



HARNESS HORSE BREEDERS OF NEW YORK STATE

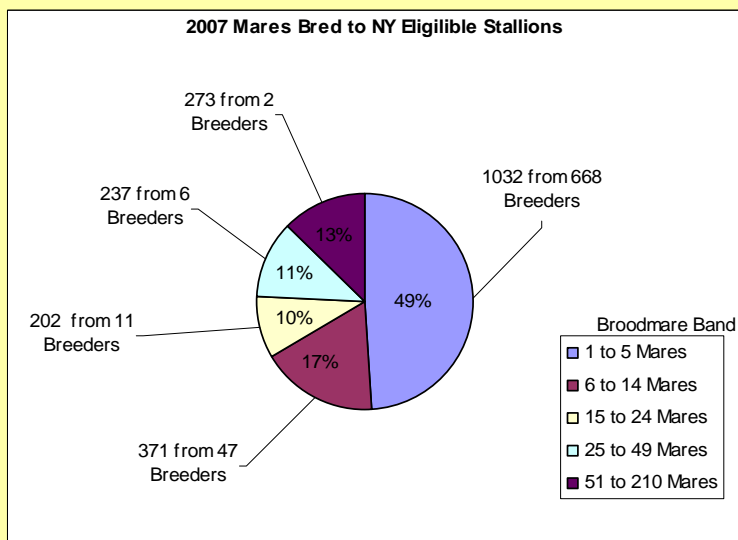
Small Breeders Are 'Big' in New York

By Bill Heller

While the biggest breeding operations in New York State produce some of harness racing's best horses, the backbone of the breeding industry here is smaller breeders. According to data provided by the USTA, almost 50-percent of the 2,115 mares bred to registered New York eligible stallions in 2007 belonged to 668 breeders with just one to five mares. Another 17-percent were breeders with six to fourteen mares.

Maintaining a smaller breeding operation is difficult. "It's getting harder and harder for the little guy to try and break even," Earl Sauve said. The 54-year-old Sauve, and his wife, Sheri - who both have full-time jobs - own two broodmares, six other Standardbreds and three riding horses in Malone, N.Y., operating under the name of EJ's Standardbreds.

Earl is an insurance agent; Sheri is a supervisor for the New York State Department of Labor. "She's up every morning at 4:30 and goes out to take care of the horses," Earl said.



Both are happy that the New York Sire Stakes has decided to re-institute breeders' awards beginning this summer. "That's headed in the right direction," Earl said. "I like that."

Earl has had riding horses most of his life, and purchased his first harness horse in August, 2000. "I always wanted to own a racehorse," he said. "I always enjoyed harness

races at the fair."

So he bought a three-year-old trotter named Sonita's Comfort. "She had \$458

on her card,” Earl said. “I had a win with her in October at Rideau Carlton and then I was hooked.”

Though he doesn’t have a pari-mutuel license to drive, he does have a fair license and, he pointed out, “I have had some winners.”

He bred both of his mares, Katrina Comings, by Overcomer, and Linda Lane, by Lindy Lane, to Dream Vacation, who finished second to world champion Varenne in the Breeders Crown and earned more than \$600,000. He stood at [Winbak Farm](#) in New York before being exported.

“I bought Katrina as a two-year-old and we raced her ourselves,” Earl said. “She earned just under \$30,000, and she took a mark under two minutes at Hippodrome Montreal.” He bred her to Dream Vacation twice and now has a yearling and a suckling both on the exact same day, March 7th, a year apart.

He purchased Linda Lane in December, 2006, and she foaled a filly May 8th at Silver Maple Farm in Schoharie. “I send my mares out to foal,” he said. “I used to try to foal them here. It just wasn’t feasible for me.”

Improving his operation is feasible. “Some day, I’m hoping to breed more and have them be more competitive,” he said. “I have to breed better horses.” New York’s breeder awards and rich sire stakes purses are incentives to do just that.

Just two days after Earl celebrated the birth of a new foal, 53-year-old Peter Arrigenna of Piffard, N.Y., was celebrating an easy victory by his three-year-old trotter Arson Ant, who won a \$7,500 Late Closer at Tioga Downs in a snappy 1:58.1 with Jim Morrill, Jr., in the bike. Arrigenna also trains the son of The Fireman, out of Miss Amanda Sue, by Cambest.

Peter and his wife, Pamela, own six-broodmares and 14 other Standardbreds in Piffard, N.Y., where Peter runs his own construction company out of his house. Peter, who also drives occasionally, has a half-mile training track on his property and 23 stalls.

“It started out as a hobby in ‘92 or ‘93,” Peter said. “I raced a couple mares, and then bred them. It’s been fun. I’ve had good luck in the Sire Stakes with my trotters. I had a champion in the Sire Stakes in 2001, Princess Deanna. She won the Two-Year-Old Trotting Filly award.”

Princess Deanna’s dam, Brightside Lady, has given Peter, Pamela and their 28-year-old daughter Amanda four other winning foals. Princess Deanna earned \$167,373 in her career. Brightside Lady’s other foals have each won more than \$10,000.

In the spring of 2007, Princess Deanna recently delivered her first foal, a filly by Credit Winner that they named Tuesdays With Mom in memory of Pamela’s mom, whom Pam visited every Tuesday until her death a year ago at the age of 93.

Like other breeders throughout New York, Peter and Pamela are thrilled with the Agriculture & NYS Horse Breeding Development Fund’s decision to reinstitute breeders’ awards beginning this summer. “It makes you want to come back and breed some more,” Peter said.

That’s the goal, too, of Chip and Kathy Pratt’s Flyhawk Farm just outside Cazenovia. Chip, who’s 54, is an assistant to the commissioner of the New York

State Department of Agriculture and Markets. “At the department, we look at breeding Standardbreds as maintaining green space,” he said. “It’s huge for agriculture and it’s growing. We think it’s an important component for state agriculture.”

Chip and Kathy, who teaches agricultural education in Homer, N.Y., began breeding and raising Morgans before switching to Standardbreds. They currently own seven broodmares and have six foals that will be sold as yearlings at the [Morrisville College Sale](#). “Kathy is really the drive behind this,” Chip said: “She’s a horse lover.”

So are a lot of small breeders in New York State, they account for two-thirds of mares bred and the numbers are growing.