

The Big Guns Fire Back

Vindication, Empire Maker sire first stakes winners

by

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Going into the year, the headline first crop sires were Classic winner Empire Maker and the Eclipse Champions Mineshaft, Vindication and Aldebaran.

The latter struck first in early summer with some promising winners who came back to compete in stakes events. But it is Vindication and Empire Maker who are the first of the powerful group to sire stakes winners.

Vindication's daughter More Happy broke her maiden early in the Del Mar meeting and then fled California with many of the Bob Baffert runners. Making her second start in the Adirondack Stakes (G2) at Saratoga, the filly went wire-to-wire to collect the trophy. More Happy was purchased for \$1 million earlier this year at the Fasig-Tipton Calder sale.

Joining More Happy on the exodus from Del Mar was Maimonides. One week before the Adirondack, the \$4.6 million yearling looked worth every penny after strolling home by 11 1/2 lengths over maiden special company in his debut. Vindication is now up to six winners, including the stakes-placed Galiano and Sargent Seattle, another impressive Saratoga debut winner.

Emerging empire

Miss Red Delicious became Empire Maker's first winner when she destroyed a maiden special field at Colonial Downs by 13 1/2 lengths. She validated that performance with a gritty win in the Anna M. Fisher Debutante at Ellis Park on August 18. The filly held off the previous stakes winner Wonderful Luck, who is by fellow freshman sire Trust N Luck.

Earlier on the Ellis Park card another freshman sire stole the show in the James C. Ellis Juvenile. Yonegwa, one of five winners by the Cherokee Run stallion Kafwain, took the seven furlong contest. Another Kafwain colt, D.C. Eight, a 6 1/2 length maiden winner was back in third.

The Florida-based Repent was most effective going two turns and if his first stakes winner is any indication, his get will also appreciate a distance of ground. His son Atoned took a one mile maiden special weight at Monmouth on August 3 and returned to win the off-the-turf Continental Mile Stakes at that same track and distance 15 days later.

Little big men

The New Mexico-based Afternoon Deelites stallion Premediation has assumed the role of surprising

regional freshman sire with two stakes winners from a crop of only five foals. However, there are some other small market stallions who are doing good work with their limited opportunities.

A. P. Delta sired the winner and third place finisher in the rich John Franks Memorial Sales Stakes at Louisiana Downs on August 3. The son of A. P. Indy is based in Louisiana and has but 19 registered foals in his first crop.

The Dehere son Finality, who stands in British Columbia, also dominated a regional stakes race. His runners finished first and third in the August 6 BC Cup Debutante at Hastings Park.

Macho Uno isn't the only freshman son of Holy Bull with a stakes winner. From only 14 foals, the Iowa-based Bravo Bull is the sire of Bravo Cyclone, winner of the Iowa Stallion Futurity.

The California-based Freespool has a comparatively large first crop with 35 foals and he too has an early stakes winner. His gelded son Joe's Cannon captured the \$55,000 Idaho Cup Juvenile Championship at Boise.

Still chasing posse

Posse remains the clear first crop leader with 13 winners and five stakes winners, two more since July 28. As Alan Porter pointed out in his Close Encounters column in the August issue of OBI, the first three stakes winners by Posse are all out of mares from the Mr. Prospector broodmare line. His most recent two blacktype winners, however, are out of mares with a more diverse makeup. Tyro Stakes winner Lantana Mob is out of a mare by Copelan, while T. J.'s Posse, winner of the Jamestown Stakes at Colonial Downs, is out of a daughter of Meadowlake.

The Storm Cat son Van Nistelrooy has also kept rolling along with 11 winners and a new group winner in Europe. Coming off a third place run in the Prix Robert Papin (G2), the Van Nistelrooy colt Strike the Deal captured the Richmond Stakes (G2) at Goodwood on August 3.

The Storm Cat grandson Harlan's Holiday is another who has built upon his mid-summer momentum. Sire of Colin Stakes winner Bear Holiday on July 21, Harlan's Holiday was represented by his second stakes winner less than three weeks later. His daughter Tasha's Miracle captured the Sorrento Stakes (G3) at the Del Mar meeting on August 8.



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