



By Greg Reinhardt (Ken Weingartner Photo)

Sorella

(Muscle Hill-Kadealia-Kadabra)

Sorella bypassed the August 1 Hambletonian Oaks prep race at the Meadowlands and will go to the final off a fourth-place finish to Hambletonian elimination winner Ramona Hill in the Delvin Miller Memorial at The Big M on July 18.

Sorella won a pair of stakes races as a freshman, an Arden Downs split at The Meadows and a Pennsylvania Sire Stakes leg at Harrah's Philadelphia. She was also the runner-up in the PaSS Championship to Hambletonian finalist Sister Sledge. She was transferred from trainer Staffan Lind to trainer Nancy Takter for this year's campaign and won an overnight race, a 3-year-old Open, and a Reynolds division at the Meadowlands before her fourth in the Delvin Miller Memorial. She sports a record of 5-2-0 from 11 starts, has earned \$203,376, and owns a mark of 1:50.2.

Sorella's 1:50.2 is the fastest mile by a 3-year-old trotter this year, one-fifth faster than Ramona Hill, who is the Hambletonian morning-line favorite.

Breeding Notes

Sorella is by Muscle Hill, who won his elimination and the final of the 2009 Hambletonian. As a sire, Muscle Hill has won the last four editions of the Hambletonian Oaks. Sorella's dam, the Kadabra mare

Kadealia, was an eight-time winner and earned \$570,375. In 2008 Kadealia pulled two major upsets, first winning the Ontario Sires Stakes Super Final for 3-year-old filly trotters at Woodbine Racetrack at odds of 61-1 and then the Breeders Crown 3-Year-Old Filly Trot Final at the Meadowlands at odds of 75-1. That remains the highest-priced pay-off in Breeders Crown history.

Sorella was bred and retained for racing by Elmer Fannin in partnership with Crawford Farms and would be his first Hambletonian Oaks champion.

Driver Bio

YANNICK GINGRAS

Born: 8/4/1979 – Birthplace: Greenfield Park, Quebec – Resides: Allentown, NJ

Yannick Gingras, who turned 41 on Aug. 4, holds the record for most driving wins in the Hambletonian Oaks, with five. He has twice finished second in the Hambletonian, with Mission Brief in 2015 and by a nose with Southwind Frank in 2016.

Last year in the Hambletonian, Gingras finished second in eliminations with Don't Let'em and Osterc. In the final he drove Don't Let'em, who went off stride.

Gingras' five Oaks wins came in consecutive years with horses trained by Jimmy Takter. His winners were Lifetime Pursuit (2014), Wild Honey (2015), All The Time (2016), Ariana G (2017) and Manchego (2018).

A third-generation horseman from Quebec, Gingras arrived in the U.S. in 2001 and established himself as a top driver at Yonkers Raceway. In 2003, he received the Rising Star Award from the U.S. Harness Writers Association and in 2004 he moved his base to the Meadowlands. He has led the Big M in wins four times in his career, most recently in 2015.

Gingras has finished no worse than second in North American purses for eight years in a row and led the sport four consecutive seasons, 2014-17. His \$184 million in career purses rank No. 7 in history.

He was voted Driver of the Year by the U.S. Harness Writers Association in 2014 and 2017.

Gingras was the regular driver of 2017 Horse of the Year Award winner Hannelore Hanover.

Among his many accomplishments, Gingras is known for his association with pacer Foiled Again, who retired in 2018 as the richest horse in harness racing history, with \$7.63 million in lifetime earnings.

Trainer Bio

NANCY TAKTER

Born: 6/23/1981 – Birthplace: Malmo, Sweden – Resides: Allentown, NJ

Nancy Takter, 39, started Don't Let'em in the 2019 Hambletonian. The colt finished second in his elimination and went off stride in the final.

She made her Hambletonian final debut in 2014 with Resolve, finishing fifth. She has started two other horses in elims, one each in 2015 and 2016, but did not reach the final.

On July 18, the Takter-trained Tall Dark Stranger won the Meadowlands Pace. Tall Dark Stranger was the Dan Patch Award winner for best 2-year-old male pacer in 2019. No trainer has ever won the Meadowlands Pace and Hambletonian in the same year.

Takter was 1 when she moved with her family from Sweden to the U.S. Her father is Hall of Fame trainer Jimmy Takter, a four-time winner of the Hambletonian and record eight-time winner of the Hambletonian Oaks. Nancy was the caretaker of Muscle Massive, who won the 2010 Hambletonian for her father.

In 2013, Takter started her own training stable. In 2014, she guided 2-year-old female pacer JK She'salady to Horse of the Year honors. JK She'salady is the only 2-year-old filly pacer to be named Horse of the Year.

Takter received the Rising Star Award from the U.S. Harness Writers Association in 2014.

Last year, Takter set career highs with 72 wins and \$4.59 million in purses. Her earnings ranked seventh among all trainers in North America.

Takter will send out two starters in this year's Hambletonian Oaks as she also has Panem, who will start from post 11.

Owner Bio

Elmer Fannin, Crawford Farms Racing, Brett Fannin, Delaware, New York, and Delaware

Elmer Fannin and Brett Fannin are in search of their first Hambletonian Oaks success. Crawford Farms Racing (Al and Michelle Crawford) are as well, but they have experienced the thrill of winning the Hambletonian as they were partners on 2018 champion Atlanta.

Fannin, a Delaware resident, founded custom home builder Country Life Homes a little over 25 years ago.

Fannin named Sorella after a wine, telling Harness Racing Communication's Ken Weingartner earlier this year that after enjoying dinner with a friend a couple years back, "I decided I was going to name her

Sorella for the bottle of wine,” Fannin said. “That’s how it happened. It was just an enjoyable dinner, enjoying some good wine, and now I’ve got a good horse.”