

Company for the Monkey

Forestry 2-year-olds flying so far

BY MATT O'NEIL

Forestry made headlines back in February when his 2-year-old colt, now named The Green Monkey, brought a record auction price of \$16 million at the Fasig-Tipton Calder sale. He is now preparing for his racing career at Todd Pletcher's barn at Churchill Downs. Meanwhile, other members of Forestry's fourth crop, with the help of the red hot Steve Asmussen, are making news of their own at the spring meet.

In the fourth race on Wednesday, the Forestry colt Sequoia King, a \$525,000 Saratoga yearling, broke well under John Velazquez and sprinted clear from post 6. Proud Leader rushed up the inside to put pressure on the leader around the turn, but Sequoia King parried back and drew off down the lane to win in hand.

"They liked him a lot and they weren't wrong. He's very nice and very professional. I didn't have to ride him hard, I kept him busy, switched my whip to left-handed and shook it at

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him, he went on about his business," Velazquez said. "It's hard to judge them right now, the reason they're here is because of their speed. He's a good mover, got a good character, he behaved perfectly in the gate. The first time, you never know, but he can improve more, definitely."

Proud Leader ran on willingly to hold the place, some 5 lengths ahead of L'Grande d'Oro and Last Dream who finished a head apart in third and fourth. Both of those colts ran on opening day with L'Grande d'Oro running second to the impressive One Good Yank.

Sequoia King and The Green Monkey are bred in very similar fashion.

Sequoia King is out of the Unbridled mare Potential Pleasure who in turn is out of a daughter of the In Reality stallion Relaunch. The Green Monkey, too, is out of an Unbridled mare and his second dam is by the In Reality son Valid Appeal.



Matt Goins

Steve Asmussen won 2-year-old races with two horses by Forestry this week.

Sequoia King is trained by Steve Asmussen for Jess Jackson's Stonestreet Farm and he stopped the timer at 52.09 over a sealed track labeled as muddy.

* Asmussen sent out another offspring of Forestry to win the second race Thursday for owner George Bolton. The Forestry lass Angel Island broke with another Asmussen trainee Sea Search and those ran side by side through the first quarter. Gallant Dreamer tracked the front pair in third and as Sea Search dropped off the pace, she surged three wide to engage Angel Island at the top of the stretch. Those two fillies then waged a spirited head and head battle down the straight, exchanging several bumps. Angel Island edged ahead nearing the wire and prevailed from the inside by a 1/2-length in what was the most entertaining baby race of the meet thus far.

* Asmussen also took the fourth Thursday with no such drama. The Successful Appeal filly Appealing Sophie outbreaks the field from post 10 and quickly secured inside position. She repelled the challenges of Abby Road and Taletobetold around the far turn and romped home by 10 1/2, the largest 2-year-old winning margin of the meet. Her time for the 4 1/2 furlongs on a moist surface labeled as fast was 52.59.

There have been seven 2-year-old races run during the first nine days of the spring meet and Appealing Sophie

was the fifth juvenile winner for Asmussen. Before his sweep of this week's baby races, he won with Richwoman on opening weekend and Datrik last Thursday. That pair, as well as Appealing Sophie, are owned by Heilighrodt Racing. Richwoman and Appealing Sophie are both by Successful Appeal, who along with Forestry, now has two juvenile winners under the Dogwoods.

* The first-crop sires of 2006 have had seven more runners in the five baby races run since opening weekend.

Fans of Came Home cashed a nice bet on April 12 when his first starter, Beautiful Venue, won paying \$17.60. The filly actually dumped rider Mark Guidry in the post parade and ran off toward the first turn before being picked up by the outriders. None the worse for wear, Beautiful Venue tracked the speedy Joangel in the early stages of the real race and drew even with that rival at the eighth pole. Joangel put up a good fight but Beautiful Venue prevailed under heavy urging. Joangel ran on well to hold the place. Beautiful Venue ran the 4 1/2 furlongs in 52.90. She is trained by Barbara Beagle for owner Fred J. Miller III.

Officer has already been represented by a winner in Europe and his first North American runner finished fourth in the second race Thursday. Police Woman, gave away several lengths out of the gate, then made a nice run around the turn before being beaten a neck for third money.

Since last weekend we've also seen the first runners by Pure Prize and 2001 Blue Grass winner Millennium Wind as well as a few more runners by Johannesburg.

Last Sunday we saw the first Yonaguska runner, the filly Shesadreamcatcher who finished fourth to Richwoman at odds of nearly 7-1. On Wednesday Misty Light, the first runner by Festival Of Light, placed third to Datrik. Festival Of Light is a Texas-based son of A.P. Indy, who won a G3 in Dubai and is a half-brother to Arch. Those aren't credentials that would necessarily suggest precocious offspring.

Two sons of Johannesburg have also been unveiled at Keeneland so far. On Friday, Johann Star finished ninth at 68-1 while the more highly regarded Teufelsburg debuted on Wednesday at 9-2. The latter broke awkwardly, made a nice run around the turn, and ran willingly (and a bit greenly) through the straight to finish fourth. A better result can be expected next time out.

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