

Elusive Quality Takes Control

Freshman star leaps past Swiss Yodeler

by
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With their surprisingly good starts, Elusive Quality and Swiss Yodeler have dominated the 2002 freshman sire headlines. Between them, they have already sired 19 winners and five stakes winners who have earned nearly \$900,000. But there are other freshman surprises who have quietly gotten off to rather solid starts, including a pair who are doing well in small markets.

The Florida-based Lucky Lionel, currently eighth among 2002 freshman sires, is one such stallion. From a crop of 43 foals, he shows 11 starters, six winners and a pair of stakes horses. The nine-year-old son of Mt. Livermore was a group three winner at two in England and despite going winless at three, did place in two group races in England and Italy. At age four in America, he set a six and a half furlong track record winning an allowance at Santa Anita.

It should be noted that Lucky Lionel has been well supported by the sprawling Adena Springs broodmare band, as evidenced by the fact that there is yearling half brother to Preakness winner Red Bullet on the way. It should not, however, diminish his solid start as a stallion.

Making his mark

It's safe to say that Benchmark did not have access to such a powerful private broodmare band standing at River Edge Farm in California. It is also safe to say that it's a bit surprising to see a son of Alydar who did not win a stake until age six, siring early two-year-olds. But there he is, ranked tenth on the 2002 Freshman Sire List. Thus far Benchmark has sired four winners from 10 starters including Standard Setter who has placed in pair of stakes events on the Northern California fair circuit.

An 11-year-old son of Alydar, Benchmark was actually unraced at two and winless until his four year-old season. It wasn't until his six-year-old campaign that he hit his stride as a racehorse, winning a trio of grade two events at Santa Anita and Del Mar. While being a son of Alydar has proven to be a liability at stud, Benchmark is still impeccably bred. His dam is the Danzig mare Winters' Love, a sister to three stakes winners including Belmont Stakes (G1) winner Caveat and grade one winner Tranquility Lake.

Eleven foals, eight starters, four winners: With numbers like that it's no surprise that Ghostly Moves is the hottest new sire in New Mexico. It also doesn't hurt that he is also the sire of Rio Grande Senorita Futurity winner Shemoves-likeaghost.

Ghostly Moves is a son of Silver Ghost and the grade one winner Dance Teacher, a daughter of Smarten who is also half-sister to the tough sprinting mare Gold Mover. He was a winner at two and placed in the Pegasus (G2) as a sophomore. Ghostly Moves placed in three additional stakes over the next two seasons although was he never made the winners circle in a black type event.

The Washington State-based Snowbound has a relatively large crop of 38 foals on the ground. Thus far eight have

started with only two winners. Those two winners however, have both won stakes. Snowbound Bob took the ATBA Spring Sales Stakes at Turf Paradise and First Snowbound proved victorious in the Yavapai County Arizona Breeders' Futurity.

Snowbound was a successful pinhook for James D. I. Haley, who paid \$140,000 for him at the 1996 Keeneland September Sale. He was worth \$500,000 to Bob and Beverly Lewis at the 1997 Barretts Two-Year-Old Sale. Snowbound never made it to the races that year, but did win two races at three, none of them stakes. The seven-year-old son of Meadowlake is a brother to three stakes winners and stands at Pulse Ranches.

Onto the charts

Since the last issue of *OBI*, 21 freshman sires have sired their first winners. 1997 Champion Juvenile and Horse of the Year Favorite Trick is perhaps the most prominent of those. Dance Brightly (by Mr. Prospector), Banker's Gold (Forty Niner), Cape Town (Seeking the Gold), Formal Gold (Black Tie Affair), and Labeeb (Lear Fan) are the other Kentucky-based stallions who have gotten on the board in the past month.

Stormy Atlantic, whose daughter made a big splash by bringing a final bid of \$1.9 million at Barretts March Sale, is also now the sire of a winner, Jimmy O. Others with their first winner: More Royal (by Mt. Livermore, standing in Florida), Cyberspace (Forty Niner, FL), Truckee (Danzig, CA), Commandero (Unbridled, TX), Saxton (Summer Squall), Frisco View (Mt. Livermore), Ops Smile (Caveat, MD), Kiridashi (Bold Ruckus, ON), Peyrano (Southern Halo, CA), Storm Ashore (Storm Cat, CA), Storm Broker (Storm Cat, MD), and Yarrow Brae (Deputy Minister, MD). Wild Deputy (Wild Again, CA) and Chopin (Mr. Prospector, AZ) have both sired two winners since the last issue.

Elusive Quality and Swiss Yodeler remain locked in battle atop the freshman sire standings. Distorted Humor, with only three winners, is third. (It helps that a pair of those winners have already won stakes). Indian Charlie and Grand Slam round out the top five, the latter without the benefit of a stakes winner as of yet (but with two stakes horses).

The top of the overall juvenile standings contains a few familiar faces. Storm Cat, with five juvenile stakes winners already this year, leads over Elusive Quality. End Sweep with 10 winners and two stakes winners checks in third ahead of Swiss Yodeler and A. P. Indy. 



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