



Rome Pays Off

Bay colt, 3 by Muscle Hill – Order By Wish by Cantab Hall

OWNER: SRF Stable [Lennart Agren & Jan Johnson]
BREEDER: Order By Stable, Sweden
SALE INFO: Standardbred Horse Sale – Harrisburg \$155,000
TRAINER: Marcus Melander
DRIVER: Mattias Melander

YEAR	STARTS	1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	EARNINGS	MARK
2020	3	2	0	0	\$53,450	1:52.3 M
2019	12	3	3	3	\$339,484	1:55 Mea
LIFETIME	15	5	3	3	\$392,934	3, 1:52.3 M

- Finished fifth in his Hambletonian elimination to make the final. He is leaving from post 8 and listed at 15-1.

- Melander on Rome Pays Off: "He trained down so frickin' good, but when we qualified him he had problems with his liver. His liver values in the bloodwork were terrible and it took awhile until we got him back to normal. The win at Harrah's Philadelphia wasn't against the competition he's going to face now, but they were still good. In the Tompkins Geers he was really good. He went first over and did it easy."



- Started his sophomore season off two for two with a win in a non-winners condition race and in a division of the Tompkins Geers in a personal best of 1:52.3 at the Meadowlands.

- Closed out his freshman campaign with a fifth place finish in the Valley Victory Final at the Meadowlands in November.
- Rome Pays Off finished third in his Breeders Crown elimination and closed sharply after being parked to finish second in the \$600,000 Breeders Crown Final behind Hambletonian contender Amigo Volo at Woodbine Mohawk Park.
- Won his PASS Consolation in 1:55 at Harrah's Philadelphia in September, 2019.
- Finished second in both his Peter Haughton elimination and the final on Hambletonian Day 2019 behind Real Cool Sam.
- Kicked off his freshman year with a win in the PA All Stars at Pocono Downs in 1:58.1.
- Mattias Melander, who turned 24 on August 4, is making his Hambletonian debut. He is the brother of trainer Marcus Melander.
- Melander, a native of Sweden, came to the U.S. four years ago, and began working at the stable of Hall of Fame trainer Jimmy Takter, where his brother Marcus had also worked, but Takter talked him into staying.
- In 2019, Melander won 20 of 97 races. He finished second in the Breeders Crown for two-year-old male trotters with Rome Pays Off.
- Marcus Melander, 28, was voted the 2019 Trainer of the Year by the U.S. Harness Writers Association. Age 27 at the time, he was the youngest trainer to ever receive the honor. The recognition came one year after he was named the Rising Star Award winner by the same organization.
- Melander's top horse last year was Greenshoe, who was named Trotter of the Year. Greenshoe won his Hambletonian elimination and finished second in the final. The colt was one of three Hambletonian finalists for Melander. Green Manalishi S won his elimination and was fifth in the final; Gimpanzee was fourth in his elimination and third in the final.
- Greenshoe and Gimpanzee both earned more than \$1 million in 2019. Melander became only the second trainer to have two million-dollar-earning trotters in the same division in the same season, joining Jimmy Takter.
- Earlier this season, Gimpanzee won the Hambletonian Maturity for 4-year-olds at the Meadowlands.
- The Melander-trained Miss Trixton finished fourth in the 2019 Hambletonian Oaks.
- Melander made his Hambletonian debut in 2017 and saw Enterprise win his elimination and then finish fourth-placed-third in the final. Melander's Long Tom also raced in an elimination, leading through three-quarters of a mile before going off stride and failing to reach the final.

- In 2018, Evaluate finished fourth in his Hambletonian elimination and fifth in the final.
- Melander came to the U.S. from Sweden and worked for four-time Hambletonian-winning trainer Jimmy 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 150 races and \$6 million in purses in his career.
- Growing up in Sweden, Melander stayed up all hours of the night following the results of U.S. harness racing. He was making a name for himself as a driver in Europe but was always fascinated by racing in the States. At age 19, Melander won Sweden's equivalent to the U.S. Harness Writers Association's Rising Star Award. He had just more than 100 wins when the Melanders moved to America.
- Melander's uncle, Stefan Melander, won the 2001 Hambletonian as trainer and driver with Scarlet Knight.
- Melander has two other Hambletonian contenders: Rome Pays Off and Capricornus.
- Rome Pays Off's sire Muscle Hill captured the 2008 Peter Haughton in a stakes-record-equaling 1:55 and won the 2009 Hambletonian in a stakes-record 1:50.1.
- Muscle Hill has sired two previous Hambletonian winners –Marion Marauder (2016) and Trixtion (2014). He has also sired four Hambletonian Oaks winners – When Dovescry (2019), Manchego (2018), Ariana G (2017) and All The Time (2016).
- SRF Stable won the Hambletonian in 2017 with Perfect Spirit through a disqualification.