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**Ted Bassett Resigns
 from BC Board p2**

IT'S OFFICIAL: LAVA MAN RETIRED

Lava Man (Slew City Slew), who came out of retirement to finish last of seven in the Dec. 27 GII San Gabriel H., has officially run his final race, according to *Daily Racing Form*. Claimed for \$50,000 as a three-year-old by trainer Doug O'Neill on behalf of owners STD Racing Stable and Jason Wood, the gelding went on to win seven Grade I races--including three consecutive renewals of the Hollywood Gold Cup--before he was retired following a sixth in the 2008 GI Eddie Read H. Lava Man's connections decided to make a comeback attempt after the dark bay underwent stem cell therapy earlier this year to regenerate cartilage tissue in an ankle. "I've thought a lot since [the San Gabriel]," part-owner Steve Kenly told *DRF*. "We were expecting more out of him. His ankles were better, but the thing that probably caught up with him was time. We said that if he couldn't compete at the highest level, we wouldn't continue. That's what made this decision possible." Kenly told the trade daily that plans for the nine-year-old are uncertain. "His second career--whatever it will be, and we haven't decided--is unlimited," Kenly said. "He could be a hunter-jumper, a pony or retired in a field, and he'll get along much better in those scenarios. He'll be a much sounder horse than [he was] two years ago. The chronic arthritis would have gotten worse and worse." Lava Man retires with a record of 47-17-8-5 and \$5,268,706 in career earnings.

MAGIC MILLIONS GOLD COAST BEGINS

The Magic Millions Gold Coast Yearling Sale begins this morning at 11 a.m. local time as the first of 1,236 catalogued yearlings enters the Bundall ring in Queensland, Australia. Roughly 200 yearlings will be on offer during the first of five selection sessions. The select portion of the sale continues through Sunday, with a sixth and final open session on Thursday, Jan. 14.

An impressive line-up includes siblings to no fewer than 25 Group 1 winners, including the likes of Cesario (Jpn), Phelan Ready (Aus), and Redoute's Dancer (Aus). Leading sire Encosta de Lago (Aus) has 32 yearlings catalogued, while fellow star Redoute's Choice (Aus) is represented by 23 catalogued youngsters.

Last year's sale was topped by an Encosta de Lago (Aus)--Surrealist (Aus) full-brother to champion Racing to Win (Aus) who was hammered down to trainer Gai Waterhouse for A\$2 million. Four select sessions in 2009 produced an average of A\$131,632, a 16.3-percentage drop from the previous term. In all, 503 horses sold for a gross of A\$66,211,000. Cont. p2



You can also pick up a copy of the TDN today at the Magic Millions Gold Coast Yearling Sale.



1ST ANNUAL TDN READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

The *TDN* is proud to present our inaugural Readers' Choice Awards. We came up with our favorite performances of the year--and beyond--and added nominations based on your input. (If you voted during the nomination process that ended Dec. 22, but want to change your vote now that we have added nominees, you can vote again).

From now through Jan. 17, we will be accepting votes for the award winners, to be announced in the Jan. 22 edition of the *TDN*. All voters will be entered in a drawing, with five winners getting to choose either a framed 11x14 photo from the Sarah K. Andrew gallery (click [here](#)), or a free full-page ad in the *TDN*.

For a list of categories and nominees, please click [here](#).

2010 STUD FEES

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	PRICE	DISCOUNT	PRICE	DISCOUNT	PRICE	DISCOUNT
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	\$15,750	11/1	\$14,850	11/1	\$13,500	11/1
MASTER COMMAND	\$12,500	S&N	\$11,500	S&N	\$10,000	S&N
	\$11,250	11/1	\$10,350	11/1	\$9,000	11/1
NORTHERN AFLEET	\$10,000	S&N	\$9,000	S&N	\$7,500	S&N
	\$9,000	11/1	\$8,100	11/1	\$6,750	11/1
OFFICER	\$10,000	S&N	\$9,000	S&N	\$7,500	S&N
	\$9,000	11/1	\$8,100	11/1	\$6,750	11/1
OLD FASHIONED	\$12,500	S&N	\$11,500	S&N	\$11,500	S&N
	\$11,250	11/1	\$10,350	11/1	\$10,350	11/1
UNBRIDLED'S SONG	\$115,000	S&N	\$115,000	S&N	\$115,000	S&N
	\$100,000	11/1	\$100,000	11/1	\$100,000	11/1

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One of the highlights of the festivities will be the \$4.6 million Magic Millions Raceday this Saturday, featuring the \$2 million, 1200-meter BMW Magic Millions 2YO Classic, Queensland's richest race won last year by the aforementioned Phelan Ready (More Than Ready).

Magic Millions Managing Director David Chester said the excitement is building in advance of the 2010 carnival.

"It is always such an exciting time on the Gold Coast, and where else would you want to be at this time of the year?" Chester commented. "Owners, trainers and horse enthusiasts all flock to our complex to find a horse to suit their needs and budget. As we say, there is always something for everybody. And just who will be buying the 2011 Golden Slipper winner? This is one of the big questions, as the Gold Coast is now the undisputed shopping ground for the winner of the world's richest juvenile race. It's not only winners of the Golden Slipper that are sold at the Gold Coast--we sell Oaks winners, Derby winners, Melbourne Cup winners--all of the great races."

To view the online catalogue for the 2010 Magic Millions Gold Coast Yearling Sale, visit www.magicmillions.com.au.



NEWS TODAY

BASSETT RESIGNS FROM BC BOARD James E. "Ted" Bassett has stepped down from his position as a member of the Breeders' Cup Board of Members and Trustees, Breeders' Cup announced yesterday. President of the Breeders' Cup from 1988-1996, Bassett had served on the Breeders' Cup Board of Directors and the Board of Members and Trustees in a variety of capacities over the past two decades. "I leave the board with full comfort that the Breeders' Cup is in more than capable hands," Bassett said in a statement. "Bill Farish has done an outstanding job chairing the organization during a period of innovation and growth and, given the makeup of the current board and current management, I predict that the Breeders' Cup will only grow stronger in the years ahead." Breeders' Cup President and CEO Greg Avioli added, "Ted Bassett has enjoyed a remarkable career filled with invaluable contributions to the Breeders' Cup and to the Thoroughbred industry as a whole. We are grateful for his service, and I will personally miss his candor and wise counsel."

In FIVE Consecutive Races at Two:

Won Hollywood Futurity-G1, Norfolk S.-G2
Placed Del Mar Futurity-G2, Best Pal S.-G2
5th Breeders' Cup Juvenile-G1



And at Three:
2nd Fountain of Youth S.-G2
3rd Woody Stephens S.-G2
4th Florida Derby-G1
1st foals are yearlings this year.



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RACING Round-Up

Promising Baffert Sophomore Dies of Pneumonia...

Clutch Player (Malibu Moon), a four-length debut winner at Hollywood Park Dec. 19, died Monday after contracting pneumonia over the weekend, *Daily Racing Form* reports. Trainer Bob Baffert told the publication the colt became sick Friday at Santa Anita and was subsequently shipped to Chino Valley Equine Hospital. "In 72 hours, he was gone," Baffert told *DRF*. "The mood around here has been pretty somber." Clutch Player was owned by Shah Kaleem, who also owns three-year-old **Take Control** (A.P. Indy), the son of Horse of the Year Azeri who scored by 1 1/2 lengths at first-asking Dec. 30. "[Kaleem] had a great week, and then this," added Baffert, who trains the leading contender for champion two-year-old colt **Lookin at Lucky** (Smart Strike).

TDN TODAY

Headline News..... 9 pages



JAPANESE RESULTS

Tuesday, Kyoto, Japan

SPORTS NIPPON SHO KYOTO KIMPAI-G3,
¥82,810,000, Kyoto, 1-5, 4yo/up, 1600mT, 1:34.10,
fm.

- 1--**LIVE CONCERT (IRE)**, 126, g, 6, by [Singspiel \(Ire\)](#)
1st Dam: Dance Lively, by Kingmambo
2nd Dam: Tivli, by Mt.Livermore
3rd Dam: Bold Boston, by Bold Forbes
(120,000gns yrl '05 TATOCT). O-Green Fields Inc;
B-Mrs J Chandris; T-Toshiaki Shirai; J-Yasunari Iwata;
¥43,707,000. Lifetime Record: 28-8-4-3.
- 2--**Smart Gear (Jpn)**, 126, h, 5, Marvelous Sunday (Jpn)--
Squarehead Line (Jpn), by Pas de Seul (GB). O-Toru
Okawa; B-Daiei Farm; ¥17,202,000.
- 3--**Rain Dance (Jpn)**, 117, m, 6, Dance in the Dark (Jpn)--
Wren (Ire), by Bob Back. O-Teruya Yoshida; B- Shadai
Farm; ¥11,101,000.

Margins: HF, HD, NK. Odds: 13.30, 1.20, 68.80.

Click for the [Racing Post chart](#).

Tuesday, Nakayama, Japan

NIKKAN SPORTS SHO NAKAYAMA KIMPAI-G3,
¥82,680,000, Nakayama, 1-5, 4yo/up, 2000mT,
2:00.80, fm.

- 1--**AXION (JPN)**, 126, h, 7, by Sunday Silence
1st Dam: Greatest Hits, by Dixieland Band
2nd Dam: Simple Taste, by Sharpen Up (GB)
3rd Dam: Trove, by Key to the Mint
O-Tetsu Nakata; B-Bando Farm; T-Yoshitaka
Ninomiya; J-Shinji Fujita; ¥43,616,000. Lifetime
Record: 17-7-3-1.
- 2--**Tosho Scirocco (Jpn)**, 123, h, 7, Admire Vega (Jpn)--
Spark Tosho (Jpn), by Nippo Teio (Jpn). O-Tosho
Sangyo Inc; B-Tosho Sangyo Inc Tosho Farm;
¥17,176,000.
- 3--**Tosho Wave (Jpn)**, 119, h, 5, Stay Gold (Jpn)--Spark
Tosho (Jpn), by Nippo Teio(Jpn). O-Tosho Sangyo
Inc; B-Tosho Sangyo Inc Tosho Farm; ¥11,088,000.

Margins: NK, NO, NO. Odds: 2.20, 14.30, 85.00.

Click for the [Racing Post chart](#).

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FROM THE DESK OF...

Bill Oppenheim

TDN 30TH DEC. 2009



First Foals 2009 (First Yearlings 2010)...

... Both of Coolmore's top prospects from this sire class also stand for half of what they entered stud for in 2008. **Dylan Thomas**, winner of six Group 1 races including the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, Irish Derby, and Irish Champion S. twice, is down to €25,000 for 2010, from his original 2008 price of €50,000. I thought he was a colt with the immense virtues of soundness and durability, as well as class. Coolmore also stands **Excellent Art**, a Pivotal colt they bought after his two-year-old campaign, who won the G1 St. James's Palace S. for them. He is now €12,500 from €25,000.

First Foals 2010 (Retired 2009)...


When Dylan Thomas retired, he passed the baton to stablemate **Duke of Marmalade**, from Danehill's last crop. Placed in a Goodwood seven-furlong Group 2 at two, and second, third or fourth in six Group 1s from eight to 10¹/₂ furlongs in six starts at three, Duke of Marmalade won five Group 1s from 10 to 12 furlongs at four. He retired to Coolmore in 2009 for €40,000, and has dropped to €30,000 for 2010.

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**FROM THE DESK
OF...**
Bill Oppenheim



SOME NEW RULES

Some things have changed an awful lot in the last 20 years in this business, and in this week's column I'd like to talk about a few of them: what has changed, why have they changed, and how the business has responded, and is responding, to these changes. Of course, some things haven't changed much, and we'll talk about one or two of those, too.

Those of us who were working in the business in the 1980s have to remember that anybody born in 1970 or later--that's 40 years old this year and younger--didn't live through the first Golden Age of the Thoroughbred sales, nor the crash of 1986-1992. It isn't important that they didn't know about the ups and downs of the marketplace and business until about the middle of 2007. No, what it means is our business' thirtysomethings have never seen a time when North American racing was dominated by the big stables of owner-breeders (unlike those of us from previous generations), nor were they around when the Europeans and Japanese bought hundreds of well-bred mares in Kentucky, decimating the North American broodmare band.

For today's thirtysomethings, the North American breeding market has always been a commercial one, especially given the doubling of stallions' book sizes and, to some extent, dual-hemisphere shuttling. When they hear our generation talk about "great families," they must scratch their heads and wonder why these families--if they are so great--have been producing so few top horses for the last 20 years. The two things just about have to be connected, it seems to me: few owner/breeders in North America, fewer still new "great families."

Things have changed a lot in Europe, too. From having a handful of the best stallions in North America and Europe, they now have half of the top 20 available. Plus, there are a number of large, active owner/breeders with broodmare bands in the hundreds: the Maktoum family, of course, including Darley, Shadwell and Rabbah (surely well over a thousand mares among them); Prince Khalid Abdullah's Juddmonte Farms; the Aga Khan; and even Coolmore, though they are half commercial breeders, too, since their primary objective is to stock Ballydoyle and associates with maybe a hundred two-year-olds a year, including what they buy at the sales. Breeders love to buy at the annual culls, from the Aga Khan's and Juddmonte operations in particular.



Multiple Grade 1 Winner of \$1.5 Million

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Still, even though these big operations have broodmare bands in the hundreds, it seems to me these days it's not so much a case of there being one or more families in particular that turn out class horses as if from a gusher. Rather, it's more a matter of them having so many class mares, they produce a certain number of top horses. Breeders tend to buy because it's "an" Aga Khan family, or "a" Juddmonte family, rather than a particular family or families, which is more what we used to talk about--the Rough Shod family, the La Troienne family, and so on.

What Yearling Buyers Want...

During the first Golden Age of the Thoroughbred marketplace (1978-1985), yearling buyers would roughly weigh three factors of relatively equal importance: the sire, the dam's side, and the yearling's conformation. It wasn't so much that they were weighted equally, but that any of the three factors could be a reason for throwing the horse out. Then came the crash of 1986-1992, when many top pedigrees went into private hands or were exported to Japan.

Cont. p6

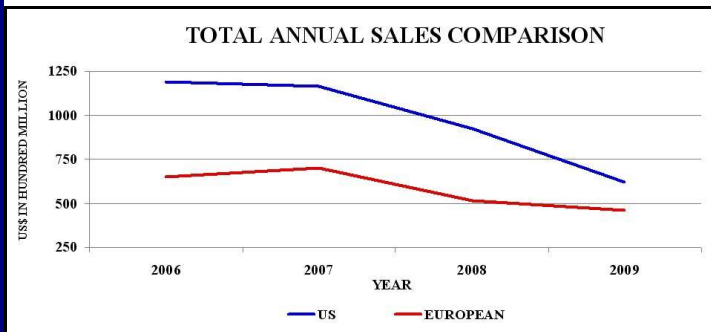




Weekly Sales Ticker *by Bill Oppenheim*

“Brienne is very apologetic about our having to issue whole new sets of tables covering the sales, but these really are correct, as far as we can make them. The combined gross of \$1.08-billion is down 42 Percent from the record 2007 year (corrected to \$1.8-billion), but it’s down 47 percent – nearly half – in North America, compared to Europe’s 35 percent. The best performance was European yearling sales (down 28 percent from 2007), enabling Europe to climb from 40 percent of the combined yearling market in 2006 to 48 percent in 2009. A lot of it’s those better sires. Mixed sales did the worst.”

– Bill Oppenheim



TOTAL US AND EUROPEAN ANNUAL SALES

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	35,422	29,151	20,650	17.7%	70.8%	58.3%	\$1,081,572,400	\$52,333
2008	41,087	33,498	23,013	18.5%	68.7%	56.0%	\$1,434,467,462	\$62,333
2007	42,722	36,436	26,469	14.7%	72.6%	62.0%	\$1,868,311,480	\$70,585
2006	40,761	34,732	25,864	14.8%	74.5%	63.5%	\$1,838,390,506	\$71,079

TOTAL US ANNUAL SALES

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	21,846	17,079	12,233	21.8%	71.6%	56.0%	\$622,169,550	\$50,860
2008	25,678	20,233	14,221	21.2%	70.3%	55.4%	\$921,496,100	\$64,798
2007	26,863	22,253	16,335	17.2%	73.4%	60.8%	\$1,165,454,200	\$71,347
2006	26,482	21,806	16,076	17.7%	73.7%	60.7%	\$1,191,615,100	\$74,124

TOTAL EUROPEAN ANNUAL SALES

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	13,576	12,072	8,417	11.1%	69.7%	62.0%	\$459,402,850	\$54,580
2008	15,409	13,265	8,792	13.9%	66.3%	57.1%	\$512,971,362	\$58,345
2007	15,859	14,183	10,134	10.6%	71.5%	63.9%	\$702,857,280	\$69,356
2006	14,279	12,926	9,788	9.5%	75.7%	68.5%	\$646,775,406	\$66,078

TOTAL US 1ST HALF SALES (MIXED AND 2YO SALES)

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	6,643	4,918	3,412	26.0%	69.4%	51.4%	\$138,224,400	\$40,511
2008	7,758	5,836	4,098	24.8%	70.2%	52.8%	\$227,157,200	\$55,431
2007	8,765	6,932	4,696	20.9%	67.7%	53.6%	\$239,840,700	\$51,073
2006	8,555	6,624	4,815	22.6%	72.7%	56.3%	\$266,939,100	\$55,439

TOTAL US YEARLING SALES

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	9,316	7,731	5,494	17.0%	71.1%	59.0%	\$292,579,850	\$53,254
2008	10,412	8,818	6,190	15.3%	70.2%	59.5%	\$428,697,000	\$69,256
2007	10,224	8,957	6,734	12.4%	75.2%	65.9%	\$514,310,300	\$76,375
2006	10,132	8,940	6,654	11.8%	74.4%	65.7%	\$529,607,900	\$79,592

TOTAL US 2ND HALF MIXED SALES

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	5,887	4,430	3,327	24.7%	75.1%	56.5%	\$191,365,300	\$57,519
2008	7,508	5,579	3,933	25.7%	70.5%	52.4%	\$265,641,900	\$67,542
2007	7,874	6,364	4,905	19.2%	77.1%	62.3%	\$411,303,200	\$83,854
2006	7,795	6,242	4,607	19.9%	73.8%	59.1%	\$395,068,100	\$85,754

TOTAL EUROPEAN 1ST HALF SALES (MIXED AND 2YO)

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	1,902	1,537	917	19.2%	59.7%	48.2%	\$34,219,110	\$37,316
2008	2,534	1,999	1,164	21.1%	58.2%	45.9%	\$53,975,686	\$46,371
2007	2,723	2,248	1,498	17.4%	66.6%	55.0%	\$53,757,657	\$35,886
2006	2,196	1,816	1,281	17.3%	70.5%	58.3%	\$38,921,177	\$30,383

TOTAL EUROPEAN YEARLING SALES

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	6,123	5,618	4,319	8.2%	76.9%	70.5%	\$273,065,517	\$43,820
2008	6,359	5,742	4,220	9.7%	73.5%	66.4%	\$293,909,549	\$48,271
2007	6,527	5,950	4,642	8.8%	78.0%	71.1%	\$376,736,518	\$56,260
2006	6,213	5,650	4,583	9.1%	81.1%	73.8%	\$349,762,291	\$52,906

TOTAL EUROPEAN AND 2ND HALF MIXED SALES

YEAR	CAT	RING	SOLD	%W/D	%S/R	%S/C	GROSS	AVE
2009	5,551	4,917	3,181	11.4%	64.7%	57.3%	\$152,118,223	\$47,821
2008	6,516	5,524	3,408	15.2%	61.7%	52.3%	\$165,086,127	\$48,441
2007	6,609	5,985	3,994	9.4%	66.7%	60.4%	\$272,363,105	\$68,193
2006	5,870	5,460	3,924	7.0%	71.9%	66.8%	\$258,091,938	\$65,773

Data compiled by Brienne Stanley



Oppenheim cont.

Coupled with the decline in owner/breeders in North America (which was then producing twice as many foals as Great Britain, Ireland and France combined), by the time we arrived at the Second Golden Age (1998-2007), the nature of one of the three factors had changed: there were fewer truly good first dams in yearling pedigrees. Over the last decade, buyers increasingly concentrated on the sire and conformation. Whereas previously the ratio of factors for "inclusion," let us say, were 33-33-33, now they would be more like 40-20-40, the reduction coming in the importance of the first dam to yearling buyers relative to the other two factors. Yearling buyers, as a collective group, have made this abundantly clear over the past few years.

At the same time, within the context of its reduced influence, the pecking order on "the dam's side of the page" also changed. A study carried out by Gary Hadden found that 29 percent of the dams of about 3,000 graded/group stakes winners in 1998-2003 were themselves black-type winners. When we compared those to the profile of racing fillies sired by two top broodmare sires of recent years, Alydar and Affirmed, we found that about 12 percent of their fillies were black-type winners. We have seen independent research which comes up with a similar 12-percent figure. So, the fact that as high as 29 percent of the dams of graded winners were themselves black-type winners looks pretty significant.

What does this all mean in English? It means, if you're a commercial breeder contemplating buying a mare, your best bet is to buy a black-type winner. It doesn't mean she should only be a black type winner; breeding history is replete with outfits that banked solely on black type to the exclusion of other pedigree considerations, such as the mare's sire and the mare's actual female family. But the research does tell us that black-type mares (black-type placed, too, though not as strongly as black type winners) have moved up the value scale, and non-black-type mares, no matter how good their pedigrees, have moved down the scale. A non-black-type mare is not worth as much as a producer of commercial yearlings as she used to be. So whether it's actually a good idea, financially, to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on mares who could not get black type must be more open to question now than was the case 20 years ago. This may appear to be less the case in Europe than in North America because of these other factors we've mentioned, but I'm not entirely sure that's the case, either.

What Euros Want...

Another huge difference between the Thoroughbred market in the 1980s and the market now is the level of participation by European buyers in the North American (essentially, Kentucky) market.



Though they still constitute a significant portion of especially the upper reaches of the North American market, there is a powerful layer of European buyers below the Maktoums and Coolmore who are not active in North America, whereas 20 or 30 years ago half of them would have mares in Kentucky and be breeding to Kentucky stallions.

Part of the explanation, of course, is that the ratio of top 20 stallions went from something like 80-20 in favor of Kentucky to 50-50. European breeders now have much a much better group stallions to breed to--certainly just as good as the group in Kentucky--for European racing. But there's something else, too, and it's something really fundamental to the value of horses in the marketplace: Europeans do not understand North American black type below the graded level and, as a consequence, they do not have the confidence to invest in American black type like they used to.

I don't think it is possible to underestimate the true influence of black type. It was the invention of black type in the 1950s that resulted in the creation of a scale of value in pedigrees which--refined by the introduction of the Pattern of Graded and Group Races in 1972--provided the very framework for the growth of the auction sales. These peaked at over \$1.8 billion annually in North America and Europe in 2006-2007. I'm not saying it wouldn't exist; I'm saying the creation of black type provides the framework from which specific scales of value can evolve. **Cont. p7**



Oppenheim cont.

The Europeans are right to be confused, because as it has evolved, there is a huge anomaly in the qualification for black type in favor of North America. To put it in a nutshell, there are three kinds of black type: graded (in North America) or group (in Europe)--Pattern Races; then there are listed races; finally, non-listed black type races. The shocking truth is this: in the major European countries--Great Britain, Ireland, France, Germany and Italy--there are no black type races below listed standard, according to the International Cataloguing Standards booklet issued by the IFHA (International Federation of Horseracing Authorities) for the year 2008. In North America in 2008, there were 1,890 black-type races, and 1,148 of them, or 61 percent, were non-listed, black-type races--in other words, below listed class.

It's no wonder Europeans can't make head nor tail of American catalogues, and therefore lack the confidence to buy. Percentage of black-type races below listed class in Europe: zero; percentage of black-type races below listed standard in North America: 61 percent. In a racing population in Europe, if the top tier was 39 percent black-type, the tier below (which in North America is 61 percent of black-type horses) would be high-level handicappers, say horses with Official Ratings in Britain and Ireland of 100, maybe even 95. Europeans don't consider these black-type horses because they're below listed standard. But in America, about 1.5 times the number of horses which are listed standard and above are still black-type horses.

There is a devastatingly simple solution: instead of calling them listed races, change the name: call them Grade 4 in North America, and Group 4 in Europe. By adding the G4 option, we would all understand it much better. Europeans could simply see if black-type listings in a pedigree included any "G" designations; that would restore their confidence in the system. The Americans could continue to assign black type as they have, confident both that Europeans would understand North American black type much better, and that they themselves would, too. Of course, it would require a change, from Listed to Grade/Group 4, but all you're doing is renaming a classification to make it more understandable for everyone.

One other matter cited by Europeans concerning their reluctance to buy in the U.S. is "the medication issue." At least some European professionals harbor the view that racing on medication by definition signals a weakness in the breed, and therefore they are very wary of breeding to horses that have raced on medication. Since something like 99 percent of American horses now race on Lasix, it becomes a kind of "reducto ad absurdum"--an absurd argument--to ignore American breeding, which they already find confusing. But I would like to say this is a point of view which seems to me to have absolutely no evidence to support it.

STUDENT COUNCIL

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For example, the following horses all raced on Lasix: **Medaglia d'Oro** (sire of two Group 1 two-year-olds in Europe last year); **Elusive Quality** (sire of Raven's Pass and Elusive Pimpernel); **Distorted Humor**; **Street Cry**; **Tale of the Cat**; **Lemon Drop Kid**; and so on. There is one very good reason, even now, why Europeans should still be looking to the U.S. for horses to race in Europe: the success rate is high. America produces twice as many horses every year as the three top European countries combined, and a good many of them can run. The fact their parents raced on medication hasn't changed things at all, as far as I can see; availability of sires and the pedigree issues I've discussed; might have. But the medication knock: can't buy it. Not proven.

What Euros Got: Inbreeding to Northern Dancer...

This is an issue that seems to still be keeping bloggers, other pedigree buffs and professionals occupied: is there too much inbreeding generally, and is there too much inbreeding to Northern Dancer in particular? Brianne and I will be doing some further research on this in the next few weeks, when the new APEX numbers come out to include all 2009 racing, but in the meantime, I've been doing some work on the matter with a database of some 12,000 A Runners foaled 1996-2005, through racing of 2008. **Cont. p8**



Oppenheim cont.

These are very definitely limited measurements. We are measuring only within this population of 12,000, not taking into account what is called "opportunity in the general population." This is a big thing with a lot of people now, how things ought to be measured against opportunity in the general population. I used to think it would be better if I could do that, but I don't think so any more. As far as I'm concerned, the "general population" consists of 98 percent of horses that are not 'A Runners' (top two percent earners), and two percent which are. I'm not sure I even believe it's meaningful to compare one population to another essentially 50 times its size.

The other limitation on the information I analyzed is that the "inbreeding" is only "sire on damsire," or what has also been called "first cross" data. Though this is the most frequently occurring form of inbreeding, there are many other combinations, especially involving the sire's damsire and the second dam's sire. I can't count those--that's a limitation of the system.

Even given those limitations, what I can count yields what seem to be to be impressive results. Please see the accompanying graph, which shows the incidence of Northern Dancer line (sire) over Northern Dancer line (damsire) in relation to two populations. First--the blue line--is the incidence of 'Northern Dancer over Northern Dancer' as a percentage of all Northern Dancer-line sired A Runners, by year foaled, 1996-2005. That percentage increased from 13.2 percent among 380 Northern Dancer-line sired A Runners foaled in 1996 to 22.4 percent of the 566 Northern Dancer-line sired A Runners foaled in 2004, and 22.7 percent of the 409 Northern Dancer-line sired A Runners of 2005 (including just three-year-olds by the end of 2008, so the number of 2005-foaled A Runners will have increased significantly by the end of 2009). The second/red line shows the percentage of "Northern Dancer over Northern Dancer" A Runners as a percentage of the entire population of A Runners foaled that year. That percentage has increased from 4.3 percent (50) of the 1,151 A Runners foaled in 1996 to 9.3 percent (127) of the 1,371 A Runners foaled in 2004, and 9.6 percent (93) of the 967 A Runners (through the end of 2008) foaled in 2005.

Those trend lines tell us one thing: Whatever the theories, it is working. Is "Northern Dancer over Northern Dancer" nine or 10 percent of the whole population? I don't know, and I don't think I care. What I can see for sure is that, as a percentage of the annual population of new A Runners, the percentage has more than doubled in the last 10 years. How much faster could it possibly be expected to accelerate? **Cont. p9**

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Oppenheim cont.

My conclusion: We shouldn't even be discussing "Northern Dancer over Northern Dancer" any more, except as a sort of umbrella designation, like "Native Dancer" or "Nasrullah" are now used. Northern Dancer is so successful, so powerful, that it really has branched off into nine separate sire lines (in my classifications, one of those lines is actually "Nearctic other than Northern Dancer," such as Explodent, Icecapade, and Wild Again. Even though it's historically incorrect, because Nearctic was also Northern Dancer's sire, that's the way I classify it). Of the nine, Danzig, Sadler's Wells, and Storm Cat/Storm Bird are the most active; Nureyev and Deputy Minister/Vice Regent may or may not survive as active sire lines. Nijinsky, Lyphard, Nearctic, and Miscellaneous Northern Dancer (includes the likes of The Minstrel and, more recently, Dixieland Band) are very unlikely to survive as sire lines. In any case, it's time to stop talking about Northern Dancer over Northern Dancer and start talking about, for example, Danzig over Sadler's Wells--a cross that didn't even exist in 1996, but had 39 A Runners through the end of 2008, including 11 foaled in 2004. The "cross index," at that point, came out at 2.39, when 1.00 is average.

Well, I could keep going: the myth that a horse has to be a Grade/Group 1 winner to "really" count for something (Grade/Group 2 winners: Distorted Humor, Pulpit, Dansili); and what really hasn't changed: prizemoney. The Irish figured out a couple of years ago that prizemoney could be funded by a two percent commission, ring-fenced for that purpose, on all bets, regardless of who placed them; how they were placed (what platform); and where. The endemic problem in this industry is still that the buzz is at the sales, not the racetrack: the tail is still wagging the dog. Ultimately, the industry can only grow by attracting new owners, and an obvious way to attract new owners is to improve prizemoney to the point where owners have a fighting chance, instead of having to accept a desultory return. But that's another subject. In the meantime, I persist in believing the best strategy for success, or at least the best shot at success, in this business is to see things how they are, not how they used to be, or how we wish they would be. Happy New Year.

Comments? Click on bopp@erb.com to send an email.



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JOCKEY CLUB RENEWS RETIREMENT PROGRAM

The Jockey Club is once again offering owners and breeders the opportunity to contribute, through a voluntary checkoff program, to Thoroughbred aftercare programs at the time they register their foals in 2010, it was announced yesterday by James L. Gagliano, president of The Jockey Club.

The retirement checkoff program, created in 2009, is administered by The Jockey Club, and it raises funds to assist the retirement, re-training and adoption efforts of Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF) and the Thoroughbred Charities of America (TCA). The Jockey Club, through its four commercial subsidiaries, donated \$100,000 to each of those two charities in 2009 and will make donations totaling that same amount in 2010. The four companies are: The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc.; The Jockey Club Technology Services Inc.; InCompass Solutions Inc.; and The Jockey Club Racing Services Inc.

"We are grateful to those who participated in the checkoff in 2009 and we hope that additional individuals and organizations will do their part this year to help ensure adequate post-racing care for Thoroughbreds," said Gagliano. "The treatment and use of racehorses at the conclusion of their racing careers should be of concern to all industry participants."

Said Diana Pikulski, executive director of Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, "With across-the-board decreases in charitable giving, it's more important than ever for the Thoroughbred industry to take care of its own, and we urge owners and breeders to make contributions through The Jockey Club's checkoff program."

TCA President Herb Moelis added, "The checkoff is important because it provides a steady source of funding for essential TCA activities. We appreciate the contributions that have been made through the checkoff and we are grateful to The Jockey Club for maintaining the checkoff program. We hope other organizations will follow its lead and enact similar programs that benefit retirement efforts."

Thoroughbred breeders have the option of selecting one of four graduated amounts (\$25, \$50, \$75, or \$100) to be designated for these Thoroughbred aftercare programs, or they can fill in the amount of their choice on the Application for Foal Registration form. These contributions do not qualify as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. For more information, visit www.thoroughbredcharities.org.

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TODAY'S INSIGHTS

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3:36p
HRTV

6th-SA, \$48,000, Alw, 3yo, 1 1/16m
QUIET INVADER ([Songandaprayer](#)) just missed by a nose on debut sprinting six panels at Hollywood Nov. 29, then came back to post an impressive two-length victory at 1-2 odds in a similar event Dec. 19. The Bob Baffert trainee stopped the clock in 1:08 4/5 that day, earning him a good 93 BRIS figure. The \$370K KEEAPR juvenile tries to stretch his considerable speed to two turns today. His uncoupled stablemate is Thoroughbred Legends' **The Program** ([Harlan's Holiday](#)). The \$310K KEESEP yearling won his route debut Oct. 30, was second in his first try against winners in late November, than ran a good fourth--beaten 1 1/2 lengths by another stablemate in Lookin at Lucky (Smart Strike)--in the GI CashCall Futurity at Hollywood Dec. 19. brisnet.com PPs




CLANCY WINS ECLIPSE AWARD FOR NEWS/ COMMENTARY WRITING The National Thoroughbred Racing Association (NTRA), *Daily Racing Form* and the National Turf Writers Association yesterday announced that Sean Clancy, veteran racing journalist in the Middle Atlantic region, has won the 2009 Media Eclipse Award for Writing in the News/Commentary category for his column "Life's Work," about the gamut of emotions he felt while attending an estate sale of the late Hall of Fame trainer Sidney Watters, Jr. in 2008. The entry appeared in the Jan. 3, 2009 edition of *The Blood-Horse* magazine. "It's a real thrill for anyone in the business to win an Eclipse Award," said Clancy, who was born in Wilmington, DE, and currently resides in Middleburg, VA. "It's the pinnacle to win one, whether it's as a jockey or a trainer or for writing. It's always out there, and you're always chasing after it." He added, "Sidney Watters was an amazing horseman and gentleman, who represented a different era as a sportsman. My mentors, and people I respected like Leo O'Brien and Dickie Small, always talked about him and his legacy. He trained champions on the flat and over jumps, which is pretty special. I feel like I'm always trying to bridge that same gap." Honorable mention in the Writing in the News/Commentary category went to four-time Media Eclipse Award winner Jay Hovdey, for his column "No Choice but to Rise to the Top," about the passing of Hall of Fame trainer Bobby Frankel, which appeared on the *Daily Racing Form* website on Nov. 16, 2009. The 39th Annual Eclipse Awards will be held on Monday, Jan. 18 at the Beverly Wilshire Hotel in Beverly Hills, CA.

★ EAST ★

Northview PA Open House Jan. 31:

Northview PA will host an open house Jan. 31. All six of the farm's stallions, including newcomer **Lido Palace (Chi)**, will be available for inspection from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. Light fare and refreshments will be available. RSVP at the [Northview website](#).

<p>BLACK-TYPE STAKES CLOSINGS </p> <p>TOMORROW, THURSDAY, JANUARY 7:</p> <p>01-16 \$150,000 San Fernando-II, SA, 4yo, 8.5f (AWT) (150)</p> <p>01-16 \$150,000 Santa Ynez-II, SA, 3yo, f, 7f (AWT) (150)</p> <p>01-16 \$100,000 San Rafael-III, SA, 3yo, 8f (AWT) (100)</p> <p>01-17 \$150,000 El Encino-II, SA, 4yo, f, 8.5f (AWT) (150)</p> <p>01-18 \$150,000 San Marcos-II, SA, 4yo/up, 10fT (150)</p> <p>www.stakesdigestweekly.com</p>

BRIS Speed Ratings
Top Weekly Stakes Races

Horse	Sire	Race	BRIS Speed
Greenspring	Oriente	Native Dancer S.	107
Quality Road	Elusive Quality	Hal's Hope S.-G3	104
Tiger's Rock	Giant's Causeway	Gallant Fox H.	102
Cherokee Heaven	Cherokee Run	Impressive Luck H.	100
Perf	Burning Roma	Minaret S.	100
Red Rally	Reformer Rally	Louisiana Futurity	100
Twin Sparks	Twining	Swift S.	100
Category Seven	Gulf Storm	Furl Sail H.	99
Distorted Passion	Distorted Humor	Interborough H.	99
Compari	Redattore (Brz)	Sensational Star H.	98
Tuscan Evening (Ire)	Oasis Dream (GB)	Monrovia H.-G3	96
Cat By the Tale	Tale of the Cat	San Gorgonio H.-G2	95
Z. I. Zipp	City Zip	Turfway Prevue S.	95
Free Flying Soul	Quiet American	Kalookan Queen H.	94
Macias	Purge	Eddie Logan S.	94
Romantic Hideaway	City Zip	Brandywine S.	93
Grand Slam Andre	Grand Slam	Riley Allison Futurity	92
Laus Deo	Medaglia D'Oro	Count Fleet S.	91
Enchanted Outlaw	Prospector Jones	Albert Dominguez Memorial H.	90
Hear No Angel	Eavesdropper	Cocodrie S.	89
In the Slips	More Than Ready	Blue Norther S.	88
Intimissimi	Posse	Gardenia S.	86
Antares World	Decarchy	California Oaks	84
The Rumor's True	Kafwain	Louisiana Futurity	79

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★ INDUSTRY INFO ★

Early Triple Crown Nominations Due Jan. 16:

Early nominations for the 2010 Triple Crown are due Jan. 16, Churchill Downs announced. For \$600, horsemen can nominate their three-year-olds to the GI Kentucky Derby, GI Preakness S. and GI Belmont S. Nominations can be made at www.thetriplecrown.com, or with various representatives of Triple Crown racetracks. Covering South Florida will be Don Richardson, Churchill Downs Inc. senior vice president; Ben Huffman, director of racing and racing secretary at Churchill Downs; Coley Blind, Pimlico stakes coordinator; and P.J. Campo, vice president, director of racing and racing secretary for NYRA. Gene Williams, representing Churchill Downs, will accept nominations in Southern California. Jason Boulet, director of racing and racing secretary at the Fair Grounds, will take nominations at his home track. Sandy Montgomery of Churchill will sign up horses at Oaklawn Park, while Allison DeLuca, director of racing at Tampa Bay Downs, will handle nominations at that Florida track. NYRA Stakes Coordinator Andrew Byrnes will take nominations in New York, and Georganne Hale, Pimlico racing secretary, will handle Maryland-area nominations. Horsemen may also contact Kelly Danner at (502) 638-3825 or by fax at (502) 638-3915. A late nomination-period, with a fee of \$6,000 per horse, closes Mar. 27.



★ AMERICAN-BRED WINNERS ★

IN BRITAIN:

Russian Music, g, 5, **Stravinsky**--Private Seductress (SP-US), by Private Account. Southwell, Britain, 1-5, Hcp, 4yo/up, 1 3/4m (AWT). B-Denis O'Flynn. *150,000gns yrl '06 TATOCT; 800gns HIT '08 TATHIT. **1/2 to Menhoubah (Dixieland Band), G1SW-Ity, G1SP-Ire & SP-GB, \$550,269.



First/Second-crop starters to watch: Wednesday, Dec. 6
Sire (Sire's Sire), Farm, 2005 Fee, #foals of racing age/Winners/BlackTypeWnrs
Race #-track, race type, distance, runner, odds (if available)

SAINT LIAM (Saint Ballado), Lane's End, \$50K, 98/15/1
 6-GP, Alw, 1m, Imaginary Saint, \$325K KEE SEP yrl, 4-1

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ADDITIONAL MAIDEN WINNERS:

Seaside Fortune, f, 3, **Forest Danger**--Option Contract, by Forty Niner. PHA, 1-5, (C), 6 1/2f, 1:16 4/5. B-Michael Rainier (KY). *1/2 to Shake the Dice (Boundary), SW, \$523,851. **Won by 11 lengths in wire-to-wire fashion.

• ON THE WORKTAB •

FAIR GROUNDS

Auspicious (Indian Charlie), 5f, •1:00.80, 1/8

SANTA ANITA

M One Rifle (One Man Army), 5f, 1:03.00, 17/20

Mr. Hot Stuff (Tiznow), 5f, 1:00.80, 6/20

Silver Swallow (Alphabet Soup), 4f, :48.40, 9/24

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BASTIENNE (ITY) (f, 3, **Fasliyev**--**Fiorella Lolly {Ire}**, by **Saddler's Hall {Ire}**) Lifetime Record: 8-3-1-3, €33,983. O-Scuderia Chimax Srl; B-Scuderia Elle Srl; T-Vitale Panico. *€10,000 yrl '08 ITYSEP.

MAIDEN WINNER:

Ambrogina (GB), f, 3, **Osorio (Ger)**--Oh Bej Oh Bej (Ire) (GSW-Ity), by Distinctly North. Southwell, Britain, 1-5, Mdn, 3yo/up, 6f (AWT). B-Newsells Park Stud Limited. *22,000gns yrl '08 TATOCT. **First winner for sire (by Surumu {Ger})