

Florida Pedigree

Perspective

BY MATT O'NEIL

TO SAY THAT APRIL 9 was a big day for Florida-breds and their Florida-based stallions would be an understatement.

Bellamy Road ran out of his skin to take the Wood Memorial (G1) for the Ocala Stud stallion Concerto. Depending on how you keep track, that runner is the first grade one victor for his sire who does have a pair of grade one winners in Puerto Rico. Last summer, Bellamy Road became his sire's first graded winner (on the mainland) when he won the Cradle Stakes (G3) at River Downs. He is one of seven stakes winners sired by Concerto from first three crops that total only 106 foals.

Fellow Florida stallion Marco Bay has only 59 foals in his first six crops, but one of them is this year's Santa Anita Derby (G1) winner Buzzards Bay. He and Florida-bred runner up General John B, by Sweetsouthern saint, made the Santa Anita Derby seem like a Sunshine Millions race. Buzzards Bay is the second overall stakes winner for his sire, as well as his first unrestricted and graded win-

ner. Marco Bay is a son of Copelan and is now standing at Hidden Hill Farm for a \$3,000 fee.

While Mecke has not yet sired any runners on the grade one stage, he has been quietly siring some very nice runners the past few years. In 2005 his progeny have been performing exceptionally well.

On March 21, OBS Champions Day, two of the five stakes events were won by sons of Mecke, Mighty Mecke in the OBS Championship and Gower in OBS Sprint. Twelve days later his Deputy Lad earned blacktype with a third in the Pan American (G2) at Gulfstream. Earlier this year, Captain Lindsay placed in a pair of three year-old stakes at Tampa and Supah Blitz, arguably Mecke's best runner to date, became a millionaire. The latter also took his second career graded race when he got home first in the Tokyo City Handicap (G3) at Santa Anita on April 2.

The two new OBS stakes winners bring Mecke's lifetime stakes winner total to nine or 5.3% of foals (not including this year's juve-

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CONCERTO



MECKE

niles). His total number of stakes horses is now up to 19 which translates to 11% of his registered foals.

Mighty Mecke, Gower and Captain Lindsay are among only 15 named three year-olds in Mecke's fifth crop. He averaged nearly 39 foals in his first four crops and his numbers have rebounded with similar numbers of 2005 juveniles and yearlings. Interestingly, Mecke has yet to sire a stakes horse from his fourth crop, foals of 2001 and current year four year-olds.

The Ocala Stud based son of Maudlin leads all Florida stallions with five 2005 stakes horses.

On the racetrack, Mecke was a good late season juvenile with a win in the Affirmed Division of Florida Stallion Series and thirds in the In Reality Division and the What A Pleasure (G3). His versatility was on full display as a sophomore in 1995 with dirt wins in the Super Derby, a grade on at that point, and a third in the Florida Derby (G1). That season he also performed well on the turf winning the Tropical Park Derby (G3), and placing in the Secretariat (G1) and the Rothmans International (G1) against older runners.

At four, Mecke was kept mainly on the grass, winning the Early Times Turf Classic (G1) and the Arlington Million (G1). Thus far his progeny are showing similar precocity, versatility and class.

Supah Blitz has done his best running on the dirt with a prior win in the Del Mar Breeders' Cup (G2) and a runner up finish in the Fountain of Youth among his extensive credentials. Mecke's other graded winner, Mountain Rage, won four stakes on the grass, including the Generous (G3) as a juvenile at Hollywood Park's Autumn Turf Festival.

Mountain Rage is among eight Mecke runners who have earned blacktype at two. Eleven of his stakes horses are or were primarily dirt runners, while the remaining eight did or do their best work on the turf. 31% of his blacktype runners have either won or placed in graded events.

Mecke is bred on the Bold Ruler-Northern Dancer cross, by the Bold Ruler great grandson Maudlin out of the Nijinsky II granddaughter Beautiful Bid (by Baldski). That mare also produced 1999 Eclipse Champion Older Filly/Mare Beautiful Pleasure by Maudlin.

Looking strictly at the broodmare sire lines of the dams of his stakes horses, Mecke has sired five of his 19 stakes horses from Northern Dancer line-mares. Two of those are the stakes

winners, Sea Mist and Sea Pleasure.

Mecke has sired three stakes horses, all stakes winners, out of Mr. Prospector-line mares. Mighty Mecke is out of a daughter of the Mr. Prospector grandson Fortunate Prospect. Mecke and Fortunate Prospect share the same second dam, Biddy Big, and Mighty Mecke is therefore inbred to that mare at 3x4.

Four other Mecke stakes horses are out of mares influenced by Valid Appeal. The multiple stakes-placed Captain Lindsay and the stakes placed Longford Arms both carry Valid Appeal in the broodmare line of the second dam. The stakes-winning Rylstone is out of a Valid Appeal mare while the grade three-placed Mrs M is out of a mare by the Valid Appeal stallion World Appeal. ■

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