

Lasting Success

Successful Appeal outlast foes for freshman crown

by
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"Successful Appeal's progeny earnings is the second highest total in history"

The skeptics, this writer included, said that Successful Appeal's early season stay atop the freshman sire list would prove temporary once the rich two turn races were run in the fall. We were all wrong. The son of Valid Appeal, with only 37 juveniles in this crop, will be crowned the leading first crop stallion come January 1. And he'll do it going away. In fact, Successful Appeal's numbers are among the best ever for a first crop sire.

Hostile Witness became his sires' sixth first crop stakes winner with his triumph in the Inaugural Stakes at Tampa on December 12. That puts Successful Appeal in the company of Elusive Quality and Red Ransom as the only sires with six first crop juvenile stakes winners.

Successful Appeal's progeny earnings of over \$1.6 million is also the second highest total in history. Back in 1984, Danzig's first crop racked up over \$2.1 million, with Chief's Crown winning the inaugural \$1 million Breeders' Cup Juvenile and Stephan's Odyssey taking the Hollywood Futurity, a \$1 million race at the time. Honour and Glory's \$1,436,584 in 2000 had previously been the second highest first crop juvenile earnings figure.

Florida flyers

The one-two finish by Successful Appeal and Yes It's True also illustrates the impact that Florida-based stallions have had on the first crop sires lists. In 2001 Valid Expectations and Open Forum pulled off the same Florida freshman sire exacta with their one-two finish. In six of the past ten years at least one Florida-based stallion was counted among the top five and in four of those years there were two. In that same period, End Sweep, Valid Expectations and now Successful Appeal have been the first crop leader at year's end while Storm Creek, Diablo, Rizzi and Open Forum finished ranked second. It's interesting to note that not one of those stallions, still living, remains in Florida.

Successful Appeal will be the second son of Valid Appeal, and the third In Reality-line sire, in the past five years to be Leading First Crop Sire. Honour and Glory (by Relaunch) was the top freshman in 2000 and Valid Expectations (Valid Appeal) took top honors the following year.

Looking at the sire-lines of the top-ten first crop sires from (and including) 2000 to this year, the usual suspects appear. The Northern Dancer-line has produced 17 of the 50 top first crop sires the past five years, with sons of Storm Cat accounting for eight of those.

The Raise A Native-line has produced 13 top ten first crop stallions, all but one (Maria's Mon) a descendant of Mr. Prospector.

The Bold Ruler-line is responsible for five of the recent top ten, three of those sons of A. P. Indy, and all except Yes It's True descending through Seattle Slew. Aside from Honour and Glory, Valid Expectations and Successful Appeal, Valid Wager has represented the In Reality-line in the top ten. There have also been three Damascus-line stallions that have made good early showings: Swiss Yodeler (by Eastern Echo), Afternoon Declites (Private Terms) and Friendly Lover (Cutlass). Three male-line descendants of Caro have cracked the top ten as well: Running Stag this year, Indian Charlie and Tejano Run.

Perhaps the biggest surprise is the Turn-To/Hail to Reason sire-line, or rather the lack of that line. Only More than Ready in 2004 has represented that sire-line on any top ten first crop sire list the past five years.

Mr. Prospector has had three direct sons in the top ten in recent years including Fusaichi Pegasus and Cape Canaveral in 2004. The latter was represented by his first graded winner when Megscape took the Valley Stream Stakes (G3) at Aqueduct. The Overbrook-based stallion has had a fine season with his initial crop on the track, with two other stakes winners and eight total stakes horses, second only to Successful Appeal.

Another Mr. Prospector stallion, the late Chester House, sired his first stakes winner when Exceptional Ride won the Grand Canyon Stakes at Churchill Downs. Florida-based stallions Sweetsouthern Saint and Running Stag also came through with their initial stakes winners at Calder. Better Than Bonds won the What A Pleasure for Sweetsouthern Saint and Running Bobcats won the Cassidy for Running Stag.

Storm Cat with 16 juvenile winners and four juvenile stakes winners has wrapped up another overall Juvenile Sires title. It's his eighth such title from his 14 crops to race. Two of his 2004 stakes winners are grade one winners, Consolidator and Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies heroine Sweet Catomine. She will become Storm Cat's second Eclipse Champion when those awards are announced in January. 



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