

The Fasig-Tipton Selected July Yearlings Sale will be conducted next Tuesday and Wednesday, July 13-14. On Thursday, the company's chairman, Walt Robertson, sat down with the *TDN* to talk about changes made to the format, Fasig-Tipton's efforts to promote the sale, what buyers and sellers can expect at the first major yearling auction of the season.

**The July catalogue is the smallest that it's been in the past decade. What's your assessment of its quality?**

**Robertson:** Page for page, if you look at the pedigrees and in particular the female pedigrees, I think we like our book better this year than last year. We screened them a little tougher. I think the smaller catalogue will serve us well.

**Last year, day one at July--which featured the New Sire Showcase--was down 23.8 percent in average, while day two--which featured more established sires--was down only 4.3 percent. How much of this was buyers gravitating toward established sires, and how much of the downturn, if any, can be attributed to a less commercial group of young stallions last year?**

**Robertson:** I think the world, whether you're talking horses or anything else, is moving toward commodities that have a track record. We certainly proved that last year when buyers went after the proven horses, and were not as strong on the first- or second-year sires. In particular, the second-year sires hit us pretty hard last year. Although we still have second-crop sires in the sale, we're not showcasing them this year.

**Yes, you've changed the New Sire Showcase to the Freshman Sire Showcase. Was that the primary reason?**

**Robertson:** Yes. We looked back, and the second-year sires were pretty hard on us.

**Looking forward, this year's group of freshman sires looks to be pretty strong, with the likes of After Market, Any Given Saturday, Corinthian, Hard Spun and Street Sense, all of whom are represented at July.**

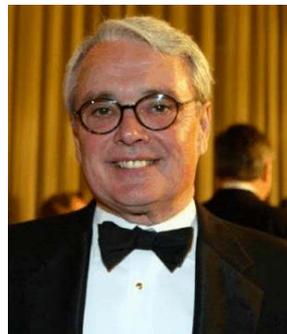
**Robertson:** Absolutely. We are also strong in young hot sires--I'm talking third-, fourth-crop sires. We've got nine catalogued by Medaglia d'Oro, five Tapits. So we're good with those, and we're loving the first-year sires.

**Is the smaller catalogue entirely a result of Fasig being more selective, or are consignors and sellers also being more selective in what they consider a commercial horse? Is the reflective at all of a smaller foal crop?**

**Robertson:** It's probably somewhat reflective, but I think it's a combination of screening them tougher and, like I said, I think we've got fewer second-year sires that in the past.

**Is there a change in mood or temperament from either buyers or sellers from a year ago, that you've picked up on?**

**Robertson:** I can only look back as far back as our



**Walt Robertson** *Horsephotos*

last sale, and at Timonium [Fasig-Tipton Midlantic Two-Year-Old in Training Sale], people wanted horses across the board. I thought it was an excellent horse sale, and those same people will be shopping at July. Plus, I think we'll have some Europeans here; we've put a pretty good recruitment effort on them. And we've also spend a lot of time recruiting buyers from this side of the ocean. Everybody that should be here tells us they're coming.

**Tell us about Fasig-Tipton's July 4 promotion blitz around the country.**

**Robertson:** We had representatives at Monmouth, Belmont Park, Churchill and Hollywood Park. We did some hospitality and recruiting, and I think it paid off. Anybody who was at those four tracks, or who were watching racing on TV, certainly was aware of what was going on and what we're trying to do. The response was great. I was at Belmont with Boyd Browning. Bayne Welker and Anna Seitz were at Monmouth; Bill Graves, Evan Ferraro and Max Hodge were at Churchill, and Peter Penny and Dennis Lynch were in California. We talked to trainers, owners--all of the above--and worked hard not just in the mornings, but between the races, too. Hopefully, the world is aware we've got something pretty good coming. All I can say is that we've screen them pretty hard, and they're going to like the athletes in the book. Page for page, I think we've got a good a catalogue, pedigree-wise, as we've ever put out for this sale.