



Care, Safety Key in Selecting Right Boarding Outfit

Thoroughbred owners do not take the care of their horses for granted. With both large sums of money and personal interest invested in each horse the welfare of these animals is of paramount concern. Most owners consider many factors other than just the “day rate” of a Thoroughbred facility. Issues such as safety, feeding programs, veterinary care, employee competence, and other considerations are important in selecting a boarding operation. Those same concerns apply whether you are boarding in your home state or are planning on taking part in a state-bred program away from your home base. What follows are informative looks at various farms offering boarding as one of their services in the Thoroughbred industry.

Castle Rock Farm

Peter Giangliulio has a simple philosophy about caring for horses: “Every horse gets everything it needs, every day.”

It is that kind of individual attention that has helped Castle Rock Farm remain one of the leading Pennsylvania breeders for more than 50 years, and why clients continue to send horses to the historic property.

Giangliulio has owned Castle Rock with his sister, Barbara Geraghty, since their father, Joe, passed away in 1979. Located on the rolling hills near Unionville, which is located in Chester County, Pa., Castle Rock sits on 170 beautiful acres of historic land. The property dates back to 1707, and the main house is still lived in today by farm manager June Hillman.

Giangliulio’s father, an Italian immigrant who worked two construction jobs during the day and was a semi-pro boxer at night to save enough money to accomplish his dream of owning horses, bought Castle Rock in 1957. Since then, the farm has been one of the leading breeders in the state, with Joe Giangliulio receiving the



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Feeding programs, vet care, and employee competence are factors beyond just the “day rate” when selecting the right boarding farm

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Pennsylvania Breeder of the Year award in 1976 and 1977, the first two years that the award was handed out.

The younger Giangiulio and Geraghty have continued that fine tradition ever since, specializing in raising young horses and racing homebreds. Over the years they have continued their father's work ethic, while upgrading the facility and focusing more on boarding in recent years.

"We have about 100 horses here and 170 acres," said Giangiulio, who does all the

foaling with his wife, Stephanie. "There is an abundant amount of space here. Individual attention is our focus. We need every horse to reach its full potential."

Castle Rock has 48 stalls, 23 of which are in the original but refurbished barn that was built in 1713. There is an on-call veterinarian 24 hours a day, plenty of spacious paddocks, and a private stallion barn that houses the farm's four stallions.

"Our boarding business is mostly repeat and referral," said Giangiulio, who served

as president of the Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association for more than four years. "We try to build trust and faith in people that will eventually manifest itself into repeat business."

Circle H Farms

When you have a 300-acre farm with more than 200 horses, it helps to have more than several sets of eyes looking after them.

That's not a problem for Circle H Farms near Abbeville, La., as the entire Hargroder family resides on premises, which is located not far from Lafayette. The residents include Don and Arlene Hargroder, who started Circle H in 2003, and their four children.

"We all live there, including the eight or 10 employees we have working for us," said Don Hargroder. "We take care of all the horses like they are our own. This is not only a business, it's our passion."

Of the 200 horses at Circle H, about 150 are owned by the Hargroders and their daughter, Valerie Broussard, who serves as the farm manager. They breed their own mares to their five stallions—Run Production, Big Top Cat, Gigawatt, Shermanesque, and Kingkiowa—do all the foaling, and also have a well-run boarding business. A couple of years ago they began racing horses in their own name.

The farm has five barns complete with 65 stalls and plenty of spacious pastures. They have an on-call veterinarian 24 hours per day and do all the vaccinations and deworming at the facility. When the mares are in foal, a night watchperson patrols at all hours. The separate foaling pasture is complete with lights.

The mares that board at Circle H receive a discount when they are bred to one of the farm's stallions.

A former Quarter Horse trainer, Broussard bought a few Thoroughbred mares about 10 years ago, which gave her the impetus to start her own farm with her parents.

"It was tough to get my mares bred; we had some trouble," said Broussard. "We decided not to trust anyone else and just do it ourselves."

Hargroder said it's easy to see that they take fine care of the horses.

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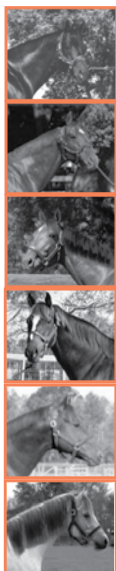
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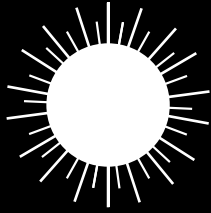
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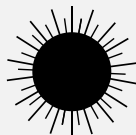
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at our mares and babies,” he said. “I think that’s what separates us from the others in Louisiana—the condition of our horses.”

Columbiana Farm

Horace Greeley coined the phrase “Go West, young man,” but Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ochocki have decided to move in the opposite direction. Their Columbiana Farm, originally located in Riverside, Calif., has come East to the fertile soil of the Bluegrass region of Central Kentucky near historic Paris, home to such legendary Thoroughbred facilities as Claiborne, Stonerside, and Stone farms.

Columbiana Farm boasts more than 400 acres of beautiful pasture stretching out on top of the region’s famed limestone-rich soil that has nurtured horses in Kentucky for hundreds of years. The farm’s five modern barns house 120 stalls perfect for boarding, breeding, and raising the stars of today and legends of tomorrow. Columbiana’s staff reside on the property thanks to a half-dozen on-site residences, so they

are always close by to handle any situation. Twenty-four-hour security is also a hallmark of the operation.

The farm prides itself in the individual care given to each equine athlete. Feeding programs are developed specifically for each horse and modified as needed. The Ochockis believe that hands-on care is the right way to raise horses, and so each athlete is handled on a daily basis.

A farm is only as good as the partners it signs on with, and to that end, Columbiana is in the best hands possible. Veterinary medical services are provided by world-renowned Hagyard-Davidson-McGee Associates. Additionally, pasture analysis is performed by Roger Allman, long noted as the top expert in the field of soil analysis.

As impressive as this team is, the proof is in the results, and Columbiana has gotten the results on the racetrack. Some of the racing stars foaled and/or raised at Columbiana Farm are group/grade I winners Miss Houdini, Snow Ridge, Eishin Preston, Salty You, Eishin Champ, and Taste

of Paradise. Other graded winners include Tale of a Dream, Magicalmysterycat, and Papa Clem.

Columbiana offers high-quality boarding and sales prep services, specializing in year-round care of the horse from the time it is foaled until they leave for auction or their career on the racetrack. It is a complete equine program, and the personal attention and devotion to each horse makes Columbiana a special place for a special animal—your horse.

Denali Stud

For the past 20 years Craig and Holly Bandoroff have owned and operated a first-class operation at their Denali Stud in the heart of Kentucky’s Bluegrass in Bourbon County. The results speak for themselves—Denali has raised runners such as English group I winner Sophisticat and recent Breeders’ Cup Juvenile Turf (gr. IIT) winner Pluck. In fact, Bourbon County had a huge Breeders’ Cup, as Juvenile (gr. I) victor Uncle Mo and Classic (gr. I) win-

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ner Blame both hail from the land just east of Lexington.

Denali spreads out over 700 prime acres of the best-quality land in the region, known for its limestone-rich soil and its century-long history of raising strong Thoroughbreds. The facilities at Denali are top-shelf and include modern, fire-safe barns; large paddocks and fields as well as individual-sized paddocks ideal for sales prep, lay-ups, and limited turnouts; round pens for breaking and training; and a Stratton Exerciser for yearling sales prep.

The farm is managed by Gary Bush, and Don Snellings serves as yearling and sales manager. Craig Bandoroff said his team at Denali ranks with the very best in the region, and its attention to detail is second to none.

Others who contribute to Denali's success as a boarding and sales prep operation are a consulting equine nutritionist to take care of the horses' food needs and soil evaluators that test the soils annually for fertilization requirements. Denali keeps a tight control on its equine population to make sure its pastures remain in the best possible condition. Currently, 100 mares roam the pastures.

Denali's most famous resident is the Hall of Fame runner Serena's Song, one of the greatest fillies in racing history. Robert Lewis, the late owner of Serena's Song, chose Denali for his star because of Craig Bandoroff's hands-on approach and his compulsion to do things the right way.

Denali is committed to providing its clients with the best possible care for their broodmares, sales prospects, and racing prospects. While Denali is a major operation, it is also committed to customized care and providing individualized attention to each horse. It is dedicated to the Thoroughbred industry and each day displays a commitment to the equines that call it home and the customers it has served so well for the past two decades.

GoldMark Farm

GoldMark Farm general manager Todd Quast talks with pride about the Ocala, Fla., farm's Safetrack synthetic training surface. Quast, who researched all available forms of synthetic surfaces before recommending Safetrack to GoldMark owner T. Paul Bulmahn, feels the constant consistency of the Safetrack surface makes for a healthier horse.

"It's never dusty, it's great on their feet, and horses don't have respiratory issues because of it," Quast said. "It's not affected by the weather, and we never miss a day at the track. Horses are on a safe track everyday, which is unlike a dirt track, where you have to worry about wet, sloppy, or drying conditions."

Safetrack not only is spread over the three-quarter-mile training track, but covers the lanes going to the track, the walking area, and the shed row. "It's almost like when a horse comes here, he's never off the surface," Quast said.

Except when a horse is in his stall. But even there, GoldMark makes sure the horse is comfortable and safe. "The stalls have SoftStall on the ground," Quast said. "It's a rubber surface. Instead of a hard dirt floor, the horse gets to stand in a soft spot."

GoldMark's 142-stall barn area is geared for both optimum work-flow performance and climate control during the hot summers. The barns are 19½ feet tall, helping promote circulation, and are equipped with fans.

Quast brought a ton of experience to GoldMark. He earned degrees in agricultural business and horse production and management at Tarleton State University in Texas. He also earned a degree from "Team Lukas," working for Hall of Fame conditioner D. Wayne Lukas for 10 years and handling such horses as champions and/or classic winners Boston Harbor, Charismatic, Flinders, Grindstone, Thunder Gulch, and Timber County.

GoldMark, which has a staff of 65, also offers breaking, boarding, lay-ups, and sales prep for horses selling as 2-year-olds.

Mighty Acres

Dr. Warren Centers' Mighty Acres near Pryor, Okla., has been a mighty good place to raise a horse over the years. The 250-acre Thoroughbred farm in the northeast section of the state near Tulsa has been the stomping ground of a Breeders' Cup winner and to the dam of another Breeders' Cup winner.

As the home of sire Kipling, Kip Deville was bred, foaled, and raised at Mighty Acres prior to going on to win the 2007 Breeders' Cup Mile (gr. IT). Kipling now stands at Crestwood Farm near Lexington with Mighty Acres holding on to a half-interest.

Mighty Acres was also the home of Gift of Dance, the dam of 2006 Breeders' Cup Distaff (gr. I) winner Round Pond. At the time Centers bought Gift of Dance, Round Pond was an unraced 2-year-old.

Centers, along with farm manager Randy Blair, are quite

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bullish on the Oklahoma-bred program. They've seen an influx of interest, and mares, to the Sooner State and are poised to take advantage

"We got in some mares last year from Texas," Blair said. "I've got one client who used to board several mares in Kentucky and now he's moved them to either Iowa or Oklahoma."

Blair notes they have a good mix of mares that are both seasonal and year-round boarders. A key to their nursery is the size of the foaling stalls at Mighty Acres, with four stalls that are 12x24 and four that are 12x14. Blair notes they also have state-of-the-art video surveillance cameras in the foaling stalls.

Mighty Acres is also going through a growth spurt with a new barn under construction for sales prep. Blair said the farm is quite busy preparing yearlings for three major area sales during the summer held by the Carter Sales Co. near Washington, Okla.; the Heritage Place sale near Oklahoma City; and the Fasig-Tipton Texas yearling sale at Lone Star Park in Grand Prairie.

Four stallions stand at Mighty Acres, including Air Commander, a Point Given half brother to grade II winner Medallist, whose first foals are on the ground; and Save Big Money, a son of Storm Cat out of Tomisue's Delight, a full sister to 2002 Horse of the Year Mineshaft. The strength

of their stallion roster has been able to draw mares from Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas.

Millennium Farms

Since purchasing 350-acre Millennium Farms in 1999, Ro Parra has experienced tremendous success in all aspects of the Thoroughbred business. He has raced numerous graded stakes winners, including two-time grade I victor Student Council, and has cultivated an exceptional breeding program that is highlighted by 2004 Bessemer Trust Breeders' Cup Juvenile (gr. I) winner Wilko.

Located near Lexington on the rolling hills of what was formerly Buckland Farm (best known for breeding and racing 1981 Kentucky Derby, gr. I, winner Pleasant Colony), Millennium is a complete operation that offers services for all aspects of foaling, breeding, racing, and sales. A state-of-the-art lay-up facility, sales preparation in a beautiful facility equipped with a covered Equicizer and round pen, a full range of bloodstock services, and a six-horse stallion roster are just some of the features of Millennium.

Recently, Millennium has begun to focus more on growing its boarding business, which includes hands-on care from experienced horsemen and top-notch veterinarians. About 30% of the horses boarded at the farm are owned by Millennium,

while the rest belong to outside clients.

The farm takes pride in providing excellent communication to clients that board their horses there, providing regular updates—especially during breeding season.

At the beginning of 2010, Millennium made a significant change to its boarding fees, lowering the day rate from \$28 to \$24. There is also no additional charge for the boarding of foals before they are weaned, all part of an effort to keep client costs to a minimum.

"Our goal is to deliver the best in equine care and customer service while also offering ultra-competitive rates," said Millennium's business manager J. Ted Neel. "If given the chance, we are confident we will exceed customers' expectations. Our attractive rates have been paramount in providing us with opportunities to expand our business. The facilities are top notch and we feel our location on Paris Pike is a plus."

Oak Lodge USA

Since being established two years ago, Oak Lodge USA has earned high marks from its clients for attention to detail and the care provided horses boarded at the farm. Operated by Alan and Suzy Fitzsimons, Oak Lodge is located near Paris, Ky., on property that was formerly Katalpa Farm.

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Oak Lodge is a full-service operation offering boarding, lay-up services, sale consignments and sales preparation, and USDA-approved pre-export quarantine facilities. Alan Fitzsimons was raised on his family's farm in Ireland, which also operates under the Oak Lodge name. Fitzsimons' background includes stints at Eliza Park in Australia as well as at Three Chimneys Farm and Ashford Stud in Central Kentucky. Suzy Fitzsimons worked for Coolmore Stud in Ireland, Australia, and the United States.

Alan Fitzsimons said Oak Lodge's clients have a high level of confidence in the care being provided horses at the farm. Not only do they manage Oak Lodge, but the Fitzsimonses reside on the property.

"We feel the fact that we live on the farm and are available 24/7 is a big benefit to our clients," said Alan Fitzsimons. "We get to see every horse every day, and we know exactly what is going on with each horse. Any time a client calls, we can tell them everything they need to know about their horse."

In addition to the hands-on care, Oak Lodge also limits the number of horses on the premises at any one time. "We try to emphasize quality rather than quantity," Alan Fitzsimons said.

Fitzsimons said Oak Lodge is sensitive to the economic pressures breeders face and tries to keep costs to a minimum while not



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sacrificing quality of care. Among the ways in which Oak Lodge gives clients a break is by not charging a foaling fee and having a nominal vanning fee for taking mares to the breeding shed.

"It is a very competitive rate compared to other farms," Fitzsimons said of Oak Lodge's boarding fees.

Peach Lane Farms

All it took was a trip to the now defunct Jefferson Downs in the New Orleans area during Lora Pitre's college years to get her hooked on the horse business.

Now, Pitre, a native of Raceland, La., who founded the 115-acre full service breeding and boarding facility Peach Lane Farms in 1995, has spent the last three decades immersed in her own Thoroughbred world.

After earning a degree in animal science in 1986, Pitre worked at various positions in the business before venturing out on her own with the purchase of Peach Lane, which is located near Opelousas, La., and boards around 100 horses year-round.

Peach Lane's stallions include grade III victors Puck (by Mr. Greeley) and Orthodox (by Pulpit); stakes winners Capitalimprovement (by Dixieland Band) and Political Whit (by Lines of Power); and winners Lampedusa (by Woodman) and Planet Earth (by Conquistador Cielo).

"My main objective is to raise a good, clean, sound racing prospect with a good mind to them," said Pitre, who keeps 35 of her

own horses at Peach Lane and offers lay-ups, halter breaking, and sale prepping in addition to boarding. "If you give them the fundamentals, they can usually do it (on the track)."

Peach Lane has also been home to such successful Thoroughbreds as Fair Grounds Hall of Famer Dixie Poker Ace, two-time Louisiana champion Eskimo's Angel, and stakes winners Dancing Latino, Viking Princess, and Lac Laronge.

The last mentioned horse was bred by Pitre in partnership with John Franks. Lac Laronge, a son of Nelson, captured the 2005 Louisiana Premier Night Sprint Stakes at Delta Downs, plus the 2003 A.L. Red Erwin Stakes and Arcadia Stakes at Louisiana Downs.

Marcia LaMarche, one of Pitre's biggest clients, keeps around 40 horses at Peach Lane. Pitre raised Dancing Latino and Viking Princess, plus other dual stakes winner Anything But Quiet for LaMarche, who races mostly on the Louisiana circuit.

"The people that make this industry go are the owners, and I do appreciate my clients," said Pitre.

"Since I'm hands-on, I know my horses, and they get the ultimate best care," she added when asked what sets Peach Lane apart from other operations. "My babies are handled from day one, and most of them stay here until they go off to their racing careers."

Taylor Made Farm

When it comes to breeding and raising racehorses, their father literally wrote the book. Published in 1993, the how-to manual titled, "Joe Taylor's Complete Guide to Breeding and Raising Racehorses," has become the definitive guide for both farm managers and horse lovers alike.

Joe's memorable passion, wisdom, and insatiable thirst for perfecting the art of horsemanship has been passed down to his sons, and today those deeply ingrained values live on at Taylor Made Farm.

Established as a boarding farm in 1976, Taylor Made evolved quickly and became a major force in both the public auction and stallion businesses.

Owned and operated by brothers Duncan, Ben, Frank, and Mark Taylor, along with long-time family friend Pat Payne, Taylor Made's reputation has spread worldwide. Currently, they are ranked No. 1 leading consignor in the world by gross sales and have maintained that position for nine of the last 10 years.

This November, Taylor Made handled the complete dispersal of Gulf Coast Farms. This dispersal of nearly 100 horses, most of which are boarded at Taylor Made Farm near Nicholasville, Ky., will naturally leave Taylor Made with open stalls for the first time in quite awhile.

"We've been operating at full capacity for the past 10 years," said Frank Taylor. "Now we have a rare opportunity for select clients to board their horses with us and experience the many advantages that we have to offer."

Located on 1,500 acres of rich, Kentucky Bluegrass, Taylor Made features 22 barns with 429 stalls. Their facilities also include three round pens, five exercise walkers and 107 paddocks—all of which were artfully designed by Joe Taylor using the guiding principles set forth in his landmark book.

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Of the countless stakes winners raised at Taylor Made, the most recent include Belmont Stakes (gr. I) winner Drosselmeyer.

Taylor Made offers many services including: boarding, foaling, lay-ups, and sales prep as well as complete equine portfolio management.

"We have an incredible team of the world's best horsemen, veterinarians and blacksmiths all working together to maximize your horse's potential," Taylor concluded.

Thunder Run Stables

It's not every day that an English professor and novelist should decide to shift her vocation to the Thoroughbred industry.

But that's what happened with Roberta Smoodin upon the purchase of her first mare in the 1980s, and she has never looked back.

"I have a unique resumé in the horse business," said Smoodin, who leases and operates a 70-acre breeding, boarding, and lay-up operation called Thunder Run

Stables near Cynthiana, Ky.

A native of Los Angeles, Calif., Smoodin grew up attending races with her father, an avid handicapper, at Santa Anita and Hollywood Park. She is now the sole caretaker of the three dozen horses residing at Thunder Run, which she has owned since 2001.

"I live on the farm, so I'm here 24-7," said Smoodin, who also teaches online classes in dog, cat, and horse care for the Nash Academy in Lexington. "I live with the mares (during foaling season); I don't have any cameras or newfangled gadgets. I just sleep in the barn with them and watch them every minute. It's what I live to do."

While most of the horses at Thunder Run belong to clients, Smoodin does have one mare of her own, a daughter of Black Tie Affair named Dusty Ravi, who is in foal to Einstein. Smoodin plans on selling Dusty Ravi's foal because she prefers to focus her finances on breeding instead of racing.

One of Smoodin's favorite clients is New York-based Jim Pino, who keeps a stakes-producing mare named Let's Punt at

Thunder Run. Let's Punt, who is currently in foal to Indygo Shiner, is the dam of Minnie Punt, a two-time black-type victor at Belmont Park.

"Mostly, my clients are little guys," said Smoodin. "My (boarding) rates have always been very low because I want regular people that aren't wealthy to be able to take part in this great sport."

Smoodin said other characteristics that set Thunder Run apart include having excellent communication with clients, providing quality feed and attention to each horse, and consistently getting mares in foal.

"Every baby to me is an achievement; they're all so beautiful," said Smoodin. "I'm just a little guy, but I take great pride in the business, and to me every mare and every foal is a friend and a family member."

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Location	Mares Bred	Live Foals	% Live Foals
California	3,163 (2)	1,891	60%
Florida	4,203 (8)	2,097	50%
Kentucky	19,140 (112)	12,931	68%
Louisiana	3552	1678	47%
New York	1,625	908	56%

Number of mares in parentheses were covered in the Northern Hemisphere on Southern Hemisphere time.

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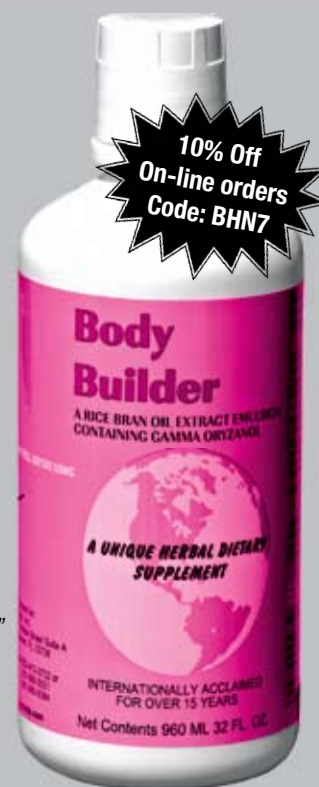
"We have been using **BodyBuilder™** for years with very good results. This year we have 162 babies. We had 30 maiden and barren problem broodmares last year which we put on **BodyBuilder™**. ALL 30 got in foal first cover!" Brandywine Farm, KY Pam Robertson.

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formerly operated by the late Dr. R. Smiser West, and Millford Farm, started by West's son, Bob West Jr., were merged with the idea of providing more complete services to clients.



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Waterford-Millford is a full service operation, offering boarding, sales prep, breaking yearlings, bloodstock evaluation, and specializing in pre-export quarantine. The farm is equipped with 250 stalls.

West, who owns the 850-acre farm with his mother, Kathryn, brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the job. "My horsemanship is not text book," he said. "I learned from the ground up and went around with a shank and pitch fork as a kid. I still carry around a shank and a bit in my truck."

West experienced the good fortune of learning from his dad, who was the breeder of numerous stakes winners. The elder West and Hall of Fame trainer Mack Miller were the breeders of grade I winner De La

Rose, whose \$500,000 price at the 1979 Saratoga yearling sale was a record for a filly at the Spa. Other stars raised at Waterford include Chilukki, Lite Light, Candy Eclair, and Turkoman. The farm's boarded bloodstock included Kentucky Derby (gr. I) winner Genuine Risk.

West is price-conscious when it comes to customer satisfaction. "People have become more conservative and more aware of expenses for their horses," he said. "We offer yearly boarding at \$22 a day, seasonal boarding at \$24 a day, and sales prep at \$29 a day. It's not unusual for other farms to charge in the high \$30s or in the \$40s."

Another plus when it comes to customer satisfaction is that the farm is located within minutes of such major farms as Ashford, Airdrie, Darby Dan, Lane's End, and Three Chimneys. If emergencies arise, Rood and Riddle Equine Hospital and Hagyard Equine Medical Institute are about 15 minutes away.

"If anything happens—a problem with a sick mare, colic, whatever—I'm there to make a decision. Instead of waiting for a vet to come, I can make the decision whether to send the horse to the clinic immediately," West said.

He is partial to the farm's soil, calling it the best in Central Kentucky. West also takes pride in the fact that the farm's water is spring water and not city water.

"It's something our customers like," he said.

Products/Services

Eponaire Equine Products

The sport horse product company Eponaire got its name from the Celtic goddess Epona, the protector of horses and a deity eventually adopted by the Romans as a protector of their cavalry. The association with rider safety is particularly appropriate for the latest addition to Eponaire's product line, the Hit-Air safety vest.

The Hit-Air vest uses air bag technology to protect a rider from injuries associated with a fall. Compared with standard safety vests, the inflation vests provide greater projection to the neck and tailbone.

Eponaire founder Krista Towns saw an inflation vest at work during the 2010 Rolex Three-Day Event in Lexington, when

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top European rider Oliver Townend took a serious spill on the cross-country course. Townend, who was knocked unconscious and got his ribs and collar bone fractured, credits his air vest from preventing more serious injury.

"I saw the immediate importance of this vest to the racing industry," Towns said. "People in the eventing industry know about the vest, but now I'm promoting the Thoroughbred industry."

The Hit-Air vest was developed specifically for equestrian sports by Mugen Denko, a leading manufacturer of airbag safety apparel. Mugen Denko's air bag apparel has been protecting motorcycle riders for over 15 years.

Eponaire has been providing specialized equipment to the Thoroughbred and sport horse communities since 2002 when it introduced its patented Astride weight belt. The Astride is a contoured, padded leather girth with pockets that accommodate lead-weight bags that are soft like bean bags. The belt has a number of

uses: It allows trainers to increase gradually the amount of weight a horse carries while it's being rehabilitated from injury, it can be used to introduce weight during breaking and training, and it can be used to condition yearlings. It was serendipitous for Towns that the year she brought the Astride to market a study published by Michigan State University showed putting weight on yearlings helped build muscle mass and strengthen bone.

Eponaire is headquartered in Loxahatchee, Fla., next door to the equestrian community of Wellington, but don't look for a retail store there. Eponaire products, which also include heart monitors and communications equipment between riders and trainers, are available only by calling or ordering online.

Equiade

Longtime Standardbred horseman and pharmacist Arnold Epstein decided to tie his primary profession and passion for horse racing together when he formed the

Clearwater, Fla.-based nutrition supplement company Equiade two decades ago.

One of the first companies to sell holistic equine supplements that serve as legal performance-enhancing agents, Equiade's initial product was an electrolyte mixture called Jug.

The liquid supplement, which is designed to restore the vitality lost during strenuous activity, was an innovative product when it was introduced and continues being successfully marketed.

Epstein, who retired in 1991, sold his company around seven years ago to Dr. Ernest Pecoraro, a veteran of the human health and medical nutritional industries who has personally benefited from Equiade's products.

The Epstein supplements, which can be used for both humans and horses, include Body Builder, which increases lean muscle mass; Lube All Plus, a cartilage enhancer and joint lubricant to reduce swelling; and Overdrive Plus, a pre-supplement to help supercharge a horse's performance.



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Body Builder, by far Equiade's most popular product, has additional benefits that include increased energy, stamina, appetite, and all-around health. The product also testifies to reduce nervousness and stress and has aided some mares with fertility issues.

The foundation of Equiade's supplements, which are of "pharmaceutical quality," according to company director Andy Savas, is a rice bran oil and rice bran oil extract that contains the natural compound gamma oryzanol.

According to Savas, five Breeders' Cup winners have benefited from Equiade products throughout the years. One of the company's major clients, Doug O'Neill, has testified how many of his horses have flourished from the supplements, including multi-millionaire Lava Man.

Other Equiade clients include Sheikh Mohammed's Godolphin Stable, Khalid Abdullah's Juddmonte Farms, and trainers Jeff Mullins, Keith Asmussen, and Richard Mandella.

"Every product we sell on our website for horses was made for, and is being used by, humans," said Savas. "So it's all human quality, with high absorption rates. Eighty percent of our business is from repeat customers, so the results speak for themselves."

Quillin Leather & Tack

"Made in Paris" connotes style and high quality, and so it is with the halters and other leather goods crafted by Quillin Leather & Tack. The Paris, Ky., store hand makes more than 17,000 halters each year, and they adorn the heads of



A well-run lay-up operation can help get horses back to the track more quickly

leading stallions, million-dollar yearlings, and other valuable equines around the world. In addition, Quillin makes tack, key tags, well-known "halter plate" belts, and dog collars to serve an international clientele.

Its volume of business makes Quillin the country's largest custom leather and halter shop. Founder Ralph Quillin is a self-taught craftsman who started making fine leather goods in the early 1970s and gradually migrated to halters when his family bought a Bourbon County farm. He opened a store on Main Street in 1982 and produced the company's first mail order catalog in 1986.

Today Quillin produces nearly all of its merchandise on the premises and specializes in rush and custom orders. Mail and website orders account for most of the business.

However, Quillin gets a boost in store traffic during the sales and Keeneland race meets and recently welcomed many visitors during the Alltech FEI World Eques-

trian Games. "At WEG I kept running into people that all said, 'You're with Quillin? I get all my halters there,'" Ralph Quillin recounted.

Popular items include black halters in English-finished bridle leather with stainless steel hardware and name plate and matching leads. "We've just started offering a pink halter—we did presentation halters for the Oaks fillies—along with dog collars and leads," Quillin said.

Personalized service—"Call in and you'll talk to me or one of our knowledgeable staff"—and old-fashioned craftsmanship generate loyal customers.

"We have had people tell us our halters are an exceptional value and last far longer than the competitors'. Our fair price is because our halters go directly from the makers hands to the customer," he said.

Because so many of the halters require custom features, the store does not maintain a huge inventory. "We find we can keep quality up with the small-batch approach," Quillin said.

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