



New York "Breeding Stock Exchange" hitting new highs

By Phil Nero – HHBNYS Communications

Location, location, location – the owning interests of three top horses have decided that in breeding, as in real estate, that's what matters most, and the acreage they want their studs standing on is in New York State.

So that's exactly where Kenneth J, Crazyed, and Badlands Nitro are preparing to settle down and entertain broodmares as their illustrious racing careers near the finish line.

"It's testament to the viability and success of the New York State Sire Stakes Program," says Dave Hanson, Harness Horse Breeders of New York State president. "I would call it the best program in North America because purse money and the levels of racing make it the richest and most equitable program of its kind on the continent."



KENNETH J, who set track records at Harrah's Chester Racetrack, Tioga Downs, and Monticello, Saratoga, and Batavia Raceways, will be standing stud at Morrisville College in Morrisville in 2009. The speedy 4-year-old son of Bettor's Delight banked \$1,562,007 while winning 18 times on all size tracks during his 49-race career. The versatile pacer took a mark of 1:50.3 as a 2-year old; 1:49.3 at 3, and 1:49.3f as a 4-year-old. He will stand for a fee of \$4,500 with discounts for mares that have won or produced winners of a race in 1:55 or faster.

Crazyed, with lifetime earnings of \$1,063,059, was victorious in eight races this year while finishing 3rd or better in 12 out of 13 starts will call Blue Chip Farms in Wallkill his home. He took his record of 1:52.2 winning an elimination of the Hambletonian (½ length behind Deweycheatumhow in the final), before going on to win the \$500,000 Colonial Trot at Chester, equaling the world record of 1:53.2 for 3-year-old trotting colts. Crazyed also won his elimination of the Canadian Trotting Classic, beating "Dewey" by ¾ of a length. His stud fee is set at \$7,500.



Badlands Nitro's connections chose Winbak Farm in Walden. He showed speed early on



in his career by equaling the world record for 2-year-old pacing colts on a five-eighths-mile track in 1:51.1. With career earnings of \$1,554,638 (\$1.3 million as a 3-year-old), Badlands Nitro won the Hempt, the Art Rooney, and Battle of the Brandywine, and also had strong seconds in the North America Cup, the Cane Pace, an elimination of the Little Brown Jug, and the Windy City Pace.

Badlands Nitro Syndicate Manager John Celii, who co-owns the horse with trainer George Teague, is excited about their horse's breeding future on two fronts: potential as a sire and the opportunities offered by New York. "We think he can have an even better future at stud than his sire, and that's saying a lot" says Celii, referencing Badlands Hanover, who previously stood at Winbak Delaware but will stand at Winbak's Ontario farm in 2009. "Not only has Badlands Nitro been an unbelievably sound racehorse, but he's raced at the highest levels against top competition throughout his career and turned out to be bigger, faster, and more versatile than his dad." A syndicate agreement is in the works that would allow other breeder's to participate in lifetime breeding rights, but terms and conditions have not been finalized.

As for standing in New York, "It's a perfect match. It provides us 10 times the broodmare population as Badlands Hanover had in Delaware and it also appears to be a higher quality of breeding stock. Couple that with the richest purse structure anywhere and the fact that Badlands Nitro raced his best on a half and five-eighth mile tracks. We couldn't ask for more! We can't wait to see his first crop of offspring race."

Ken Jacobs, owner of Kenneth J, also likes the combined potential of what his horse brings to the breeding shed and all that New York offers his horse. "He's got the record at several tracks in New York State and he's definitely got one of the best conformations for a half-miler. I like the New York circuit because you have to be super-gaited to win on a New York track because of [their smaller size]. Kenneth J. did well on all-size tracks, but especially well in New York," says Jacobs. As for the purse structure in New York, Jacobs says, "I don't want to say too much because I don't want everybody who owns stallions coming up here." Laughingly he adds, "Tell everyone else they should go to New Jersey and Pennsylvania."

Geoffrey Stein of Preferred Equine, syndicate manager for Crazed on behalf of Lindy Farms Racing, won't be granting Jacobs his wishes. However, he won't be direct competition either because Crazed's offspring will be bred to trot.

"Our thought process was to determine the right program to maximize the horse's opportunity for success – and there was a lot to like about New York and Blue Chip Farms," says Stein. "For one, even in these times of economic turmoil, New York-breds

sold significantly better at yearling sales than horses from any other programs. That obviously got our attention.”

Stein also likes the fact that Credit Winner, who sired Crazed, stands at Blue Chip Farms. “It’s an ideal fit for Crazed to stand in the same state as his sire. When you factor in the addition of the breeder awards, it makes the program even that much more appealing. And while the purses are already good, it looks like they will increase in the future. Great purses, great tracks – New York is very breeder friendly. When it comes to everything we look for in putting together a strong syndicate, including the right mares and the right people, New York gives you an edge.”

If things continue to go as they have in recent years, Keith Hamilton, an Agriculture and NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund trustee, sees no reason why future generations of sire stakes-eligible offspring and others racing in New York won’t enjoy a similar edge.

“Our purses are tied to revenue generated by VLTs (Video Lottery Terminals) at the various racing venues,” says Hamilton. “Since their beginning only a few years ago, the revenue generated for our program has about doubled from \$8 million, just prior to the VLTs, to approximately \$16 million now.” That money, he adds, has been a catalyst for renewed interest in the sport of harness racing. “It helps increase traffic not just at the racing venues. but also at the breeding farms in the state. New York becomes a destination not only for racing, but retirement into breeding on both the sire and dam side.”