted prize. The last filly to win the Hambletonian was Atlanta in 2018.