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Azur Steals The Show at Meadowlands Sale

By Bill Finley

EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ—Fran Azur came, saw and conquered at yesterday's Tattersalls Select Mixed Sale at the Meadowlands. The owner took home the \$170,000 sale topper, **Mystical Diva** (Western Ideal), plus three other horses that topped the \$100,000 barrier.



Fran Azur is the new owner of Mystical Diva

Mystical Diva, a 4-year-old mare, had been racing at Woodbine for trainer Tony Alagna and was coming off a solid 2011 in which she won seven times and earned \$150,738. She was second in the Tender Loving Care Series final and won an elimination the Lynch Memorial.

"I wanted her as a race horse, but the backup plan is a broodmare," Azur said. "I like the number of races she had (30) in 2011 and her times are good. She's a good strong raceway horse and, hopefully, she'll show that again this year. I expected to pay no more than \$125,000 for her. I wasn't get-

ting gun shy, but the problem is that the higher you go the more you have to recover racing. When you pay that much you need a little luck when they race."

Mystical Diva was consigned by Preferred Equine.

Azur said his new acquisitions would be trained by Kevin McDermott.

The owner also paid \$155,000 for **Flipper J** (Art Major), \$135,000 for **Sonic Dancer** (Mach Three) and \$120,000 for **Village Beat** (Rocknroll Hanover). Flipper J was a New York sire's winner last year and has career earnings of \$250,590. Sonic Dancer is a lightly raced horse who held his own in Ontario sire's stakes races in 2011, and Village Beat is a solid 5-year-old with \$151,916 in career earnings.

"The prices for the raceway horses are higher," Azur noted. "That is the trend, for a good raceway horse you're going to pay a little more than you used to. I am always looking for the right horses and trying to balance our stable. Since we sent 'Hypnotic' to stud, we wanted to add a little bit to the stable. At the last Harrisburg sale, I bought a yearling for \$110,000. That's the first yearling I ever bought in my life. I like raceway horses. With these we'll need a little luck to recover the extra we had to pay."

Second-place honors went to **Divulge** (Tell All), a 3-year-old purchased for \$160,000 by Daryl Bier. Though he has

earned just \$50,132 in his career he showed promise last year, finishing second in the New Jersey Futurity at Freehold and holding his own with a fourth place finish in the Matron at Dover. He was bred by Brittany Farms and was trained in 2011 by Jimmy Takter.

"I got to \$150,000 and figured what's another \$10,000?" Bier said. "But that would have been my last bid. Unlike with the babies, when you buy a horse like this it's not a guessing game. This horse has already proven himself as a race horse. I don't have any dreams of winning the North America Cup with him. I was looking for a horse that can make anywhere from \$150,000 to \$300,000 over the course of the year. It looks like he can do that, and he has a lot of promise."

Bier achieved a rarity when acquiring the colt, outbidding John Cancelliere, who doesn't say no too often when he wants a horse. But the Cancelliere Brothers did not go home empty handed as they added **Rollwithitharry** (Rocknroll Hanover) to their stable, paying \$120,000 for the 4-year-old.

Nine horses topped the \$100,000 mark as opposed to seven at last year's sale.

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Total US Purses Off 2 Percent in 2011

By Bill Finley (Statistics courtesy of USTA)

There was good news and bad news for North American harness racing in 2011 when it comes to purses.



A total of \$422 million in purse money was paid out in 2011 at the US tracks, a slight decrease from 2010 when \$431 million was paid out.

However, the decline is largely attributable to the fact that fewer races were contested. There were 48,346 races in the US in 2011,

down from 49,998 a year earlier. With the decline in the number of races, the figure for the average purse per race was actually up. The average purse in the U.S. in 2011 was \$8,746 versus \$8,628 a year earlier.

Purses at the Canadian tracks were up in 2011 in every category. Canadian races went for a total of \$186 million in 2011, an increase of \$4.3 million over 2010 numbers.

There were 20,575 races held in Canada in 2011 versus 22,194 in 2010. That resulted in a healthy increase in the average purse per race figure, which was \$9,063 in 2011 versus \$8,208 in 2010. That represents a 10.4 percent increase.

Combining the numbers from the two countries, purses in 2011 were \$609 million, down from the 2010 figure of \$613 million. The decline was less than 1 percent.

Below is a list of 2011 and 2010 purses at major North American racetracks:

Track	2011 Purses	2010 Purses	+/-
Yonkers	\$67,558,503	\$62,747,427	+7.7%
Chester	\$41,910,064	\$31,789,383	+31.8%
Woodbine	\$38,290,356	\$33,798,287	+13.3%
The Meadows	\$37,778,894	\$40,187,983	-6.0%
Mohawk	\$37,114,873	\$35,942,030	+3.3%
Pocono	\$32,181,782	\$31,162,751	+3.3%
Meadowlands	\$25,354,431	\$38,233,294	-33.7%
Dover Downs	\$23,156,695	\$24,795,312	-6.6%
Indiana Downs	\$18,624,409	\$17,456,423	+6.1%
Rideau Carleton	\$16,681,469	\$16,795,301	-0.7%

The following is a list of the tracks with the highest average purse per race in 2011.

Track	Average Purse Per Race
Mohawk	\$34,050
Meadowlands	\$27,893
Woodbine	\$26,280
Red Mile	\$24,889
Yonkers	\$22,587
Chester	\$19,910
Indiana Downs	\$17,670
Pocono Downs	\$15,845
Hoosier Park	\$12,464
The Meadows	\$12,456
Dover Downs	\$12,011
Tioga Downs	\$11,982
Georgian Downs	\$10,326

Winbak's First 2012 Foal Arrives

As the new year begins, so does foaling season at Winbak Farm.



The newest addition to the Winbak family

Early Sunday morning, on January 15, 2012, Winbak Farm welcomed its first foal of the year.

He is a Royal Mattjesty colt out of the Bettor's Delight mare, Bet On Sis. He is the first of a multitude of foals that will be born between January and June at the main Chesapeake City, Maryland farm.

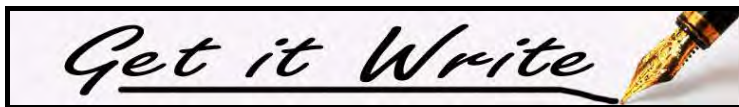
This is the first foal for the half-sister to JWs Best, p, 2, 1:55.3f; 3, 1:52.1f; 1:50s (\$635,564). The maternal family

also includes double-millionaire Jake and Elwood, p, 2, 1:56.1f; 3, 1:52.2; 4, 1:50.1 (\$2,273,187). She seems to be handling her maternal duties well as a new mother.

The foal will be eligible to the rich Ontario Sires Stakes program. With millionaires on both paternal and maternal sides of the family, Winbak Farm is excited for when this little guy will hit the track. Until then, he will grow up on Winbak Farm of Maryland's lush fields, like many champions have done before him.

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Sorry, But Jug Doesn't Belong In Crown

By Eric Cherry

I would like to address the topic of revamping the Triple Crown to make it relevant and turn it back into a milestone worth pursuing. The two key components missing today are:

- 1) Selecting races that today draw the best of the three year old class to the most prestigious races
- 2) That there is an economic incentive to insure that it becomes the goal of everyone.

I agree the first two logical choices are The North America Cup and The Meadowlands Pace. These are both first class races at first class facilities with big purses and they are run on large tracks with two turns. My third choice would be the Breeders Crown instead of the Little Brown Jug. The Jug is a great race to watch but a terrible race to crown a champion. More times than not, the winner of the Jug is determined at draw time than post time.

Delaware's half mile track is so biased to the inside that it is not the right venue as the deciding leg. Whereas the Breeders Crown already attracts all the eyes of our industry and is normally run on a large track, this would just be the icing on the cake.

Finally, we must economically incentivize this accomplishment to not only build the excitement but to insure it becomes the goal of all the connections of the top three year olds.

Today's Results sponsored by ...

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Monday's Results

8, DD, \$30,000, Pace, Preferred, 26.2, 56.0, 1:23.3, 1:51.2, FT

1-Mainland Key N (g, 7, Shiny Key--Eastwood Bluejeans, by In The Pocket) O-Harry von Knoblauch. B-L R Melhopt, NZ & T C Behrns, NZ. T-Peter Tritton. D-Tim Tetrick, \$15,000, Lifetime Record: 83-20-16-11, \$337,662

2-Delivered From Zin (g, 9, Sealed N Delivered--Zinful, by Arturo), \$11,000 2004 MORRIS O-Howard A Taylor. B-Amy M & Linwood M Higgins. T-Dylan Davis. D-Corey Callahan, \$7,500

3-Jeremy's Successor (g, 8, Mach Three--Gentle Audrey, by Artsplace), \$70,000 2005 SHS-HBG O-Heavenly Ways. B-Tara Hills Stud LTD, CA. T-Crissy Crissman-Bier. D-Sean Bier, \$3,600

Calls: 1, 1Q, 1H, Q, NK
Finish Order: Kiss My Art, Schoolkids, Southwestern Dream. To view the replay click [here](#)

10, DD, \$30,000, Pace, Delaware Special, 26.2, 54.3, 1:22.2, 1:50.1, FT

1-Cams Art (g, 5, Cams Fortune--My Foolish Art, by Artiscape) O-Morgan S & Jeanne M Mc Innis. B-Jeanne M & Ryan S Mc Innis. T-Ryan Mc Innis. D-Tim Tetrick, \$15,000, Lifetime Record: 53-18-7-7, \$249,567

2-Broadies Song (g, 5, Camluck--Hawaiian Dancer, by Abercrombie) O-Chasing Paper & Dorothy D Parker & Joshua L Green. B-E Stephen Scarff, CA & J Leonard Birch, CA. T-Josh Green. D-David Miller, \$7,500

3-Catchmecullen A (g, 9, Christian Cullen--Kimrena, by Trustmaker) O-Nanticoke Racing Inc & Joshua Davis Parker. B-M Arrow, AS. T-Les Givens. D-Tim Curtin, \$3,600

Calls: 1H, 1H, 1, 2, NK
Finish Order: Artists Rally, Roman Conqueror N, Nova Artist, Fancyfreshark, Highbeam Rusty N

To view the replay click [here](#)

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11, DD, \$23,000, Pace, Open, 27.0, 55.4, 1:23.3, 1:51.0, FT

Wambam Sam (g, 6, Real Artist--Roses For Sammie, by Cam's Card Shark), \$27,000 2007 SHS-HBG O-Daryl Scott Bier & Glenn F Del Russo & Charles A Dombeck. B-Arlene L & Jules J Siegel. T-Daryl Bier. D-Daryl Bier, \$11,500, Lifetime Record: 79-24-8-9, \$363,003

To view replay click [here](#)

Woodbine Report

Monday's Results

3 Wdb. \$20,000, Trot. NW \$13,000 LAST 5 STARTS OR NW \$29,000 LAST 10 STARTS. 27.1, 57.1, 1:26.2, 1:40.4, 1:55 FT

Homer Jay (g,6 - Muscles Yankee-Miss Misti Girl-Pine Chip) O-Donald Lindsey, Paul W Kleinpaste, William V Alempijevic. B-Stormi and Bruiser Stable. T-Anthony Montini. D-Keith Oliver, \$10,000. Lifetime Record: 87-14-14-9, \$304,400. Replay click [here](#)

4 Wdb. \$20,000, Pace. 5 YEAR OLDS & YOUNGER, NW 3 RACES OR \$40,000 LIFETIME. 27, 56.1, 1:24.3, 1:39, 1:53.1 FT

Dannys Man (g,5 - Cammibest-Fig Nukes-No Nukes) O-Lawrence B Brennan. B-Lawrence Brennan & Dan Dengel. T-George Ursitti. D-Michael Saftic, \$10,000. Lifetime Record: 45-12-8-2, \$36,852
To view the replay click [here](#)

5 Wdb. \$21,000, Pace. 5 YEAR OLDS & YOUNGER, NW 3 RACES OR \$55,000 LIFETIME. 26, 54.4, 1:23.2, 1:37.3, 1:52.1 FT

Blade Runner (g,5 - Mach Three-Armbro Athletic-Village Jiffy) O-Tonya A Backus. B-Thomas & Elizabeth Rankin. T-Richard Moreau. D-Sylvain Fillion, \$10,500. Lifetime Record: 42-8-3-6, \$80,155
To view the replay click [here](#)

7 Wdb. \$23,000, Pace. 5 YEAR OLDS & YOUNGER, NW 3 RACES OR \$85,000 LIFETIME. 26.3, 54.4, 1:22.3, 1:36.4, 1:51.3 FT

Rays San (h,4 - The Panderosa-Santastic-Camtastic) O-Gaston Bibeau-Sylvain Descheneaux. B-Jacob Ramsburg. T-Richard Moreau. D-Sylvain Fillion, \$11,500. Lifetime Record: 34-8-4-5, \$90,996
To view the replay click [here](#)



Harness Racing Update is distributed each and every day on the grounds of the Lexington, Harrisburg and the January Select Mixed Sale.

9 Wdb. \$20,000, Pace. 5 YEAR OLDS & YOUNGER, NW 3 RACES OR \$40,000 LIFETIME. 26.1, 56, 1:24.1, 1:38.2, 1:53 FT

Stroński (g,5 - Another Mile-Amber Fields-Western Hanover) O-James Vanboven. B-Thomas Cole. T-George Ursitti. D-Michael Saftic, \$10,000. Lifetime Record: 15-7-2-4, \$35,516

To view replay click [here](#)

10 Wdb. \$38,000, Trot. Preferred. 26.4, 55.4, 1:24.1, 1:38.2, 1:52.3 FT

Frenchfrysvinegar (m,7 - Angus Hall-Gugus-Fool Me Not) O-David Smith. B-Big Al's Stable & David Smith. T-Jeffrey Gillis. D-Keith Oliver, \$19,000. Lifetime Record: 111-24-20-16, \$654,575

To view the replay click [here](#)

Introducing Cartoons By John Logan

Harness Racing Update is pleased to begin running the artwork of cartoonist John Logan. Today, he pays homage to San Pail, the likely 2011 Horse of the Year.



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