



# SOUTHWIND COBRA

Bay, C, 3 by Muscle Hill – Caerphilly by Broadway Hall

**OWNER:** Burke Racing Stable & Jack Piatt II, PA; Larry Karr, NJ; Weaver Brusceci, PA  
**BREEDER:** Southwind Farm, NJ  
**SALE INFO:** \$120,000 Lexington Selected  
**TRAINER:** Ron Burke  
**DRIVER:** Matt Kakaley

YEAR	STARTS	1ST	2ND	3RD	EARNINGS	MARK
2017	11	0	2	2	\$40,609	Q 1:52.3 M
2016	13	2	3	3	\$96,296	1:53.3 Lex
LIFETIME	24	2	5	5	\$136,905	2, 1:53.3 Lex

Southwind Cobra is a son of Muscle Hill, the 2009 Hambletonian winner and Horse of the Year, out of the mare Caerphilly. His family includes stakes-winner No Pan No Gain (the dam of Burke-trained millionaire Crazy Wow) and, more distantly, Hall of Famer Proximity.

“Cobra is an underachiever,” trainer Ron Burke said. “We’re basically hoping that he puts it all together on one Saturday in August.”

Last year Southwind Cobra won two of 13 races and earned \$96,296. Both wins came on the Grand Circuit, in divisions of the International Stallion Stakes and Tompkins-Geers, and his mark of 1:53.3 was fifth best among all 2-year-old male trotters in 2016. But he went off stride in eliminations for the Peter Houghton Memorial, William Wellwood Memorial and Breeders Crown and failed to advance to any of those finals.

“We thought at the beginning of last year he was our best 2-year-old,” said Burke, who owns Southwind Cobra with Jack Piatt II, Larry Karr, and the partnership of Mark Weaver and Mike Brusceci. “He was a disappointment. There were points where he would show some things, but then there were points where he would show nothing. It was inconsistency and a lack of, really, wanting to win.

“It’s wait-and-see with him. He has all the talent in the world. He just needs to put it together.”

## RON BURKE (Canonsburg, PA)

Ron Burke, 47, took over the family’s training stable from father Mickey, the 2006 Trainer of the Year, in late 2008 and pushed the operation’s success to record-setting heights.

Burke is in the process of leading all trainers in wins for the ninth consecutive year. He has won no fewer than 762 races a year since 2009 and twice topped 1,000 victories, with 1,090 in 2013 and 1,093 in 2014. He is the only trainer in history to win 1,000 times in a season.

Already the sport's all-time leader in training wins, Burke in July surpassed 8,000 career victories.

Burke also is in the process of leading all trainers in purses for the ninth straight season. His \$177 million in lifetime earnings leads all trainers in history. He has topped \$20 million each of the past four 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 and 2013.

In addition to Burke's success as a trainer, his Burke Racing was named Owner of the Year (with partners Mark Weaver and Mike Brussemi) in 2013.

Burke is seeking his first win in the Hambletonian after finishing twice the past two years. Last year, Burke's Southwind Frank was nipped by a nose by Marion Marauder, who went on to capture the Trotting Triple Crown.

In 2015, Burke entered filly Mission Brief to take on the boys in the Hambletonian. Mission Brief, a world-record-holder at ages 2 and 3, won her elimination before finishing second to Pinkman in the final.

Burke's other stars have included 2014 Pacer of the Year Sweet Lou and 2011 Pacer of the Year Foiled Again, who is the richest harness racing horse in history, with \$7.52 million in lifetime earnings.

### **MATT KAKALEY (Mountain Top, PA)**

Matt Kakaley, 29, has driven finalists in the past two Hambletonians, with a best finish of fourth last year with Waitlifter K.

Kakaley is nearing 4,000 lifetime wins and recently topped \$56 million in purses.

In 2009, at the age of 21, Kakaley became the then-youngest driver to reach 1,000 wins. He also was the youngest driver to 2,000 wins, at age 23, but later saw Scott Zeron eclipse the mark.

A third generation horseman, Kakaley followed in the footsteps of his grandfather, Joe, who owned horses and spurred the family's interest in harness racing, plus dad, driver John Kakaley, and mom, trainer Linda Kakaley.

He lived in Michigan, but spent his teen years around Pompano Park in Florida before moving to Ohio in 2007 and embarking full time on his career as a driver.

In 2010, Kakaley was given the Rising Star Award by the U.S. Harness Writers Association.

He is the regular driver of \$2.4 million-earning-pacer All Bets Off.