

Juvenile Sales Surge

Record-breaking season for two-year-olds

by
Matt
O'Neil

*"Yes It's
True is also
making
quite a
name for
himself,
matching
Successful
Appeal with three
winners and a pair
of early
stakes
winners."*

By nearly any standard, the 2004 two-year-olds in training sales were a smashing success. Collectively, gross (up 22.9%), average (34.5%), and median (26.7%) for the five select juvenile sales all surged past 2003 standards, while RNAs (36.6%) were down.

Three juvenile colts sold for more than the previous \$2.7 million record and two of those record-breakers sold on the same afternoon. This spring also saw a record price for a juvenile filly – the \$2 million Awesome Again half-sister to Madcap Escapade at Barretts March Sale. Overall, there were seven \$1 million-plus juveniles sold in 2004 and that's a record as well, one more than in 1999.

A major reason behind the new market strength are the federal tax incentives that enable buyers to depreciate their capital purchases, such as racehorses, on an accelerated schedule. The opportunity to take advantage of these incentives expires at the end of December, so a strong market looks likely at all the sales for the rest of the year.

Top of his crop

The \$4.5 million record-setting colt at Fasig-Tipton Calder helped insure that his sire, Fusaichi Pegasus, would reign supreme as the leading first-crop sire by juvenile sales average. This past spring a total of seven FuPegs sold for an average of \$1,083,610. That figure is also good enough to lead all sires by 2004 two-year-old average.

Another first-year sire, Stephen Got Even, got a big boost at Fasig-Tipton Calder when his son out of the mare Blacktie Bid brought a short-lived record \$3.1 million. His eight juvenile offerings averaged \$606,250, good enough to place behind Fusaichi Pegasus and Pulpit (and ahead of Storm Cat and Silver Deputy) among all sires. Dixie Union, with a \$1.4 million colt at Keeneland April, ranked third among the freshman with a juvenile average of \$246,250. Giant's Causeway (\$180,038) and Golden Missile (\$172,583) rounded out the top five.

In 2003 Menifee, Forestry, Sea of Secrets, Victory Gallop, and Old Trieste were the top five first crop sires by juvenile average. Forestry, Victory Gallop, and Old Trieste all currently rank among the top five second-crop stallions.

Going back to the class of 2002, Stormy Atlantic, by virtue of his \$1.9 million juvenile filly at Barretts (Atlantic Ocean) led his peers in terms of juvenile average. He was followed by Touch Gold, Grand Slam, Wild Rush, and Coronado's Quest. Among those, Grand Slam and Wild Rush are currently ranked among the top five third-crop stallions by cumulative earnings.

Stakes success

With a 2004 juvenile sales average of \$61,000, Successful Appeal ranks roughly 22nd among the freshman stallions in that category. But that was before he left the gate, and since then, he's accumulated with three maiden winners, and two stakes winners, including a multiple stakes winner now in Lunarpal. With early numbers like those it's no surprise that the son of Valid Appeal is still the leader in terms of juvenile progeny earnings, both among

his sire crop and among all sires.

Another speedy Florida-based stallion, Yes It's True, is also making quite a name for himself, matching Successful Appeal with three winners and a pair of early stakes winners. His daughter Chandtrue won the restricted Willard Proctor Stakes at Hollywood while B.B. Best used a 14 3/4-length maiden win as a springboard to victory in Calder's Wynn Dot Comma Stakes. His third winner, Yes It's Gold, also broke her maiden by 14-plus lengths and should be headed for a stakes engagement soon.

Lion Hearted, a graded stakes-placed son of Storm Cat, became the third member of his generation to sire a stakes winner when his Chocolate Brown won the \$75,000 Fashion Stakes at Belmont. Lion Hearted is a half-brother to Strolling Along, out of the mare Cadillacing, a full-sister to Easy Goer. He looks ready to follow in the footsteps of the other successful Northview stallions out of prominent Phipps families, Polish Numbers and Not For Love.

Freshman standings

Among the freshman sires, Fusaichi Pegasus, More Than Ready, Straight Man, and the Texas-based Magic Cat have all sired three early winners. Including the latter two, 14 first-crop stallions have sired their initial winners in the past month. Grade one winners Dixie Union and Dubai Millennium are the big names among that group, along with another grade one winner, Running Stag.

Also on the board are a pair of exceptionally well bred sons of Storm Cat – Bernstein and Tiger Ridge. Dance Master and Cape Canaveral are the remaining Kentucky-based sires with recent first winners while the regional stallions Makula King (two winners), Matricule (also a pair of winners), Rod and Staff, Crowning Storm, and Lightning Al (in Puerto Rico) are all now also sires of winners.

Storm Boot's son Primal Storm won the first graded stakes, for two-year-olds in New York, the Flash Stakes (G3), on Belmont Stakes (G1) eve. That win put Storm Boot among the leading juvenile sires behind Successful Appeal, Swiss Yodeler, Carson City, Yes It's True, and Stravinsky. Swiss Yodeler continues as a win factory, with four more winners in the last month. The son of Eastern Echo now has seven two year-old winners as of early June. 



Matt O'Neil is a pedigree analyst and works at Taylor Made Farm's Stallion Division.