

NY-Bred Gimpanzee tops list of 101 eligibles to 2019 Hambletonian

March 12, 2019, by Moira Fanning, for the Hambletonian Society

Cranbury, NJ — The \$1 million Hambletonian and filly companion stake, the \$500,000 Hambletonian Oaks, will be raced on Saturday afternoon (Aug. 3) at The Meadowlands Racetrack. The Meadowlands has held America's Trotting Classic for a record 38 years, the longest run of any host track. The 94th edition of the Open event will feature eliminations and final on the same afternoon.

Eliminations for the Hambletonian Oaks, if necessary, will be raced Saturday, (July 27).



Gimpanzee authored a perfect 9-for-9 season for trainer Marcus Melander and owners Courant Inc. and SRF Stable. USTA/Ken Weingartner photo.

The 2018 Dan Patch Rising Star Award winner, trainer Marcus Melander, also happens to have the Winter Book favorite for the Hambletonian in his stable, the freshman male Dan Patch divisional champion trotter Gimpanzee. He tops the list of [101 eligibles](#) to the 2019 Hambletonian.

Gimpanzee authored a perfect 9-for-9 season for Melander and owners Courant Inc. and SRF Stable, winning the Breeders Crown and the New York Sires Stakes final on his way to \$591,358 in earnings.

"Gimpanzee has been training very good all winter, never missed a day of training and he has grown and filled out nicely. He's on the road to the Hambo starting in May (New York Sire Stakes) at Vernon Downs," said Melander.

Melander has more than just one arrow in his Hambletonian quiver — add in Green Manalishi S (\$510,557), runner-up to stablemate Gimpanzee in the Breeders Crown and winner of the William Wellwood Memorial who closed his year with five wins and five seconds in 10 starts, and Greenshoe (\$76,723), who fetched \$330,000 as a yearling under the name Rifleman. Greenshoe scored his major victory in the New Jersey Sire Stakes final in an abbreviated freshman campaign.

"Green Manalishi S has also been training good all winter," continued Melander. "He's probably grown and filled out even more than the rest of the group. He was a really big horse last year and I think now when he's a year older and filled out so nice over the winter it will be very exciting to see how he developed. The plan is to qualify him in the beginning of May.

"Greenshoe feels like he's matured a lot during the winter months, he's an incredibly fast horse, definitely the fastest one of my 3-year olds, but he needs to behave himself better at the track this year. He will qualify in late April and his first race for the season will be in New Jersey Sire Stakes."

Demon Onthe Hill (\$144,542) and Gerry (\$67,147) also train in the Melander barn, completing an impressive starting lineup for the 27-year-old native of Sweden.

"Demon Onthe Hill — he's a nice little horse that always does his best. He did great in Pennsylvania Sire Stakes last year and then had some bad racing luck down in Lexington. He's been training good and he definitely has the potential to be in the Hambletonian. Gerry, he's a really nice horse, he started out his 2-year-old season very good but then ran into some problems later in the season. He's been training well all winter and I'm very excited how he developed over the winter."

Other highly anticipated eligibles include Swandre The Giant, an Indiana-bred son of [Swan For All](#)-Adagio who changed hands for a reported seven-digit sum last year after racking up seven straight wins in state-bred company. Horse agent Ernie Martinez, who put the deal together for current owners Diamond Creek Racing, J&T Silva Stables and Howard Taylor, reports that the colt is training down in the Florida division of the Ron Burke stable.

"I don't like to throw money around," said Martinez. "But this colt impressed me so much. Maybe we asked him to do too much too soon last year but we turned him out in Kentucky and Burke loves the way he is training down."

Peter Haughton winner Don't Let'Em, Valley Victory winner Southwind Avenger, and O'Brien Award winner Forbidden Trade are all listed among the eligible horses.

There are no supplemental entries permitted in the Hambletonian and Oaks, nor are participants in those events or the Hambletonian Maturity (July 18), permitted the use of Lasix or Butazolidin.

The Hambletonian is the first leg of the Trotting Triple Crown, followed by the Yonkers Trot at Yonkers Raceway on Saturday (Aug. 31) and the Kentucky Futurity at Red Mile on Sunday (Oct. 6).

The Hambletonian is also the longest-running live broadcast in harness racing. The Aug. 3 event will be broadcast live on CBS Sports Network from 4-5:30 p.m. (EDT).

The Hambletonian Trail commences Saturday (May 4), with the Dexter Cup and Lady Suffolk at Freehold Raceway.

Eligibles for all Hambletonian-serviced stakes can be found at www.hambletonian.com.