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**FLORIDA'S STALLION RANKS BOLSTERED
BY NEW ADDITIONS FOR 2003**

BY MATT O'NEIL

GRAEME HALL

The Florida stallion ranks recently suffered the unfortunate deaths of Jeblar and Pentelicus as well as the relocation of Zamindar back to Europe. Fortunately, reinforcements are on the way. There will be four new Grade One winners available to Florida breeders next year, as well as three other graded stakes winners. Even the newcomers who did not win stakes descend from the right sire lines and hail from superb female lineage. So here's a look at the stallions new to Florida (as of press time) for the 2003 breeding season.

With 2002 graded stakes winners like Bella Belucci and Left Bank, French Deputy (by Deputy Minister) is one of the hottest sires in America. Well he would be one of the hottest sires in

America if not for the fact that he now resides in Japan. While that is a regrettable loss for North American breeders, Florida breeders will have access to a very close relative in 2003.

French Envoy, who will set up shop at Stonehedge Farm, is a stakes-placed son of Deputy Minister out of Princess Mitterand, a half-sister to French Deputy. Princess Mitterand, by Seattle Slew, was a stakes winner in Southern California and also placed in a pair of Grade One events. While French Envoy never quite won a stake like his mother, he did run a troubled third in the Jaipur Handicap (G3) in 2000.

He was also a versatile runner, winning on both the turf and dirt, with his lifetime earnings of more

than \$100,000 nearly equally earned among those two surfaces. Deputy Minister has proved to be a strong sire of sires with the likes of Left Bank, as well as Dehere (also now in Japan) Silver Deputy, Salt Lake, and the promising trio of 2002 freshman sires Deputy Commander, Awesome Again and Touch Gold. With French Envoy's race record and female family, his future promises to be bright as well.

Most Thoroughbred racing fans vividly recall Touch Gold denying Silver Charm the Triple Crown in the 1997 Belmont Stakes (G1). What many fans may not remember is that there was a Triple Crown winner, of sorts, that season. Florida-bred Honor Glide swept Arlington Park's Mid-America triple during the summer of '97, culminating with a victory in the Secretariat Stakes (G1).

Many may also forget just what a war horse this son of Honor Grades was. He won another Grade One at age five, the Sword Dancer Invitational Handicap at Saratoga. He also won the Niagara Breeders' Cup Stakes (G2) at Woodbine as a sprightly seven year-old. The numbers from his remarkable career: 37 starts, 11 wins and nearly \$1.4 million in earnings.

A look at Honor Glide's female family reveals the source of his consistency and longevity. His dam is a sister to three stakes winners, including April Run who won the Turf Classic (G1) at ages three and four. She is also a sister to Northern View, a stakes winner in Europe who stayed sound long enough to earn blacktype during five consecutive seasons of racing. In an age where lack of racing soundness is decried over and over, Florida breeders should not forget about Honor Glide in 2003.

Eugene and Laura Melnyk's Winding Oaks farm will welcome their first stallion in 2003. And what a prospect they have in Graeme Hall. On the race-track, he was multiple graded stakes-placed as a juvenile. At three, he went wire to wire in the Arkansas Derby (G2), on his way to the spring Classics. By the end of the summer, he had added the Jim Dandy Stakes (G2), defeating eventual Travers Stakes (G1) winner Unshaded in the process.

As if his race record wasn't enough to get excited about, Graeme Hall also hails from a strong and active female family. He is a half-brother to the stakes winning filly Harmony Lodge (a \$1.65 mil-

lion two-year-old in training purchase), and another sibling sold for \$1.85 million at Saratoga in 2001. His dam is the graded stakes-winning Crafty Prospector mare Win Crafty Lady who herself is a

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sister to promising Florida stallion Diligence. Being a grandson of Deputy Minister also doesn't hurt his chances to be a major success and put Winding Oaks squarely on the stallion map.

By Storm Cat out of a multiple Grade One winner, Lake Austin brings a world of pedigree to Sunrise Stable South in 2003. In 1994, his dam, Lakeway, had about as strong a three-year-old campaign as a filly can have. She won the Santa Anita Handicap (G1) and Hollywood Oaks (G1), as well as the Las Virgenes Stakes (G1) and Mother Goose Stakes (G1). She also ran second in the Kentucky Oaks (G1) and Alabama Stakes (G1). Surprisingly, she was not named champion that year (the award went to Heavenly Prize).

Lakeway was bred to be the kind of filly she was, being by Seattle Slew out of a full sister to Saratoga Six. As if that weren't enough to make Lake Austin appealing, he is by the most influential sire this side of Mr. Prospector. Sixteen different sons of Storm Cat have now sired stakes win-

PISTOLS AND ROSES

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SNOW RIDGE

ners, six have sired Grade One winners and collectively they have sired nearly 100 individual stakes winners. On the racetrack Lake Austin won three times and earned nearly \$125,000. (He attempted stakes company three times, finishing a close fourth (beaten 1 1/2 lengths) in the Saranac (G3) at Saratoga.)

Montbrook's best son, Outofthebox, comes home to Florida to stand at Sez Who Thoroughbreds in 2003. Even beyond being by one of Florida's top stallions, Outofthebox has a decidedly Florida pedigree. His dam, Cricket Box, is by Notebook and she is a sister to multiple Grade One-winning Mighty Appealing (by Valid Appeal).

As is often the case with Florida-breds, Outofthebox made quite a name for himself on the national stage. He won his first two starts as a juvenile by a combined 24 lengths and quickly developed into one of the country's top three year olds. He was in the thick of the Kentucky Derby picture in the spring of 2001, running second to Songandaprayer in the Fountain of Youth Stakes (G1) and a troubled second to Monarchos in the Florida Derby (G1).

An injury as the odds-on choice in the Flamingo Stakes (G3) ended any Derby dreams, but by fall Outofthebox was back with a vengeance. On a muddy track he wore down E Dubai to win the Super Derby (G1) at Louisiana Downs in late September. He followed that performance with a

troubled third to older horses in the Fayette Stakes (G3) at Keeneland. Outofthebox retired with five wins from 16 starts and earnings of \$734,000.

Another stallion making a homecoming to Florida, although belatedly, is Pistols and Roses. The Florida-bred son of Darn That Alarm was a fixture on the South Florida circuit in the early to mid-1990's. As a juvenile, he won the Bahamas Stakes and the Everglades Stakes, both at Hialeah. At three, he added the Flamingo Stakes and ventured north to take the Blue Grass Stakes (G2) at Keeneland.

While most horses fall by the wayside after consistently taking on top-flight competition, Pistols and Roses was just getting started. At four he won the Donn Handicap (G1) and had yet another fine season at age five, again winning the Donn and Ben Ali Stakes (G3) from his 15 starts. All told the gallant grey fully campaigned through five consecutive years, won seven stakes and \$1.68 million. Pistols and Roses stood his first several seasons in Kentucky where he has sired a pair of stakes winners and the earners of over \$2.2 million.

The well-traveled Shanawi settles down in Central Florida at Stone Bridge Farm for 2003. The son of Caerleon began his career in France for The Aga Khan. There he broke his maiden in the listed Prix de Clairefontaine, in what would be his final start on that side of the Atlantic.

Shanawi then landed in California where he ran

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competitively with the top American turf specialists, namely Florida-bred Marlin and Sandpit (Brz). His finest moment came in the 1997 San Luis Obispo Handicap (G2) when he prevailed by half a length in that fixture. As an Aga Khan alum, it is no surprise to find that Shanawi comes from a

One-winning grandsons of Storm Cat at stud anywhere (joining Menifee whose first crop is now yearlings and Johannesburg who also retires this year).

Snow Ridge is out of a stakes-placed Woodman mare who is a sister to the hard knocking stakes

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prolific female family. His dam is a sister to Epsom Derby winner Shergar as well as the graded winners Shernazar and Sharamana. Shanawi gives Florida breeders in search of such classic quality a lot to consider.

If they gave Eclipse Awards out in July there is little doubt that Snow Ridge would have been named champion sprinter of 2002. He came out the gates on Jan. 1 of this year in the El Conejo Stakes (G3) at Santa Anita and won impressively by 3 1/2 lengths. In fact Snow Ridge never really looked back until he reached the winner's circle in the San Carlos Handicap (G1) in early March. Along the way, he conquered last year's Eclipse Sprint Champion Squirtle Squirt in the Palos Verdes Handicap (G2).

He was no slouch as a three year old in 2001 either, winning five times and taking home the hardware in the Kentucky Cup Sprint (G2). Snow Ridge becomes the first major son of Tabasco Cat to enter stud and will be one of only three Grade

winner Fighting Fantasy (16 wins and earnings of \$572,820). Snow Ridge will stand at Padua in partnership with W. T. Young's Overbrook Farm. Those two parties are no strangers to exciting stallions and it looks like they have yet another one.

Three Wonders is a newcomer to Hidden Point Farm. Bred very similarly to Snow Ridge, he is by Storm Cat out of the Woodman mare, Wood of Binn. Three Wonders is the first foal from that mare and her second foal is the graded stakes winner Distilled.

While well-bred sons of Storm Cat seemingly all get a chance at stud, Three Wonders also has the race record to make an attractive prospect. He broke his maiden on the dirt at a flat mile in late August of his juvenile season. As a sophomore he won the Kent Stakes (G3) on the lawn at Delaware Park. While that was his only stakes win, he did manage to rack up over \$300,000 in earnings during his three seasons on the track. ■

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