

# More questions than answers

## *Freshman pose some interesting puzzles*

by  
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As the juvenile racing season gets underway, there are more questions than answers when it comes to the new crop of stallions.

Will the Florida-based sires have a big impact again this year?

Last year, Successful Appeal and Yes It's True finished one-two on the first crop sires list, earning van rides from Central Florida to Central Kentucky. The Florida-based members of this year's sire crop show great potential as well. After the first five juvenile sales in 2005, the Padua stallion Exchange Rate leads his crop with a \$340,000 average. That figure includes a \$1.05 million colt at Fasig-Tipton Calder. Walmac South's grade one winner Songandaprayer also has a million dollar baby to his credit, a \$1.9 million colt sold at Barretts March. He currently ranks third among the 2005 first crop stallions with a \$225,000 juvenile average. Two other Florida-based grade one winners are showing promise. Vosburgh winner Trippi's first crop of juveniles have sold for an average of \$106,000 so far. He is a son of 1998 leading freshman stallion End Sweep and the first grade one-winning son of Forty Niner to have runners. Frank De Francis Memorial winner Delaware Township's first crop of juveniles has averaged six figures. He's a son of the good juvenile sire Notebook.

### **A slice of reality**

Will the In Reality-line come through again?

Three of the last five leading first crop sires have come from the In Reality sire-line, Honour and Glory in 2000, Valid Expectations in 2001 and Successful Appeal last year. In 2005, that male line is represented by two-time Breeders' Cup winner Tiznow and the Florida-based grade two winner Put It Back. Tiznow is by the California-based In Reality grandson Cee's Tizzy (by Relaunch) while Put It Back is by the Relaunch stallion Honour and Glory. Will the King's Bishop produce yet another top first crop sire?

Since 1996 nine stallions that won or placed in Saratoga's King's Bishop have gone on to rank among the leading first crop stallions. Salt Lake, End Sweep, Honour and Glory, Elusive Quality, Distorted Humor, Tale of the Cat, Forestry, Successful Appeal and More Than Ready all finished in the money in the grade one sprint on the Travers undercard. Five of those colts would become leading first crop sires, with the another three ranked among the top five. Last year More Than Ready, the 2000 King's Bishop

winner, ranked number six on the first crop stallion charts.

This year's sire class has two King's Bishop alumni, Five Star Day, second to Forestry in 1999 and City Zip, third to Squirrel Squirt in 2001. Five Star Day is already off to a good start with his filly Five Star Holding beating colts in New York's first baby race. Five Star Day and City Zip are by the late Carson City and it will be interesting to see if either or both prove to be a worthy heir.

### **Western expansion?**

Will the Gone West line expand further in America? The sons of Gone West are certainly doing their part to keep that branch of the Mr. Prospector line going strong. In Europe, the Zafonic son Xaar has already sired a group winner from his first (full) crop. Now El Corredor is the first major Gone West grandson to have runners in North America. On the track, the son of Mr. Greeley used his high speed to win four graded events, including the grade one Cigar Mile. Will Thunder Gulch, Unbridled's Song, and Maria's Mon emerge as sires of sires?

All three of those stallions sired grade one-winning colts early on and those runners will get first crack to extend their lines this year.

The aforementioned Songandaprayer hails from Unbridled's Song first crop and won the (then) grade one Fountain of Youth as a sophomore. Maria's Mon sired Kentucky Derby winner Monarchos in his first crop. The Monarchos yearlings averaged over \$100,000 last year and his juveniles are averaging \$128,000 in 2005. Thunder Gulch sired Point Given, his first major North American colt, out of his second crop. That striking chestnut won two thirds of the 2001 Triple Crown en route to Horse of the Year honors.

It should also be mentioned that Rahy's best son, Fantastic Light (from his sixth crop) will have his first runners hit the races in 2005. A Champion and multiple grade/group winner, Fantastic Light hails from the female family of the promising American stallions Cape Town and Cape Canaveral. He was no doubt well supported by Sheikh Mohammed.

### **Wither Ribot?**

Is there hope for the Ribot sire-line?

The Ribot sire-line has withered despite the success of his grandson Pleasant Colony (by His Majesty). Pleasant Tap has proven to be a useful (but not a very

commercial) sire and another Pleasant Colony son Pleasantly Perfect is still waiting in the wings. In 2005, Albert The Great will get his chance to resurrect the line. He traces back to Ribot through His Majesty, but through Go For Gin and Cormorant. Unraced at two, 'Albert' won five graded events including the grade one Jockey Club Gold Cup. **20B**



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