

Influencing



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A look at prominent sire lines in Florida and their impact on the stallion population in the Sunshine State

BY MATT O'NEIL

When selecting a stallion standing in Florida, what is the likelihood that he will be influenced by Northern Dancer? By Mr. Prospector? How many stallions that are influenced by Storm Cat stand in the Sunshine State? What traditionally Florida influences, like Tri Jet and Valid Appeal still survive in the stallion population? By looking at the six generation pedigrees of the

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sires that stood in Florida for the 2003 breeding season, we can begin to answer these questions. By also looking at similar figures from the stallion population in Kentucky we can put the answers into some sort of perspective.

This survey should be considered something of a snapshot of the Florida stallion population as it appeared for the 2003 breeding season. New stal-

Generations



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lions for 2004 like Repent and Lido Palace were not considered, but the recently deceased Notebook was. And to help insure relevance, only stallions that stood for a fee of \$2,000 or higher were used for this survey. In all, 120 stallions made the cut.

The average stud fee for those 120 is \$4,600 with a median fee of \$3,500. The average age of the Florida stallion population is 10.5 years old. The stallion population in Kentucky is slightly older, at 11.3 years old.

Nearly half of all Florida stallions, actually 46%, carry Northern Dancer somewhere within six generations. This should be of little surprise as the great Windfields stallion has been, along with Mr. Prospector, the most influential stallion of the late 20th century. Northern Dancer is also the most ubiquitous ancestor in the pedigrees of Kentucky stallions, where he is found in 56 % of the 2003 popula-

tion priced \$3,500 or higher.

What may be somewhat of a surprise is the large presence of Turn-To, who appears with the same frequency (46%) as Northern Dancer. While there is also a lot of Turn-To in Kentucky, where he ranks as the third most prevalent ancestor, there is actually more percentage-wise in Florida (46%-44%). Bold Ruler is another influence that survives in Florida in slightly larger numbers. The former multiple leading sire ranks as the third most prevalent ancestor in Florida, versus fourth in Kentucky, and is found in 45% of Florida stallions against 43% of Kentucky studs.

Raise A Native is the fourth most ubiquitous ancestor in Florida, where his influence is carried by 41% of the population. In the Bluegrass he ranks just behind his contemporary Northern Dancer, showing up in 52% of that sample. Looking at the figures

MR. PROSPECTOR'S influence can be found in 32 percent of Florida's stallion population.

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RAJA BABA can be found in the lineage of six Florida stallions.

from both states it's clear that Mr. Prospector is almost solely responsible for the survival of his sire in current pedigrees. Without Mr. P., Raise A Native would be carried by only around 12% of both populations. Northern Dancer, on the other hand, has laid a much broader and diverse foundation. His most prominent direct descendant in Kentucky is currently Storm Bird, who of course is so prominent mainly through his son Storm Cat. Even without Storm Bird though, Northern Dancer would still influence 43% of Kentucky stallions and 35% of Florida's.

Among the descendants of Northern Dancer, Nijinsky II is actually the most prominent in Florida. He is found in 12% of the population, out pacing Storm Bird (10%) and Danzig (8%). As far as Storm Cat is concerned, he is carried by eight Florida stallions (five sons and three grandsons) or 7%. In Kentucky there are 23 direct sons and a total of 27 stallions that carry Storm Cat somewhere within six

generations. That equates to 11% of the Kentucky population, and that number will almost assuredly increase (everywhere) considering how well Storm Cat daughters (and sons) are doing as a producers.

There are several ancestors that survive in stronger numbers in Florida than in Kentucky. Intentionally and his son, Florida-bred In Reality are prime examples, surviving in 16% and 15% of Florida stallions opposed to 10% and 8% in Kentucky respectively. Florida-bred Rough n' Tumble, damsire of In Reality, is carried by 20% of Florida stallions compared with 15% of those standing in Kentucky. Olympia is found in 20% of Florida stallions versus 16% in Kentucky. When it comes to the great Tartan runner Florida-bred Dr. Fager, however, Kentucky holds a slight edge at 9% versus 7% in Florida.

There are also some ancestors who are nearly extinct in Kentucky, who have found refuge in

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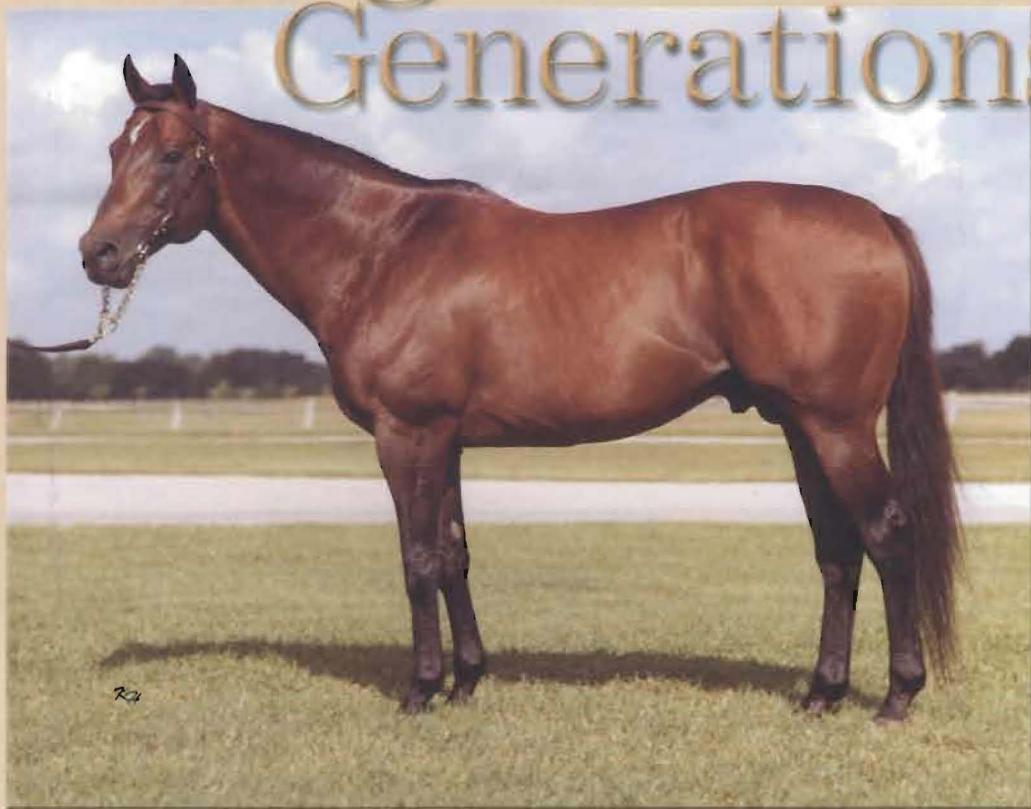


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IN REALITY is carried by 20 percent of Florida Stallions.

Florida. Valid Appeal influences only one Kentucky stallion, but lives on in four Florida studs. Raja Baba, Tri Jet and Well Decorated are three others with only singular representation up north. In Florida, Raja Baba is found in six stallions, Tri Jet five and Well Decorated four.

Another way to look at the Florida stallion population is to survey just the upper echelon of the sample. The average stud fee in Florida is \$4,600 and there are 44 stallions that stand at that fee or above.

Turn-To, who was the co-leading ancestor in the larger sample, is the runaway leader among the top stallions, with a 59% presence. Raise A Native has a 50% presence among the top tier stallions compared with a 41% figure overall. As dependant as Raise A Native is on Mr. Prospector, it's interesting that the figure for Mr. Prospector does not rise accordingly, from 28% to only 32%.

Tom Fool, who was the fifth most prevalent influence in the general Florida population at 35%, is third among the top 44 with a 45% presence. This appears to be due to the much larger presence of his son Buckpasser among the upper echelon stallions in the state. Buckpasser is found

in 22% of the larger sample and in 34% of the top priced group. Also of interest is the fact that all six stallions that carry Raja Baba stand at \$5,000 or more.

As was mentioned earlier, there are five Storm Cat sons in Florida. He has the most direct sons of any sire in the state and those five stand with an average stud fee of \$3,900. Surprisingly, that figure is only fourth best among the 11 sires with three or more sons currently standing in Florida. Of course, it should be mentioned that Stormy Atlantic was exported to Kentucky prior to the 2003 season.

Danzig, with Lost Solider, Exchange Rate, Outflanker, and Safely's Mark, has the highest average sire of sires stud fee of \$5,750. Florida has become home to four sons of Saint Ballado, whose average fee is \$4,375. There are also four sons of Mr. Prospector (average fee \$3,875) and Seattle Slew (average fee \$3,125).

With many influential sire lines represented in the Sunshine State, Thoroughbred breeders have a plethora of choices from which to make their mating decisions in hopes of breeding the next great champion. ■