



# VICTOR GIO IT

Brown, C, 3 by Ready Cash – Ilaria Jet by Pine Chip

**OWNER:** Christina Takter, East Windsor, NJ; Antonio Somma, Italy; Francesco Ruscigno, Italy; Nicolas Pietro De Mitri, Sweden  
**BREEDER:** Bivans SRL, Italy  
**SALE INFO:**  
**TRAINER:** Jimmy Takter  
**DRIVER:** Yannick Gingras

YEAR	STARTS	1 <sup>ST</sup>	2 <sup>ND</sup>	3 <sup>RD</sup>	EARNINGS	MARK
2017	5	2	1	1	\$15,070	1:53.3 M
2016	6	1	1	0	\$84,247	1:54.4 M
LIFETIME	11	3	2	1	\$99,317	3, 1:53.3 M

Italian-bred Victor Gio is a son of star French trotter Ready Cash, a two-time winner of the Prix d'Amerique (2011 and 2012) and one of the richest trotters in history.

His dam Ilaria Jet (by Pine Chip) won an elimination of the 2010 Elitloppet before finishing sixth in the final. She was a multiple-stakes-winner in Italy and won the 2009 European Championship for 5-year-olds. As a side note, Ilaria Jet's Elitloppet elimination win came against a field that included 2017 Hambletonian participants Andy and Julie Miller, who raced Lucky Jim in the 2010 Elitloppet.

Victor Gio heads to the Hambletonian off a second-place finish behind 6-year-old mare Oho Diamond in a conditioned race at the Meadowlands on July 21. Oho Diamond won in a track-record 1:50.2; Victor Gio was timed in 1:51.

"Everything has been going his way, he's getting a little better and little better every start," trainer Jimmy Takter said. "He's coming out of races better and better. I'm looking forward to him being there. After his last performance, I think he deserves a shot. He's a very strong horse. He's got the strength like French horses have. He don't mind, don't care, if he's parked. It doesn't matter. He doesn't need a great trip.

"Lately I'm very happy with him and the way he's trained heading into this race. I think he's an interesting horse going into it. He hasn't faced any (stakes) competition. I had a lot of issues with him to bring him back, but things have worked out very well for him. I'm very excited about him."

In his career, Victor Gio has hit the board in six of 11 races. He went off stride in the five races he failed to finish among the top three.

Victor Gio won his elimination in last year's Peter Haughton Memorial and finished second to What The Hill in the final.

### **JIMMY TAKTER (East Windsor, NJ)**

Jimmy Takter, 56, has trained the winner of the Hambletonian four times and the Hambletonian Oaks a record-tying six times, including the three most recent editions.

Takter is tied with Chuck Sylvester for the second-most training wins in the Hambletonian. Billy Haughton, Stanley Dancer and Ben White share the record of five. Takter won the Hambletonian in 1997 with Malabar Man, 2010 with Muscle Massive, 2014 with Trixton, and 2015 with Pinkman.

He has one Hambletonian win as a driver, with Trixton.

Hambletonian Oaks winners for Takter were Gleam in 1994, Southwind Allaire in 2003, Passionate Glide in 2006, Lifetime Pursuit in 2014, Wild Honey in 2015, and All The Time in 2016. He is tied with Jan Johnson for the most training wins in the event's history, which dates back to 1971.

Malabar Man was the first of three Takter-trained horses named Horse of the Year. Malabar Man received the honor in 1997 and was followed by two-time recipient Moni Maker in 1998 and 1999. Moni Maker, a female trotter who won races in North America and Europe, retired in 2000 as the richest harness racing horse in history, with \$5.58 million in purses. Male pacer Always B Miki, who last year became the fastest horse in harness racing history when he won in 1:46 at Lexington's Red Mile, was named 2016 Horse of the Year.

Takter and Stanley Dancer are the only trainers with at least three different Horse of the Year winners. In addition, Takter is the fifth trainer to have both a pacer and trotter receive Horse of the Year honors. He joined Dancer, Blair Burgess, Billy Haughton, and Clint Hodgins in that group.

A native of Sweden, Takter could have enjoyed a comfortable career there, where his father, Bo, was already established as one of the sport's top trainers. But after getting a taste of racing in the U.S. as a teenager during a 10-month stint with the powerful Continental Farms Stable, Takter decided at the age of 22 to make his home in the States for good. He became a U.S. citizen in 2000.

Takter has been named Trainer of the Year by the U.S. Harness Writers Association a record six times: 2016, 2015, 2014, 2010, 2000 and 1996.

In 2012, Takter was inducted into the Harness Racing Hall of Fame in Goshen, N.Y.

### **YANNICK GINGRAS (Allentown, NJ)**

Yannick Gingras, who turns 38 on Aug. 4, has teamed with trainer Jimmy Takter to win the three most recent editions of the Hambletonian Oaks and has finished second in the two most recent editions of the Hambletonian.

Last year, Gingras won the Oaks with All The Time and missed adding the Hambletonian by a nose when Southwind Frank was second to Marion Marauder. In 2015, Gingras captured the Oaks with Wild Honey and was second in the Hambletonian with filly Mission Brief. Gingras' first Oaks victory came with Lifetime Pursuit in 2014.

Gingras is tied with Glen Garnsey and Ron Pierce for the second-most wins in the Hambletonian Oaks, trailing only Berndt Lindstedt's four.

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. He has won more than 6,500 races in his career and \$149 million in purses, which ranks ninth best in history.

Gingras has led the sport in purses each of the past three years. He was voted Driver of the Year by the U.S. Harness Writers Association in 2014. Among his many accomplishments, Gingras is known for his association with pacer Foiled Again, the richest horse in harness racing history, with \$7.52 million in lifetime earnings.