

Storming on

Storm Cat grandsons ready to fire

by
Matt
O'Neil

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Next year we will begin to gather more evidence as to how far the Storm Cat sire line will extend when the first crop by Hennessy's son Johannesburg hits the track. The first major Storm Cat grandson to have runners was, of course, is the Harlan stallion Menifee. Winner of the Blue Grass Stakes (G1) and Haskell Invitational (G1), and runner up in both the Kentucky Derby (G1) and Preakness Stakes (G1), Menifee's first crop are four-year-olds of 2005. He's proven to be a useful sire so far, and one whose runners seem to get better with seasoning. That point was driven home late last year by his three new first crop winners in November.

His four-year-old daughter Canihavethisdance got the ball rolling on November 5, with a win in the River Memories Stakes at Woodbine. Eight days later at Delaware Park Dance Fee found herself in the winners circle after the Justakiss Stakes. Menifeeque capped a stellar November for her sire with a win in the Mia's Hope Stakes at Calder on November 25.

Last spring Menifee was on another mini-run and was represented by his first two graded winners. His second crop fillies Letgomyecho and Burnish won the Stonerside Beaumont Stakes (G2) and Miss Preakness (G3), respectively. His sophomore daughter Gallant Secret also ran third in the Kentucky Oaks (G1).

From his first three crops of only 131 foals, Menifee is now up to 7% stakes winners. Considering that his only juvenile stakes winner is 2004 Texas Juvenile winner Boggy Creek, we can expect more blacktype winners from Menifee as his younger runners mature.

Tiger burning bright

Another stallion who is rewarding the patience of breeders is the Florida-based Tiger Ridge. Mid-way through 2005, his first crop of 61 three year-olds had yielded only a single stakes winner (Birdonthewire Stakes winner G P's Black Knight). What a difference six months can make in the career of a young stallion. Since late July of 2005, Tiger Ridge has been represented by three new first crop winners as well as three stakes winners from his second crop of 60 juveniles.

It was those juvenile stakes winners that initially put Tiger Ridge on the map. Here Tiger clawed to victory in the Southern Belle Stakes at Louisiana Downs on July 31 (and followed that effort with a win in the Stardust Stakes at that track in September). South of the border on August 21, Savona won the first of her two 2005 stakes in Mexico City and on

September 3 at Calder, Weekend Weather took the Seacliff Stakes.

Tiger Ridge's previously disappointing first crop then came to life in October with Tiger Belle winning the Calder Oaks and Taming the Tiger taking the Lawrence Realization at Belmont. To top off the big Tiger Ridge run, Therecomesatiger captured the Commonwealth Turf Stakes in November at Churchill Downs.

The Storm Cat half-brother to A. P. Indy, Summer Squall and Honor Grades is proving a versatile sire as well. His progeny have won stakes from 5 1/2 to 9 furlongs, on dirt and turf, and he has now sired four juvenile stakes winners.

Rahy runners

At the other end of the spectrum is Rahy, a sire who has proven his mettle time and again over the years with 68 stakes winner, 31 graded winners and a pair of Champions. The sire of Serena's Song, Fantastic Light, Tates Creek, Noverre, Tranquility Lake is somewhat out of fashion with commercial breeders with a 2005 yearling average in the low six figures. But the fickleness of the yearling market doesn't change the fact that he is still a serious racehorse sire, as evidenced by his nine 2005 stakes winners. Even more impressive is the fact that all nine earned their first stakes wins in the year just ended.

Three of those new stakes winners garnered graded status: T. D. Vance in the National Racing Museum and Hall of Fame Stakes (G2), Shining Energy in the San Clemente Handicap (G2), and Golden Rahy in the Carleton F. Burke Handicap (G3). The latter is one of five Rahy stakes winners in October and November of last year. In addition to Golden Rahy, who won the Burke in late October, Military Major won the October 21 Oklahoma Derby and Rahy's Appeal won the October 22 Ticonderoga Handicap. In November, Joyful Chaos won the Glowing Tribute Stakes at Aqueduct and the juvenile Lewis Michael won the Grand Canyon Stakes at Churchill Downs. 



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