

Going Wild

Forest Wildcat now America's leading sire of stakes winners

by
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"Like Forest Wildcat, Grand Slam was one of the early sons that helped establish his sire, Gone West, as a serious sire of sires."

Along with Storm Boot and Hennessy, Forest Wildcat was one of the early Storm Cat stallions that helped extend the line of their great sire. With his two contemporaries now deceased, the 16-year-old Forest Wildcat is now the oldest active son of Storm Cat in Kentucky. He has been represented by 10 or more stakes winners in four of the past six years, including a career-high 16 in 2007. This year, double digit stakes winners again seem assured. Through mid-April, Forest Wildcat is the sire of seven stakes winners for the year, tops among North American stallions.

Three of Forest Wildcat's top 2008 runners are new blacktype winners and they have brought their sire's career total up to 52 lifetime stakes winners from his first eight crops to race. Earlier this winter, the five-year-old gelding Forest Blue won his first blacktype event in Turfway Park's Forego Stakes. More recently on April 12, Euphony remained unbeaten with her win in the Instant Racing Stakes on the Arkansas Derby day card at Oaklawn Park. The three-year-old filly is also the second stakes winner and first unrestricted winner out of a Smart Strike daughter. And a week after Euphony's win, Behindatthebar surged to win the Grade 2 Coolmore Lexington Stakes in his stakes debut.

Among Forest Wildcat's other 2008 stakes winners are Salute the Sarge and Chatain. With wins in the Hollywood Juvenile Championship (G3) and the Best Pal Stakes (G3), Salute the Sarge was one of the top two-year-olds in California last year. He returned to win the San Miguel Stakes at Santa Anita in his three-year-old debut on March 29. The five-year-old Chatain captured the Grade 3 Hal's Hope Handicap for the second consecutive year on January 6.

Just Grand

Like Forest Wildcat, Grand Slam was one of the early sons that helped establish his sire, Gone West, as a serious sire of sires. And he too has been a consistent source of winners and blacktype runners in recent years. In the first quarter of 2008 he has been on an especially good streak siring five stakes winners, four of them new blacktype winners.

Grand Slam's three-year-olds are making the biggest headlines so far this year. Visionaire got up to win the Grade 3 Gotham Stakes at Aqueduct on March 8 to secure his first stakes win. A month prior, the three-year-old colt Amazing Results won the Black Gold Stakes at Fair Grounds. He has since come back to take that track's March 22nd Grindstone Stakes. Over in Europe, the three-year-

old colt War Officer took the listed Prix Montenica at Deauville on March 21.

It should come as no surprise that Grand Slam's three-year-olds are doing so well. The crop is out of mares that were bred in 2004 when Grand Slam's stud fee reached a then-high \$75,000 (it was bumped again to \$85,000 the following year). Grand Slam earned the raise, and the better mares that followed, after runners from his first crop like Breeders Cup Sprint (G1) winner Cajun Beat, and the Grade 2 winners Strong Hope and Grand Hombre put him on the map with their strong sophomore seasons in 2003.

Grand Slam has also been represented this winter/spring by a pair of stakes winners from his earlier crops, bred at the \$30,000 level. The five-year-old Grand Minit captured his second stakes event in the Lagniappe Classic for Louisiana-breds on March 23. On April 12, it was the four-year-old filly Lady Digby who broke through with her first stakes victory in the Dahlia Stakes at Laurel. Grand Slam is now up to 44 stakes winners from his first six crops to the races.

Making The Grade

With four Grade 1 races scheduled around the country, April 5 can rightly be called the first 'big day' on the American racing calendar. Interestingly enough, all four events were captured by first-time Grade 1 winners.

The Wood Memorial (G1) at Aqueduct and the Ashland Stakes (G1) at Keeneland were first up on the menu. The Wood fell to Tale of the Cat's three-year-old son Tale of Ekati. One of the top juvenile's of 2007 after his head-turning score in the Futurity Stakes (G2) at Belmont, Tale of Ekati is the second Northern Hemisphere Grade 1 winner for his sire. Little Belle is Grade 1 winner #21 for A.P. Indy after her upset win in the Ashland, her stakes debut.

On the West Coast, Colonel John made it a Grade 1 winner in each of Tiznow's first three crops to race after storming home to take the Santa Anita Derby (G1). In the Midwest, Street Cry's latest star, the unbeaten Zenyatta, rolled in the Apple Blossom Handicap (G1) at Oaklawn Park. Street Cry is now the sire of four (Northern Hemisphere) Grade 1/Group 1 winners, two each from his first two crops to race. **JOE**



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