

Awesome again and again

Deputy Minister son making good start to year

by
**Matt
O'Neil**

*"The well-connected
Total got the
year off to a
good start for
Forest
Wildcat"*

Awesome Again seems to sire his stakes horses in bunches (Wilko and Ghostzapper on Breeders' Cup Day 2004 come to mind). The second weekend in January saw another blacktype outburst from the Adena Springs stallion.

On January 13 at Santa Anita, Awesome Gem graduated into stakes winner status by taking the San Fernando Stakes (G2) over Midnight Lute and 2006 Kentucky Derby favorite Brother Derek. The four year-old gelding had earned his first blacktype a few weeks prior with a second place run in the Sir Beaufort Stakes (G3) on the Santa Anita opening day card.

The day following Awesome Gem's triumph, Sugar Shake took the El Encino Stakes (G3), also at the Arcadia oval. Like Awesome Gem, she is a member of Awesome Again's fourth crop and they are the first two stakes winners from that group.

A pair of Storm Cat sons are also doing good work in the early days of 2007.

The well-connected Total got the year off to a good start for Forest Wildcat with a win going six furlongs in the Letelier Memorial at The Fair Grounds. The newly turned three year-old filly is owned by Claiborne Farm and Adele Dilscheinder and her third dam is none other than Special.

Five days later at Gulfstream Park, the Forest Wildcat four year-old colt Chatain took the G3 Hal's Hope, setting a new track record for the mile distance. It was the first blacktype earned by the colt, who is out of the Red Ransom mare Roujoleur.

Hennessy hitting the mark

Hennessy had another good year in 2006 with the likes of Henny Hughes, Aunt Henny and India to his credit, not to mention a successful sire son in Johannesburg. The Ashford-based stallion has lost none of that momentum so far in 2007 and on two successive January Saturdays we saw two new Hennessy stakes winners emerge.

Liquor Cabinet got the ball rolling by capturing the Aqueduct Handicap (G3) in New York on January 13. The six year-old Irish bred is out of the Jade Hunter mare Key Hunter, a stakes winner and the third place finisher in the 1997 Coaching Club American Oaks (G1).

On January 20, it was the Hennessy filly Mary Delaney who found her way to the winner's enclosure after the Wishing Well Stakes, the Saturday feature at Turfway Park. She is out of a daughter of another Mr. Prospector son, Crafty Prospector.

The Eclipse Awards were announced on January 22 and several sires were represented by their first American champions.

Wait A While got the most votes in the Turf Female division and is the first Eclipse winner for her sire, Maria's Mon. Another mid-level Kentucky stallion, Indian Charlie, added his first Eclipse winner to his burgeoning resume. His five year-old daughter Fleet Indian took home honors as the top Older Filly or Mare in 2006. First crop stallion Street Cry hit early pay dirt with Street Sense, who parlayed his big win in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile into Eclipse hardware.

Candy Stripes, now pensioned in South America, was represented by his second American champion in the past two years. In 2005, his Brazilian-bred son Leroideanimaux was named the nation's top turf male. In 2006, the Argentinean Invador swept the Older/Handicap Male and Horse of the Year balloting.

Champion three year-old Bernardini helped his sire top the General Sire's list in 2006 and is now A.P. Indy's third Eclipse winner. A.P. Indy is also the sire of 2001 champion juvenile filly Tempera and 2003 Older Male and Horse of the Year Mineshaft.

It should be noted that Wait A While is out of a mare by A.P. Indy and is the first champion out of one of his daughters. It's the seventh time that a stallion has had an Eclipse winner as both a sire and dam-sire in the same year. First Landing (1971), Bold Ruler (1972), Blushing Groom (1991), Nijinsky II (1992), Mr. Prospector (2003), and most recently Storm Cat (2004) are the other sires to accomplish the feat.

Rahy already had the American champions Serena's Song (champion three year-old filly of 1995) and Fantastic Light (the 2001 Turf Male champ) to his credit. 2006 champion juvenile filly Dreaming of Anna now makes it three Eclipse winners for the perennially unheralded stallion. **JOE**



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