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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 1997

\$2 Daily

N • E • W • S T O D A Y

STORM SONG TOPS SEVEN-FIGURE BONANZA AT KEENELAND

A day after six mares sold for \$1 million or more, bidding on five broodmares reached seven figures Wednesday at the third session of Keeneland's November Breeding Stock Sale in Lexington, Kentucky. Top price was paid for 1996 champion two-year-old filly **Storm Song** (Summer Squall--Hum Along). Consigned by Eaton Sales, agent for Dogwood Stable, the broodmare prospect brought a final bid of \$1.4 million from Jamie Carrion. "I don't know whether I was at my limit or not," said Carrion. "I never know what my limit is. I just don't know. All I know is that I really wanted that mare." According to Carrion, Storm Song's future may include a return to the races. "We might take her back to the racetrack," he said. "We just have to see." Storm Song won the GI Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies, GI Frizette and GI Adirondack S. on the way to championship honors last year. Bloodstock agent Reynolds Bell, representing Betty Moran, spent \$1.3 million to acquire the eight-year-old mare **Market Booster** (Green Dancer--Final Figure, by Super Concorde), in foal to Gone West. "She's a lovely mare; a heckuva nice mare," said Bell, who announced that Market Booster will be shipped to Henry White's farm in Fayette County. "The fact that she's in foal to Gone West made her even more attractive. Gone West is one of her favorite sires." No decision has been made on whom Market Booster will be sent to in 1998. Demi O'Byrne paid top price for a weanling when he bid \$925,000 for hip number 934, a colt by Storm Cat--La Affirmed, by Affirmed. The weanling, who is a full brother to multiple graded stakes winners Caress and Country Cat, was purchased for a partnership that includes Michael Tabor and John Magnier. According to O'Byrne, the colt--who is the fifth highest priced weanling in Keeneland's November Breeding Stock Sale history--will be kept in the United States and will be shipped to Ashford Stud in Versailles, Kentucky. At yesterday's session, 279 horses sold for \$53,053,000--up 28.5 percent from last year's corresponding day when 274 horses sold for \$41,279,000. The average of \$190,154 rose 26.2 percent from last year's figure of \$150,653. The median price of \$130,000 marked a 32-percent increase from the 1996 figure of \$98,500. Through three days of the 12-day sale, 846 horses have sold for an aggregate of \$147,739,000. The cumulative average price is \$174,632 and the median price is \$110,000. The sale continues today at 10 a.m. and ends Friday, November 21.

K • E • E • N • E • L • A • N • D R E S U L T S

TOP FIVE BROODMARES WEDNESDAY

Hip#	Broodmare	Covering Stallion	Price
915	STORM SONG	B'mare prospect	\$1,400,000
	<i>Summer Squall--Hum Along (Fappiano)</i>		
	Consigned by Eaton Sales, agent for Dogwood Stable Purchased by J. S. Carrion, Trustee		
968	MARKET BOOSTER	Gone West	\$1,300,000
	<i>Green Dancer--Final Figure (Super Concorde)</i>		
	Consigned by Eaton Sales, agent Purchased by Brushwood Stables		
816	CATNIP	Storm Cat	\$1,075,000
	<i>Flying Paster--Beware of the Cat (Caveat)</i>		
	Consigned by Pegasus Stud (Melinda Smith), agent for Jerry Frankel Purchased by Courtlandt Farm		
769	YANKS MUSIC	Storm Cat	\$1,000,000
	<i>Air Forbes Won--Traipsing (Darby Creek Road)</i>		
	Consigned by Irish American Bloodhorse Agency, agent for Aghern House Stud Purchased by Frank Stronach		
771	ABOVE THE LINE	Danzig	\$1,000,000
	<i>Easy Goer--Pure Profit (Key to the Mint)</i>		
	Consigned by Eaton Sales, agent Purchased by Overbrook Farm		

TOP SIX WEANLINGS WEDNESDAY

Hip#	Sex	Sire	Dam	Price
934	c	Storm Cat	La Affirmed	\$925,000
	Consigned by Eaton Sales, agent Purchased by Demi O'Byrne			
808	f	Storm Cat	By Land by Sea	\$650,000
	Consigned by Brereton C. Jones, agent Purchased by John Ferguson			
1016	c	Nureyev	Palestrina	\$610,000
	Consigned by Walmac International, agent Purchased by Demi O'Byrne			
945	f	Woodman	Leo's Lucky Lady	\$500,000
	Consigned by John Williams, agent Purchased by Wertheimer et Frere			
899	c	Thunder Gulch	Golden Oriole	\$475,000
	Consigned by Ashford Stud, agent Purchased by Jerry Bailey			
857	c	Nureyev	Defer West	\$475,000
	Consigned by Walmac International, agent Purchased by John Ferguson			



(News cont.)

NTRA APPROVES BUSINESS PLAN The Oversight Committee for the National Thoroughbred Racing Association has approved a draft business plan which will be circulated this week to key owners, racetracks and their representatives for comment. The plan, designed to establish a national office for the promotion and coordination of Thoroughbred racing in North America, has been developed from the preliminary NTRA business plan first released at The Jockey Club Round Table Conference in August. Included in the plan are a simplified funding formula, advertising strategies, and recommendations for television and sponsorship. The new funding formula calls for contributions to be based on total handle generated by each member track on its own live racing. "This is, above all, a fair formula," said Nick Nicholson, interim Chief Operating Officer for the NTRA. "It respects the operational differences between big tracks and smaller...between those who do a lot of business as host tracks to those who depend a great deal on their role as receiving sites." The primary NTRA goal is to launch a national marketing and advertising campaign to put racing in competition with other major North American professional sports. The strategy outlined in the draft business plan provides for a minimum 50 percent of track dues to be reinvested in local marketing advertising. The NTRA goal is that the period for industry comment on the draft will be concluded in time to unveil the final plan at the RTIP Symposium on Racing in Arizona December 10-12.

FASIG-TIPTON STALLION ACCESS RESULTS A season to premier sire **Danzig** (Northern Dancer) brought the highest bid at the Fasig-Tipton Stallion Access Fall Sale of Selected Seasons and Shares, held Tuesday at Newton Paddocks in Lexington. A 1998 No Guarantee season to the 20-year-old stallion, who has sired 128 stakes winners to date including champions Chief's Crown, Dance Smartly and Dayjur, sold for \$167,000. The second highest price was paid for a share in **Phone Trick** (Clever Trick), sire of certain 1997 champion two-year-old and Horse of the Year candidate Favorite Trick, which sold for \$160,000. In all, 60 seasons and shares were sold for a total of \$1,500,100. The average season price was \$23,194.

A # will distinguish first-time stakes-winners, a @ will indicate first-time graded stakes-winners, a + will denote winners who are first-time starters, an (S) will be used for state-bred races, a (C) will be used for maiden-claiming races and an (R) will be used for other restricted races.

BREEDERS' CUP TRANS-ATLANTIC BETTING

A SUCCESS French horseplayers bet \$1,020,057 on last weekend's Breeders' Cup races at Hollywood Park, accessing that racetrack's Autotote pari-mutuel system directly via trans-Atlantic datalines. Over 7,400 French outlets linked to the Pari-Mutuel Urbain national off-track betting system were able to place win, show and exact bets on all seven races. A live satellite feed of the Breeders' Cup card was also beamed into French race-tracks and homes over the national racing channel. "With the introduction of global wagering pools, the real winners will be the millions of horseplayers across the world," explained Kenneth Kirchner, Director of Simulcasting for Breeders' Cup Ltd. "The success of French betting into American pools demonstrates to the international community that this is not only possible, but very viable financially," he concluded.

◆ FOREIGN ◆

Stakes Results:

PRIX SARACA, \$45,045, Maisons-Laffitte, France, 11-11, 2yo, f, 1mT, 1:47.5, vy. sf.

1--#**LEGGERA (IRE)**, 126, f, 2, **Sadler's Wells--Lady Ambassador (GB) (MSW-Ire)**, by **General Assembly**. O/B-H Focke; T-J Dunlop; J-O Peslier; \$24,255.

2--**Queen Catherine (GB)**, 126, f, 2, **Machiavellian--Russian Royal**, by **Nureyev**. \$8,316.

3--**Karapucha (Ire)**, 126, f, 2, **Kaldoun (Fr)--Soviet Squaw**, by **Nureyev**. \$6,237.

Margins: ½, 3, SNK.

Local News, Hong Kong:

Decorated Hero (GB) (Warning {GB}), third in the Breeders' Cup Mile, heads the list of three European horses invited to the seven-furlong G2 Hong Kong International Bowl on December 7 at Sha-Tin Racecourse. Also invited are his stable companion **Russian Revival** (Nureyev) and **Wizard King** (Shaadi). Invited from the United Arab Emirates is **Diffident (Fr)** (Nureyev). Two European horses--**Bijou D'Inde (GB)** (Cadeaux Geneux {GB}) and **Wixim** (Diesis {GB})--have been invited to the 1 1/8-mile G2 Hong Kong International Cup, with **Allied Forces** (Miswaki) representing the United Arab Emirates. Four European horses--**Luso (GB)** (Salse), **Oxalagu (Ger)** (Lagunas {GB}), **Posidonas (GB)** (Slip Anchor {GB}) and **Protektor (Ger)** (Acatenango {Ger})--have been invited to the mile-and-a-half G2 Hong Kong International Vase. The United Arab Emirates' representative will be **Predappio (GB)** (Polish Precedent), winner of the G2 Hardwicke S. at Royal Ascot in June. North American, Australian, New Zealand, Malaysian and Japanese invited horses and reserves will be announced Nov. 14.

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**Local News, Japan:**

The Japan Racing Association has released the revised list of horses accepting invitations to the Japan Cup. The North American entrant **Val's Prince** (Eternal Prince) will not be lining up for the Nov. 23 race. European hopefuls are **Pilsudski** (Ire) (Polish Precedent), **Oscar Schindler** (Ire) (Royal Academy), **Caitano** (GB) (Ninisky), **Astarabad** (Alleged) and **Mons** (GB) (Deploy {GB}). The lone entrant from Oceania is **Ebony Grosve** (NZ) (Grosvenor {NZ}).

◆ EAST ◆

Yesterday's Results:

8th-MED, \$35,000, Alw, 3yo/up, 6f, 1:09 3/5, ft. CRAFTY ALFEL (g, 9, **Crafty Prospector--Regal Lady Hour, by Regal and Royal**), winner of last year's Suffolk Downs Breeders' Cup H., was claimed out of a fifth-place effort in an Oct. 21 \$35,000 claiming event at the Meadowlands in his previous start. The 5-1 shot ran up with the pace before taking a short lead into the lane and holding on in the stretch for a half-length victory. Lifetime Record: MSW & MGSP, 89-25-22-12, \$814,499.
O-Home Team Stables. B-James H. Iselin (NY). T-Scott A Lake.

◆ MIDWEST ◆

Local News, Churchill Downs:

Churchill Downs has announced a three-percent increase on all overnight purses, effective yesterday. "This is a direct reflection of the success of Churchill Downs and its racing," said Don Richardson, Churchill Downs Vice President of Racing. "The overall quality of our racing creates these benefits. Our horsemen and employees are the ones that make these opportunities available."

Yesterday's Results:

7th-CDX, \$43,000, Alw, 3yo/up, 1 1/8mT, 1:49 4/5, fm. REINVIGORATED (c, 3, **Academy Award--Tipton Ridge, by Gallapiat**) rolled over the field in an Oct. 2 Arlington turf maiden event by 8 1/2 lengths in his previous trip to the post. The 5-1 third choice trailed the field of 10 early before commencing his late bid five-wide around the far turn and storming to the front in the drive to win by one length. Lifetime Record: 6-2-0-3, \$50,061.
O-Joseph Shapiro. B-Doug Byars (KY). T-Philip M Hauswald.

9th-CDX, \$41,600, Alw, 3yo/up, 7f, 1:24 4/5, ft. MR. BARRYMORE (c, 4, **Rare Performer--Disco Jan, by Torsion**) ran fifth in an Oct. 18 Keeneland allowance race in his previous start and won for the first time since taking a July 29 \$30,000 Ellis Park maiden claimer six starts back. The 16-1 longshot was never far back while racing on the outside and accelerated to the front in the lane for a 1 1/4-length tally. Lifetime Record: 13-2-2-5, \$57,104.
O/B-Jebb Stable & Wafare Farm (KY). T-Walter M Bindner Jr.

8th-CDX, \$41,020, Alw, 3yo/up, f/m, 7f, 1:25 3/5, ft. REQUESTING MORE (f, 3, **Norquestor--Casamora, by Villamor**) finished third in the Sept. 20 Gill Safely Kept S. at Colonial Downs last time out and returned to the winner's circle here for the first time since taking the July 19 Dixie Miss S. at Louisiana Downs three starts ago. The even-money favorite dueled up on the front end before shaking loose in the stretch and fending off the late challenge of **QUEENS N VAGABONDS** (Black Tie Affair {Ire}) to win by a neck. Lifetime Record: SW & GSP, 14-6-1-3, \$137,165.
O-Robert Green & Dawn & Ike Thrash. B-Ron Targan (PA). T-Bobby C Barnett.

5th-CDX, \$39,280, Alw, 2yo, f, 6f, 1:11 4/5, ft. RAVE (f, 2, **Houston--Pat Copelan {GSP, \$202,654}, by Copelan**) romped by eight lengths in an Oct. 10 Keeneland maiden event and finished second last time out in the Nov. 2 Pocahontas S. at Churchill. The even-money favorite was bumped at the start, pressed the pace and gained command turning for home to go on to a two-length victory. Lifetime Record: SP, 4-2-1-0, \$72,052.
O/B-Overbrook Farm (KY). T-D Wayne Lukas.

6th-CDX, \$37,400, Msw, 3yo/up, f/m, 6f, 1:11 1/5, ft. POLA (f, 3, **Strawberry Road {Aus}--Nureyev's Best {SW & GSP-Fr}, by Nureyev**) ran fourth in a Nov. 2 Churchill maiden race at first asking but scored here by three lengths. The 2-1 favorite battled on the front end early and edged clear in the lane. Lifetime Record: 2-1-0-0, \$25,320.
O/B-Allen E. Paulson (KY). T-Jerry L Romans.

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◆ SO. CALIFORNIA ◆

Local News, Hollywood Park:

Eight-year-old **Sandpit (Brz)** (Baynoun {Ire}) will make his final start in the Dec. 14 GI Hollywood Turf Cup. "The owners (Sierra Thoroughbreds) opted not to go to the Japan Cup," Gary Mandella, assistant trainer to his father, Richard, confirmed yesterday.

Yokama (Irish River {Fr}) worked six furlongs in 1:15 1/5 Wednesday in preparation for the Nov. 30 GI Matriarch.

Yesterday's Results:

7th-HOL, \$44,400, Opt. Clm. (\$62,500), 3yo/up, f/m, 6½f, 1:16 4/5, ft.

FAIR MARGARITA (f, 3, Crafty Prospector--Aromacor, by Bold Ruckus) was a three-length winner of her debut in a \$50,000 Hollywood claimer in May and returned to take a July 30 Del Mar allowance before a sixth-place outing Sept. 1 and a second-place effort in an Oct. 13 Santa Anita optional claimer last out. The 9-5 favorite, last early, stormed to the front nearing the sixteenth pole and charged clear to win by seven lengths. Lifetime Record: 5-3-1-0, \$69,150.

O-Hughes Stable. B-Richard O'Neill (Ky). T-David Hofmans.

1997 THOROUGHBRED RACING LEADERS

(through November 9, 1997)

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Jockeys	Mounts/Wins	Purses
*Jerry Bailey	1101/258	\$17,103,994
**Gary Stevens	846/180	\$14,909,479
Mike Smith	1184/220	\$13,779,664
Pat Day	1127/237	\$12,965,108
Shane Sellers	1318/268	\$12,577,368
Alex Solis	1198/220	\$11,573,610
*Corey Nakatani	690/137	\$10,110,256
Chris McCarron	563/109	\$ 9,665,017
Kent Desormeaux	878/147	\$ 8,841,482
Jorge Chavez	1260/225	\$ 7,935,274

*Includes Dubai statistics.

**Includes England and Italy statistics.

A # will distinguish first-time stakes-winners, a @ will indicate first-time graded stakes-winners, a + will denote winners who are first-time starters, an (S) will be used for state-bred races, a (C) will be used for maiden-claiming races and an (R) will be used for other restricted races.

AT THE SALES WITH BILL OPPENHEIM

THUNDER GULCH WINS ROUND ONE

DAY THREE

Five more mares for \$1-million plus when I left with fifty to go, total 11 for the sale ... other than that, I've temporarily lost count. The two top first-year sires figured to be dual Classic winners Tabasco Cat and Thunder Gulch -- particularly as they were by far the best represented first-year sires in the first three days -- and so it's proved. Tabasco Cat fired the first salvo, with a \$375,000 colt on Monday to The Thoroughbred Corp. Thunder Gulch countered, late in the session, with a \$270,000 colt out of New York SW Sleek Feet, to Japan's Dr. Koichiro Hayata. Neither asserted on Tuesday: Tabasco Cat had a \$180,000 filly to Walnut Green Bloodstock, while Thunder Gulch had a colt out of Party Cited sell for \$170,000 to Shadwell.

Different story Wednesday. Tabasco Cat had one colt bring \$280,000, to foal-buyer Gerald Ford. But Thunder Gulch had no less than three colts bring \$400,000-plus, all sold by Ashford Stud: hip 899, a colt out of El Gran Senor's sister Golden Oriole, brought \$475,000 on a bid by Jerry Bailey; hip 943, a colt out of G2 winner Lemon Souffle, sold for \$400,000 to Narvick International; and hip 956, a colt out of the brilliant sprinting mare Lyric Fantasy, sold for \$430,000 to Timmy Hyde. At the end of three sessions, Thunder Gulch had 12 sell for an average of \$195,750; Tabasco Cat's first eight averaged \$158,375. State of Play at the end of three days: they both sold very well.

An interesting observation from one grizzled sale veteran: he thinks mares are not being penalized like they have been previously for indifferent or inconclusive early progeny racing achievements IF they come from legitimately good families ... sometimes a big if, and often debatable whether a family is "that good", but I'd have to agree. Makes you wonder what some of those beautifully-bred top-class mares in private hands might realize if they actually came on the market now ...

Bill Oppenheim is a journalist and consultant specializing in pedigrees, sires and the auction market. The former editor and publisher of Racing Update, he now lives in Scotland and may be contacted by phone (011-44-1-887-830-282) or fax (011-44-1-887-830-671).

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ALLOWANCE RESULTS:

7th-HAW, \$42,120, 3yo/up, 5fT, :57 2/5, fm.
MARKUS' POWERPLAY (c, 4, Royal Roberto--My Honeydew, by Tilt Up) Lifetime Record: 17-7-4-1, \$139,620. O-Cherrywood Stable, Inc & M Schwartz. B-Vincent J Swartz, Joseph Paglini, Et Al (IL). T-Michele Boyce.

4th-HAW, \$25,852, 3yo/up, f/m, 1 1/16m, 1:48 3/5, ft.
SEEMESKI (m, 6, Sunny's Halo--Ski Kitti, by Baldski) Lifetime Record: 53-18-4-8, \$170,607. O-Endo Pat & Pauls Steve. B-Circle S Ranch, Inc. (KY). T-Michael L Reavis.

2nd-WOX, \$22,100, 3yo/up, 6f, 1:10 2/5, ft.
GRECIAN'S REBEL (c, 3, Regal Intention--Grecian Earn {SW, \$202,116}, by Ten Gold Pots) Lifetime Record: 11-2-3-0, \$39,494. O-Okihiro R & Pleterski B & K. B-John J. Butler (CAN). T-Bosidar D Pleterski.

6th-MED, \$22,000, 3yo/up, 6f, 1:09 1/5, ft.
CHOICE SHIFT (c, 4, Night Shift--La Querida, by Foolish Pleasure) Lifetime Record: 33-4-8-5, \$125,619. O/T-Edwin T Broome. B-W. S. Farish & W. T. Carter (KY).

MAIDEN WINNERS:

Copelan's Lilly, f, 2, Copelan--Lilly's Pleasure, by What a Pleasure. WOX, 11-12, (C), 6f, 1:11 1/5. B-Mangurian, Jr, Harry T, (Fl). *1/2 to Lillycut (Cutlass), SW, \$167,412. **\$20,000 yrl '96 OBSAUG.

Apache Miss, f, 2, Corwyn Bay (Ire)--Jerrico Miss (SW), by Jerimi Johnson. BMX, 11-12, (C), 5 1/2f, 1:04. B-R D Hubbard & Ed Allred (Ca).

Cyndi's Glitter, f, 2, Glitterman--Dani's Doll, by Native Royalty. HAW, 11-12, 6f, 1:14 4/5. B-Mueller Stables (Ky). *\$2,700 yrl '96 OBSAUG.

+ **Princwee, c, 2, Native Uproar--Princess Slewee,** by Slew Machine. BEU, 11-12, (S), 6f, 1:13 1/5. B-Urban Jan & Susan (Oh). *won in dead heat.

Turn N Roll Again, c, 2, Rollin On Over-- Turntosuperior, by Superior Knowledge. BEU, 11-12, (S), 6f, 1:13 1/5. B-Hunt James E (Oh). *won in dead heat.

Colonel Vann, c, 2, Stop the Music--Soft Power, by Lines of Power. CDX, 11-12, (C), 1m, 1:39 2/5. B-Bloodstock Leasing, Inc & Lance K Robinson (Ky). *\$26,000 yrl '96 KEESEP.

Afrank, c, 3, Afleet--One From Heaven (Ch. 3yo Filly-Can, MSW & GSP, \$396,376), by Affirmed. CDX, 11-12, (C), 1 1/16m, 1:47 1/5. B-Kennedy Richard R (Ky). *\$42,000 wng '94 KEENOV.

Rockster, c, 3, Cozzene--T. V. Jingles, by Stop the Music. HOL, 11-12, (C), 1 1/16m, 1:44 1/5. B-Austin Bob (Ok). *\$31,000 wng '94 KEENOV; \$60,000 yrl '95 KEESEP. **Six-length winner.

Windy Deut, c, 3, Embrace the Wind--Dancing Deut, by Trouble Dance. FLX, 11-12, (S), 6f, 1:12 4/5. B-Waters Loretta L (NY).

Civil Wars, c, 3, Knight--What's the Verdict, by Deputed Testamony. TDN, 11-12, (S), 1 1/16m, 1:48 2/5. B-Byer Larry (Oh).

Pola, f, 3, Strawberry Road (Aus)--Nureyev's Best, by Nureyev. CDX, 11-12, 6f, 1:11 1/5. B-Paulson Allen E (Ky).

Morning Starlet, f, 3, Sun War Dancer--Morning Talents, by Morning Bob. MED, 11-12, (S), 6f, 1:12 3/5. B-L'Joka Daniel J (NJ). *\$3,000 2yo 1996 OBSAPR.

1997 LEADING SIRES OF 2YO WINNERS IN N.A.

(through 11/5/97)

SIRE	STATE	Foals	2yo wnrs
Salt Lake	Ky	66	17
Carson City	Ky	70	16
Copelan	dead	61	16
Irish Open	Tx	67	16
Phone Trick	Ky	75	16
Pentelicus	Fl	55	15
Red Ransom	Ky	119	15
Regal Classic	Ont	63	15
Wayne's Crane	Tx	58	15
Lost Code	Ky	83	14
Notebook	Fl	44	14
Robyn Dancer	Fl	43	14
Danzig	Ky	51	13

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WRITERS UP

SURFING THE "NET" TO SUCCESS

By Carol Hodes, Meadowlands Publicity

When it comes to finding horse owners, Keith Sirota lets his fingers do the walking...not in the Yellow Pages, but on the keyboard of his computer.

Two years ago, Sirota was questioning his future as a horse trainer. He decided the answer might be found on the Internet. Now, thanks to an investment in a computer, he has six horses stabled at the Meadowlands and four groups of owners, all connected to him by the World Wide Web. His horses have captured 11 of 67 starts this year, winning at a 16-percent rate.

"I had been an assistant trainer for a long time for Alan Goldberg, and I had galloped horses for Scotty Schulhofer," explained the 39-year-old Sirota. "I was sitting home one day...you know, you're sitting there thinking about your future. 'Where am I going?' I didn't want to be an assistant trainer all of my life. I graduated from Indiana State in 1980 with a bachelor's degree in secondary education. I wanted to coach or do something like that if it didn't work out with horses. But I'm sitting at home with my wife Blanca, and I keep seeing all these commercials about the Internet, how businesses are all on the Internet. Why couldn't I meet people over the Internet who might want to get horses?"

Sirota bought a computer, placed his resumes on websites in Lexington, Kentucky and Tampa, Florida, and found his first owner.

"I'm in Florida and everyone's kind of laughing at me, saying 'you'll never meet any owners,' and I'm starting to believe they're right about this whole thing," Sirota recalled. "But I wouldn't give up on it."

Finally, in April of 1996, a year after he got his computer, he received an e-mail in broken English from a businessman in Tokyo who had a two-year-old filly in Florida and was looking for a trainer. After a series of e-mails and faxes from Tomotaka Umeda and then Soppei Fukada came one which read, "Sirota-san, we would love to have you train our horse."

The filly, Turn Off the Light, reached the races three months later, finishing second in her first start to the D. Wayne Lukas-trained City Band on Haskell Day at Monmouth Park. Sirota had saddled his first horse, and the owners, 10 Japanese businessmen racing as Cyberbreeder Stable, were ecstatic. Seventeen starts later, the filly has a record of three wins, four seconds and four thirds and earnings of nearly \$70,000.

"Our only communication for a year was fax and e-mail," said Sirota. "They were paying me with Japanese postal money orders. They actually bought Turn Off the

Lights by mistake. They had come to the United States to buy her mother, but somebody else from Japan had beaten them to the punch. So they bought her foal, but they didn't know what to do with her. They went back to Japan and started surfing the Internet for a trainer."

Sirota's next three owners also came from the Internet.

Steve Richardson, who owns a detective agency and Internet provider service called Spynet in Tampa, sent him a check for \$22,000 to claim a horse. Sirota claimed Is It Blinking, who ran once, finished fourth and was claimed. With that money, Sirota picked out Proud Accolade for \$16,000.

"I told Richardson 'I think this filly wants to run long'," said the trainer. "She was running three-quarters...she'd come from the clouds and just couldn't get there. The first time I ran her, I ran her long. She won and paid \$23. It was a \$24,000 purse. This is a home run. Now I have two owners and the other guys in the barn aren't laughing any more."

Sirota met Steve and Jean Zorn of New York City, already partners in a group called the Cyberspace Racing Team, on a website called the Derby List. He had posted a notice looking to put together a partnership of from five to 10 people to own 10 to 20 percent of a race horse each. In a couple of weeks, he had eight partners. Zorn, a professor at Pace University Law School, manages the partnership, which races under the name Castle Village Farm and includes three teachers, a school counselor and a student.

One of the Castle Village partners, Toni Richardson, is also managing partner for Cyberspace Racing Team and provides the backing for another Sirota trainee, Village Fair. New Yorker Joe Calvo, part of the Village Fair partnership, has approached Sirota with the idea of adding to his stable this winter.

"He works for a brokerage firm in New York," said Sirota. "He and his buddies want to get some horses with me when I get to Florida."

Sirota keeps in touch with his owners by e-mailing progress reports and news on upcoming races.

"If I had never bought this computer, I'm still Al Goldberg's assistant or I'm off the track," said Sirota. "But I just refused to believe it wasn't going to happen. Sometimes you're just meant to do something. I came from no background in horses. It was a goofy mistake. I needed a summer job. I got a job as a hotwalker at Monmouth Park. I'm making \$75 a week, I'm living in the tack room, I'm 18 years old and I'm thinking I'm in heaven."

"Everything I learned with horses just clicked. I taught myself to gallop, I had never taken a riding lesson. A few years later I'm galloping horses for Scotty Schulhofer, a Hall of Famer. I thought to myself, 'You've come so far, this is something so natural to you, something that is meant to be.'"

What Turn-to line stallion raced drug free, started in 28 Grade I stakes and earned a Beyer number of 100+ in 23 of his last 25 starts?