

Deja Vue All Over Again

Freshman stars confirm their standing

by
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It's beginning to look a lot like 2002 all over again atop the first crop sire standings. And for a lot of reasons that's a good thing. Two years ago, Distorted Humor, Awesome Again and Elusive Quality battled to the last week of the year to determine supremacy and it was close enough to demand a recount of sorts. The final standings were not official until an early 2003 medication ruling in France that upheld the disqualification of an Elusive Quality runner from a stakes win.

The 2002 crop, has since gone on to prove that that initial flash of success was no fluke. Elusive Quality and Awesome Again now stand for six figures. Both those stallions have sired certain Eclipse Award winners in Ghostzapper and Smarty Jones in 2004, and they will join Distorted Humor (Funny Cide) and Cape Town (Bird Town) in the Class of '02 Sires of Champions Club. All told, at least 11 third crop sires have sired grade one winners and six members of that crop will stand for \$50,000 or more in 2005. The final first crop numbers strongly hinted at a deep and quality laden bunch in 2002 and the 2004 first crop standings offers many parallels so far.

2002 was the first year where four first crop stallions surpassed the \$1 million mark for progeny earnings. This year that record has already been matched by Yes It's True, Successful Appeal, Giant's Causeway and Fusaichi Pegasus. All four are in contention for the top honors with only a little over \$200,000 separating fourth from first. Like two years ago, it could come down to the last week of the year to determine who grabs the mantle as Leading First Crop stallion.

The parallels extend to stakes winners as well. Two years ago, Elusive Quality tied Red Ransom for most first crop juvenile stakes winners with six, while Distorted Humor and Tale of the Cat were responsible for four juvenile stakes winners each. This year, each of the top four freshman have already sired four stakes winners and two more, Cape Canaveral and More Than Ready have sired three each. With just under two months to go in the year as of this writing, the current top ten freshman stallions have already collectively sired the same number of stakes winners, 28, as the final top ten in 2002.

There are also similarities in grade one winners. In 2002, Elusive Quality sired a group one winner in Europe and Awesome Again sired grade one Champagne winner Tocet in the states. This year, Giant's Causeway has group one winner Shamardal across the pond and Yes It's True has a Champagne winner in Proud Accolade.

With large foal crops and rich juvenile stakes programs around the country, it may seem academic

that first crop sires will, almost by default, attain high totals in progeny earnings and stakes winners. But just last year, not a single first crop stallion managed to reach \$1 million in progeny earnings and no first crop stallion sired more than a pair of juvenile stakes winners.

One difference between this year's first crop class and the freshman of 2002 is the impact of the regional stallions. Two years ago, the only non-Kentucky-based stallions to rank in the top ten were Swiss Yodeler (California) and Stormy Atlantic (Florida before moving to Kentucky). This year, Yes It's True and Successful Appeal are one two in the standings on the strength of progeny sired while standing in Florida. Running Stag, still in the Sunshine State, and Precise End from New York also rank among the top ten.

In 2002, only three other regional stallions even made the top twenty. This year second ten contains six regional sires: Sweetsouthernstain (Fla), Western Expression (NY), Tiger Ridge (Fla), Straight Man (Fla), Old Topper (Ca) and Dance Master (Fla). Catienus, who currently stands in New York also ranks in the top twenty, but he stood in Kentucky his first few years.

So all told, half of the top twenty 2004 first crop stallions stood or stand in pastures other than Kentucky bluegrass. But there is a bit of disparity in quality so far. The top twenty have sired a combined total of 34 stakes winners, and 20 (58%) of those are by the Kentucky based stallions, compared with 14 by their regional counterparts.

Sweet Catomine's win in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies all but assured her sire, Storm Cat, of another Juvenile Sire title. She also will become his second Eclipse Award winner, following fellow Champion Juvenile Filly, Storm Flag Flying in 2002.

The Eclipse Award for juvenile colt is still up for grabs after Wilko's shocker in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile. Afleet Alex is by far the most accomplished juvenile colt in America, with wins in the grade one Hopeful, grade two Sanford as well as runner up finishes in the Juvenile and Champagne (both grade one). But there is still one more grade one juvenile stakes left, the Hollywood Futurity on December 18. With Wilko, Declan's Moon and Proud Accolade all under consideration, Eclipse voters would do well to hang on to their ballots until that one is in the books. **JOB**



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El Prado is the final Kentucky veteran that will join the six figure club in 2004. And why not? He has only been first or second on the General Sire List three years running and were it not for a certain Oaklawn Park bonus, he would be well on his way to his second title in three years. He is already over \$9 million in 2004 progeny earnings, a mark previously achieved by only Storm Cat (twice) and A. P. Indy.

Including Broad Brush (announced as private for 2005) and newcomer Smarty Jones, 15 stallions will stand for \$100,000 or more in the new year.

Forestry is fast approaching six figure status with 11 stakes winners from his first two crops and an amazing 12% stakes winners to foals ratio from his first crop. His yearling averages, always very good, crept up even more in 2004 from \$240,000 to \$304,000, more than justifying his 2005 fee of \$75,000, up from \$50,000.

The on again off again Pulpit is on again and has also earned a \$25,000 bump up to \$60,000. He has sired the 2004 grade one winners Tapit and Stroll as well four other graded winners and his yearling sold for an average of \$217,000 up from \$172,000 in 2003.

Vindication has pulled off a rare feat, commanding a higher fee his second year than in his first. Perhaps the last grade one winning son of Seattle Slew, he met with overwhelming demand last year for \$50,000 and his fee for 2005 was adjusted according to \$60,000. Officer is another who will see slight increase before his first crop hits the track in 2006. He will stand for \$15,000, a \$2,500 increase from last year.

Smart move

Just about every week it seems there is a new stakes winner by Smart Strike and breeders will have to pay \$35,000 for his services next year, up from \$25,000. Langfuhr, who, like Smart Strike has achieved a lot of his success in Canada, has also earned a \$10,000 increase to \$30,000 for 2005. Smoke Glacken has parlayed runners like Read the Footnotes, Smok'n Frolic and Kilgowan into a \$5,000 increase to \$30,000. Current top five freshman sire More Than Ready will see his fee upped from \$5,000 to \$20,000 as well.

The biggest mover among the Kentucky veterans under \$20,000 is Malibu Moon. The son of A. P. Indy graduated to Kentucky from Maryland last year and in 2004 he has sired leading juvenile Declan's Moon. His 2005 fee will be \$17,500 compared with \$10,000 in 2004.

And then there are the regional expatriates, Yes It's True, Successful Appeal, Northern Affect from Florida and City Zip from New York. All four will move to Kentucky for 2005 with Leading Freshman sires Yes It's True and Successful Appeal standing at \$25,000, roughly five times their 2004 number. Northern Affect, on the strength of his Eclipse Award contender Affect Alex will also be moving north with a \$12,500 price tag, over twice his Florida fee. And Ghostzapper's Breeders' Cup Classic victory not only secured a hefty raise for his sire, it helped break his big brother City Zip out of New York. The grade one winning juvenile will stand at Lane's End for \$15,000 and his first crop will run next spring. **BOB**

Sires of Stakes Winners

RNK	SIRE	CROPS	SIRE	FOALS	STRS	WNRS	SW
1	- A.P. Indy	9	Seattle Slew	627	179	93	21
2	- El Prado (IRE)	9	Sadler's Wells	558	194	98	15
3	- Storm Cat	14	Storm Bird	931	131	74	13
4	- Distorted Humor	3	Forty Niner	183	124	68	12
5	- Grand Slam	3	Gone West	301	173	89	11
	- Smart Strike	5	Mr. Prospector	273	133	78	11
7	- Forestry	2	Storm Cat	125	63	33	10
	- Not For Love	6	Mr. Prospector	334	171	95	10
	- Unbridled's Song	5	Unbridled	396	162	71	10
10	- Alphabet Soup	4	Cozzene	312	177	102	9
	- Carson City	11	Mr. Prospector	761	179	98	9
	- Kris S.	20	Roberto	828	105	48	9
	- Langfuhr	4	Danzig	320	186	93	9
14	- Dynaformer	12	Roberto	665	154	69	8
	- Smoke Glacken	4	Two Punch	226	149	94	8
	- Tale Of The Cat	3	Storm Cat	309	192	104	8
	- Theatrical (IRE)	14	Nureyev	765	141	51	8
18	- Devil His Due	6	Devil's Bag	450	189	99	7
	- Montbrook	7	Buckaroo	343	123	67	7
	- Polish Numbers	10	Danzig	483	134	67	7
	- Roar	5	Forty Niner	294	164	101	7
	- Skip Away	3	Skip Trial	229	124	79	7
	- Summer Squall	10	Storm Bird	326	73	39	7
	- Valid Expectations	4	Valid Appeal	229	129	80	7
	- Victory Gallop	2	Cryptoclearance	136	87	44	7

Broodmare Sires of 2004 SWS

RNK	STALLION	CROPS	SIRE	FOALS	STRS	WNRS	SW
1	- Mr. Prospector	27	Raise A Native	1175	30	14	14
2	- Danzig	21	Northern Dancer	989	68	31	13
	- Seattle Slew	23	Bold Reasoning	1036	65	29	13
4	- Dixieland Band	17	Northern Dancer	1015	156	54	12
5	- Deputy Minister	18	Vice Regent	986	131	55	11
	- Green Dancer	26	Nijinsky 2nd	1061	62	24	11
	- Storm Bird	20	Northern Dancer	678	10	3	11
8	- Kris S.	20	Roberto	828	105	48	10
	- Relaunch	21	In Reality	724	14	5	10
	- Saratoga Six	17	Alydar	609	43	19	10
	- Woodman	15	Mr. Prospector	1308	184	60	10
12	- Dynaformer	12	Roberto	665	154	69	9
	- Forty Niner	13	Mr. Prospector	615	133	52	9
	- Silver Deputy	13	Deputy Minister	656	170	90	9
	- Spectacular Bid	21	Bold Bidder	736	28	11	9
16	- Alleged	23	Hoist The Flag	943	3	0	8
	- Bold Ruckus	21	Boldnesian	628	12	6	8
	- Carson City	11	Mr. Prospector	761	179	98	8
	- Miswaki	20	Mr. Prospector	1099	97	43	8
	- Seeking The Gold	12	Mr. Prospector	632	125	42	8



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