

WEST COAST

In This Section

LEADING SIRES IN CALIFORNIA BY 2011 PROGENY EARNINGS

LEADING SIRES IN CALIFORNIA By 2011 Winners

LEADING SIRES IN CALIFORNIA By 2011 2 year old winners

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English Lessons

Generations of the Johnston family rewarded with Acclamation

BY TRACY GANTZ

entucky is far more likely than California to have multi-generational Thoroughbred farms. However, the Johnston family of California bucks the odds, with four generations involved in Old English Rancho, one of the most prolific producers of stakes winners ever in the Golden State.

Third- and fourth-generation Pete and Jonny Hilvers manage the ranch in Sanger near Fresno. Jonny's mother and Pete's wife, Mary, and her sister, Darlene, are the grand-daughters of E.B. "The Pie Man" Johnston, who founded Old English Rancho in the 1940s.

But it is second-generation E.W. "Buddy" Johnston, Mary and Darlene's father, who has played perhaps the biggest and certainly the longest role. He grew the business with his father, expanding it even further upon The Pie Man's death in 1981.

Today, at age 74, Buddy remains exceedingly active in the day-to-day running of the entire operation, particularly the racing stable. Almost any morning at trainer Don Warren's Santa Anita barn, Buddy walks the shedrow, casting a knowledgeable eye over each horse as he doles out carrots and kind words.

He spends extra time in the first stall on the left. Acclamation is a favorite, not only because he has won three grade I and two grade II races this year, but because he is as docile as a 5-year-old Thoroughbred colt could be. Johnston walks into Acclamation's



Above: The Pie King, named for Ellwood B. "The Pie Man" Johnston, the founder of Old English Rancho; at right, trainer Don Warren (left) with E.B.'s son, E.W. "Buddy" Johnston, in the winner's circle following one of Acclamation's big wins in 2011



CALIFORNIA'S GOLD STANDARD The Harris Farms Roster 2012

New for 2012: Grade I Winning Millionaire HEATSEEKER 4-Time Track Record Setter



Giant Causeway's most successful North American older horse on dirt and synthetic surfaces, **Heatseeker** set four track records from 7 to 10 furlongs, including the **Santa Anita Handicap-G1** (2:00 2/5, 110 Beyer), **Californian Stakes-G2** (1:47, 109 Beyer) and **Native Diver Handicap-G3** (1:47 1/5).

Gl-placed at 2 on turf after winning his first two starts, **Heatseeker** has the same dam sire line as **Giant's Causeway**'s leading international sire **Shamardal**. **2012 Fee: \$6,500**

Heatseeker's first crop will race as 2-year-olds in 2012.

Grade I Sires

UNUSUAL HEAT

California's leading sire of G1 winners and four-time leading sire by progeny earnings: 2008–2011.

2012 fee to be announced

SWISS YODELER

Eclipse Award Champion sire and perennial leader by progeny earnings on general and 2-year-old sire lists.

Fee: \$5,000 Live Foal

STORMY JACK

Sire of California Horse of the Year, world record setter and Santa Anita G1 winner **Bob Black Jack**.

Fee: \$1,500 Live Foal

Young Sires in the Making

LUCKY PULPIT

Sire of 17% stakes horses/starters and **Pulpit's** leading second-crop sire of 2011 by lifetime earnings.

Fee: \$2,500 Live Foal

SINGLETARY

Breeders' Cup GI winner of \$1.8 million and sire of first-crop stakes winner **Logical Single** (\$211,788).

Fee: \$1,500 Live Foal

TIZBUD

Stakes-winning brother to **Tiznow** and second-crop stakes sire has 17% wins from starts in 2011.

Fee: \$2,500 Live Foal

Graded Winners with Big Futures

THORN SONG

Millionaire son of **Unbridled's Song** and multiple wire-to-wire Gl winner. First foals arrive in 2012.

Fee: \$3,500 Live Foal

DESERT CODE

Breeders' Cup Turf Sprint winner and millionaire grandson of **Mr. Prospector**. First foals are yearlings of 2012.

Fee: \$2,000 Live Foal

LUCKY J. H.

Graded winner of \$632,065 on the board in 15 of 20 starts in Southern California. First foals are 2-year-olds of 2012.

Fee: \$1,500 Live Foal



> Harris Farms

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2011 Leading Sires in California

State sire lists updated daily online. Go to http://www.bloodhorse.com/horseracing/thoroughbred-breeding/sire-lists

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in California (exported stallions are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through November 9, 2011. As supplied to The Blood-Horse by The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., earnings exclude monies from Japan and Hong Kong. Current year stakes winners include all N.H.-foaled stakes winners worldwide and any S.H.-foaled horses that won a N.H. stakes. *Foal counts include Southern Hemisphere. Cumulative stakes winners includes all countries. (A ¶ indicates a sire represented by his first crop to race).

	Stakes Rstrct			Cumulative						
Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing	2011 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Wnrs/ Wns	SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2011 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
UNUSUAL HEAT (90, Nureyev), Harris Farms	\$20,000	111/52	3/7	1/3	(Acclamation, \$1,126,000)	\$4,039,843	*508	29	2.20	1.16
TRIBAL RULE (96, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm	\$6,000	128/73	7/10	5/7	(Heleonor Rugby, \$205,306)	\$3,008,563	363	20	1.50	1.18
BENCHMARK (91, Alydar), Ballena Vista Farm	\$4,000	148/72	4/6	0/4	(Ducky Drake, \$165,669)	\$2,595,657	610	31	1.27	1.18
KAFWAIN (00, Cherokee Run), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds	\$5,000	137/68	5/8	2/5	(Daisy Devine, \$448,561)	\$2,537,530	*366	16	1.12	1.32
SOUTHERN IMAGE (00, Halo's Image), Rancho San Miguel	\$4,000	99/63	1/4	0/1	(Calibrachoa, \$270,500)	\$1,986,215	*290	2	1.75	1.45
OLD TOPPER (95, Gilded Time), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds	\$3,500	144/72	2/3	0/2	(Ain't No Other, \$204,203)	\$1,894,716	451	17	0.98	0.89
BERTRANDO (89, Skywalker), Ballena Vista Farm	\$8,000	109/50	4/5	1/4	(Liberian Freighter, \$153,000)	\$1,717,732	980	53	1.40	1.56
SALT LAKE (89, Deputy Minister), Golden Eagle Farm	Died, 2010	100/49	2/3	0/2	(Hamazing Destiny, \$91,667)	\$1,595,530	*1192	51	1.43	1.42
IN EXCESS (IRE) (87, Siberian Express), Vessels Stallion Farm	Pnsd	111/52	3/3	2/3	(Magic School, \$121,750)	\$1,578,219	945	63	1.68	1.44
SWISS YODELER (94, Eastern Echo), Harris Farms	\$5,000	126/58	1/1	0/1	(Yodelen Dan, \$149,178)	\$1,532,072	642	23	1.07	1.07
MARINO MARINI (00, Storm Cat), Rancho San Miguel	\$2,500	97/58	2/3	1/2	(Bleach Blonde, \$137,248)	\$1,516,937	194	5	0.96	1.04
MINISTERS WILD CAT (00, Deputy Minister), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds	\$4,000	78/42	6/8	2/6	(Castinette Dancer, \$140,961)	\$1,417,768	170	8	0.91	1.02
STORMIN FEVER (94, Storm Cat), Golden Eagle Farm	\$6,500	105/41	0/0	0/0	(Filled With Wonder, \$69,342)	\$1,288,635	*593	27	1.25	1.44
GIACOMO (02, Holy Bull), Magali Farms	N/A	77/43	3/4	0/3	(Jomelo, \$105,147)	\$1,175,978	*131	4	0.88	1.51
SEA OF SECRETS (95, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm	\$2,500	95/44	3/7	1/3	(Hermosillo, \$228,370)	\$1,147,919	*411	20	0.97	1.10
DECARCHY (97, Distant View), Magali Farms	\$4,000	80/39	2/2	0/2	(Stoney Fleece, \$96,680)	\$1,145,469	236	6	1.03	0.99
RICHLY BLENDED (98, Rizzi)	Died, 2006	24/15	1/4	0/1	(Ultra Blend, \$648,000)	\$1,028,704	120	2	1.06	0.77
ATTICUS (92, Nureyev), Magali Farms	\$3,000	63/29	2/2	1/2	(Atticus Jack, \$163,344)	\$1,004,866	411	13	1.10	1.51
REDATTORE (BRZ) (95, Roi Normand)	\$2,500	66/28	0/3	0/0	(Initial Impression, \$66,176)	\$857,090	*403	2	1.04	1.20
DEPUTY COMMANDER (94, Deputy Minister)	Died, 2009	91/38	0/0	0/0	(Madam Inspector, \$117,184)	\$847,528	*564	24	1.19	1.60
	UNUSUAL HEAT (90, Nureyev), Harris Farms TRIBAL RULE (96, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm BENCHMARK (91, Alydar), Ballena Vista Farm KAFWAIN (00, Cherokee Run), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds SOUTHERN IMAGE (00, Halo's Image), Rancho San Miguel OLD TOPPER (95, Gilded Time), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds BERTRANDO (89, Skywalker), Ballena Vista Farm SALT LAKE (89, Deputy Minister), Golden Eagle Farm IN EXCESS (IRE) (87, Siberian Express), Vessels Stallion Farm SWISS YOBELER (94, Eastern Echo), Harris Farms MARINO MARINI (00, Storm Cat), Rancho San Miguel MINISTERS WILD CAT (00, Deputy Minister), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds STORMIN FEVER (94, Storm Cat), Golden Eagle Farm GIACOMO (02, Holy Bull), Magali Farms SEA OF SECRETS (95, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm DECARCHY (97, Distant View), Magali Farms RICHLY BLENDED (98, Rizzi) ATTICUS (92, Nureyev), Magali Farms REDATTORE (BRZ) (95, Roi Normand)	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing Stud Fee UNUSUAL HEAT (90, Nureyev), Harris Farms \$20,000 TRIBAL RULE (96, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm \$6,000 BENCHMARK (91, Alydar), Ballena Vista Farm \$4,000 KAFWAIN (00, Cherokee Run), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds \$5,000 SOUTHERN IMAGE (00, Halo's Image), Rancho San Miguel \$4,000 OLD TOPPER (95, Gilded Time), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds \$3,500 BERTRANDO (89, Skywalker), Ballena Vista Farm \$8,000 SALT LAKE (89, Deputy Minister), Golden Eagle Farm Died, 2010 IN EXCESS (IRE) (87, Siberian Express), Vessels Stallion Farm Pnsd SWISS YOBELER (94, Eastern Echo), Harris Farms \$5,000 MARINO MARINI (00, Storm Cat), Rancho San Miguel \$2,500 MINISTERS WILD CAT (00, Deputy Minister), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds \$4,000 STORMIN FEVER (94, Storm Cat), Golden Eagle Farm \$6,500 GIACOMO (02, Holy Bull), Magali Farms N/A SEA OF SECRETS (95, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm \$2,500 DECARCHY (97, Distant View), Magali Farms \$4,000 RICHLY BLENDED (98, Rizzi) Died, 2006 ATTICUS (92, Nureyev), Magali Farms \$3,000 <	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing Stud Fee Wins UNUSUAL HEAT (90, Nureyev), Harris Farms \$20,000 111/52 TRIBAL RULE (96, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm \$6,000 128/73 BENCHMARK (91, Alydar), Ballena Vista Farm \$4,000 148/72 KAFWAIN (00, Cherokee Run), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds \$5,000 137/68 SOUTHERN IMAGE (00, Halo's Image), Rancho San Miguel \$4,000 99/63 OLD TOPPER (95, Gilded Time), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds \$3,500 144/72 BERTRANDO (89, Skywalker), Ballena Vista Farm \$8,000 109/50 SALT LAKE (89, Deputy Minister), Golden Eagle Farm Died, 2010 100/49 IN EXCESS (IRS (187, Siberian Express), Vessels Stallion Farm \$5,000 126/58 MARINO MARINI (00, Storm Cat), Rancho San Miguel \$2,500 97/58 MINISTERS WILD CAT (00, Deputy Minister), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds \$4,000 78/42 STORMIN FEVER (94, Storm Cat), Golden Eagle Farm \$6,500 105/41 GIACOMO (02, Holy Bull), Magali Farms N/A 77/43 SEA OF SECRETS (95, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm \$2,500 95/44 DECARCHY (97, D	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing 2011 stufee Rnrs/ Wnrs/	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing 2011 studee Rnrs/ Units Wirs/ W	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing 2011 Fee UNUSUAL HEAT (90, Nureyev), Harris Farms \$20,000 111/52 3/7 1/3 (Acclamation, \$1,126,000) TRIBAL RULE (96, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm \$6,000 128/73 7/10 5/7 (Heleonor Rugby, \$205,306) BENCHMARK (91, Alydar), Ballena Vista Farm \$4,000 148/72 4/6 0/4 (Ducky Drake, \$165,669) KAFWAIN (00, Cherokee Run), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds \$5,000 137/68 5/8 2/5 (Daisy Devine, \$448,561) SOUTHERN IMAGE (00, Halo's Image), Rancho San Miguel \$4,000 99/63 1/4 0/1 (Calibrachoa, \$270,500) OLD TOPPER (95, Gilded Time), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds \$3,500 144/72 2/3 0/2 (Ain't No Other, \$204,203) BERTRANDO (89, Skywalker), Ballena Vista Farm \$8,000 109/50 4/5 1/4 (Liberian Freighter, \$153,000) SALT LAKE (89, Deputy Minister), Golden Eagle Farm Died, 2011 100/95 2/3 1/2 (Hamzeing Destine, \$94,667) SWISS YODELER (94, Eastern Echo), Harris Farms \$5,000 126/58 1/1 0/1 (Yodelen Dan, \$149,178)	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing Stud Fee Wnrs Wnrs Wnrs BT SW Chief Earner, Earnings Earnings	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing Stud Fee Winrs Wi	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing Stud Fee Winrs Winrs Winrs BT SW Chief Earner, Earnings) Earnings Earnings Foals Winrs Winrs Winrs BT SW Chief Earner, Earnings) Earnings Ear	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing Stud Fee Winrs Wi

*A-E and COMPARABLE INDEX: The lifetime Average-Earnings Index indicates how much purse money the progeny of one sire has earned, on the average, in relation to the average earnings of all runners in the same years; average earnings of all runners in any year is represented by an index of 1.00. The Comparable Index indicates the average earnings of progeny produced from mares bred to one sire, when these same mares were bred to other sires. Only 32% of all sires have a lifetime AEI higher than their mares Comparable Index.

stall, shows off the angel-wings star on the horse's face, scratches the base of his tail, and makes sure to have a ready supply of carrots.

"He is a carrot-eating machine," said Judy, Buddy's wife, after Acclamation won the TVG Pacific Classic (gr. I) at Del Mar. Judy, as did Buddy's mother, Betty, before her, takes an active role in the horse operation. She even foaled out future stakes winner Real Good Deal in 1961 when the mare gave birth during a bridal shower Judy was hosting while the men had made themselves scarce.

Acclamation might have taken the entire Johnston clan to the Breeders' Cup this year. In mid-October, though, a minor foot problem caused him to miss a key work, which was enough for Buddy to put him

away until next year.

"It's nothing serious," Johnston said.
"He had a setback that cost him some time, and I'm not going to push him for a race. Last year when we gave him time off, he came back real good."

Warren—who went to work for the family as an exercise boy in 1970, has been their trainer since 1978, and is practically family himself—let Acclamation down for a few weeks at Santa Anita. Johnston planned to ship the horse to the Sanger ranch to get ready for a 2012 campaign, which could conclude with an appearance at Santa Anita in a Breeders' Cup race.

Across the shedrow from Acclamation, Norvsky put his head out, asking for his share of attention. Once Acclamation was sidelined, Norvsky made sure the Old English Rancho silks weren't long absent from the winner's circle. On Oct. 29 the gelding won the California Cup Classic for the Johnstons and partners Bob and Dee Riggio.

While Norvsky is on the improve, Acclamation might be the best horse the Johnston family has ever bred and raced. In sheer numbers alone, that would be an accomplishment. Since Johnston's father purchased his first racehorse, English Harry, in 1939, Old English Rancho has produced hundreds of stakes winners. The family raced many—often with a variety of partners—sold others, and raised even more for breeders who kept mares at the ranch and bred them to resident stallions.

Many of those stallions led the state's sire lists. The early ones included Old Eng-





November 1964: at left, E.B. Johnston with stakes winner Real Good Deal; right, a 27-year-old Buddy Johnston at Old English Rancho

Rancho San Miguel

2012 STALLION ROSTER

MARINO MARINI - Top-4 Synthetic Sire in California

Storm Cat - Halo America, by Waquoit/ \$2,500 LF

- 58 winners of more than \$1.5 million in 2011 earnings.
- Eleven 2011 stakes horses (SIX 2yos) headed by 2yo SW **STARLIGHT MAGIC** (\$100,000 Cal. Cup Juvenile Fillies S.), **HOT FUSION**, SP **Bleach Blonde** (\$216,800), 2yo MSP **Marshal Marini** (2nd \$75,000 Charlie Palmer Futurity), and 2yo SPs **Taylor Marini** and **Tic Vic**, 2-3 finishers in the \$100,000 Barretts Juvenile S.
- Also sire of SWs MONEY LOVER (\$159,706) at Hollywood and SHUDACUDAWUDYA (\$165,216) at Golden Gate.

McCANN'S MOJAVE - Outstanding First Foals 2YOs 2012

Memo – Joni U. Bar, by Nordic Prince/ \$3,000 LF (consideration to approved mares)

- Record-setting, all-surface stakes winner of \$1,513,565 with graded scores at 6.5F, 8.5F, and 9F (NTR).
- Defeated 15 Grade 1 winners including CONGAREE, HEATSEEKER, PERFECT DRIFT, SILVER WAGON, TIAGO, TASTE OF PARADISE, and UNFURL THE FLAG.

SIERRA SUNSET - Grade 2 Stakes Winner with Tactical Speed & Classic Family

Bertrando - Toot Sweet, by Pirate's Bounty/ Stud Fee \$2,500 LF

- Won 5 races, including 4 stakes from ages 2 thru 4, from 4.5 furlongs to 11/16 miles.
- Won Oaklawn's **G2** Rebel S. (**99 Beyer**), the \$125,000 California Cup Juvenile S., the Alamedan H. at 1½6 miles (**101 Beyer**), and the Bay Meadows Juvenile S. by 8 lengths.
- By a Calif. Leading Sire (53 SWs), out of a SP full sister to the dam of G1 Belmont S. winner DA' TARA.

SOUTHERN IMAGE - California's 2nd Leading General Sire by money

Halo's Image - Pleasant Dixie, by Dixieland Band/ \$2,500 LF

- More than \$4.2 million in 2011 earnings after **SOUTHERN SPEED** (\$1,851,054) became her sire's first G1SW in the \$2,740,360 BMW Caufield Cup (**Aus-G1**) by 1½ lengths. She was 4th in the Longines MacKinnon S. (**Aus-G1**) on 10/29.
- Also sire of 2011 SHs CALIBRACHOA (\$431,040, G3 Tom Fool H.-107 Beyer, G3 Bold Ruler H., G3 Toboggan H., etc.), Southern Ridge (2nd G3 Philip H. Iselin S., etc.), 2yo Pink Candy (3rd \$150,000 Brandywine S.), etc.

STORM WOLF - Attractive First Foals 2YOs 2012

Stormin Fever - Exclusive Rosette, by Ecliptical/ \$2,500 LF

- Graded stakes-winning full brother to **G1**-performing GSW **MISTY ROSETTE**.
- Won 3 of 5 starts, including the G2 Lazaro Barrera Memorial S. by 6L in 1:22 1/5.
- Posted a 104 Beyer breaking his maiden at Santa Anita and a 101 Beyer winning an allowance there in 1:09 flat.

THE PAMPLEMOUSSE - First Foals Arrive 2012

Kafwain - Comfort Zone, by Rubiano/ \$2,500 LF

- Santa Anita Graded stakes-winning miler by Top-4 California Sire KAFWAIN.
- Won 3 of 5 starts, including the **G3** Sham S. by 6L (107 Beyer) and G3 San Rafael S. at one mile.
- Out of a half-sister to the dam of 2YO G1 SW STORMELLO (\$700,100).

No Booking Fees for 2012 Seasons / Stud Fees are payable Oct. 1 of year bred

ALSO STANDING Comic Strip / Onebadshark / Sought After / Slew's Fiznow

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2011 California Sires By Winners

Ву	Winners	
Sire	Rnrs	Wnrs
Tribal Rule	128	73
Benchmark		
Old Topper		
Kafwain		
Southern Image		
Swiss Yodeler		
Marino Marini		
In Excess (IRE)		
Unusual Heat		
Bertrando		
Salt Lake		
Sea of Secrets		
Giacomo		
Ministers Wild Cat		
Stormin Fever		
Decarchy		
Deputy Commander		
Olmodavor		
Freespool		
Siberian Summer		
Roar		
Perfect Mandate		
High Brite		
Momentum		
Atticus		
Redattore (BRZ)		
Cee's Tizzy		
Terrell		
Ten Most Wanted		
Valid Wager		
Lit de Justice		
Safe in the U S A		
Globalize		
Popular		
Western Fame		
Comic Strip		
Gotham City		
Capsized		
Game Plan		
Muqtarib		
Tannersmyman		
Richly Blended		
Flame Thrower		
Good Journey		
Iron Cat		
Tizbud		
Beau Genius		
High Demand		
Lucky Pulpit		
Singletary		
Snowbound		
Behrens		
		- 11
Vronsky Dixie Dot Com		



Buddy's wife, Judy, notes Acclamation is 'a carrot-eating machine'

lish, who gave his name to the ranch, and The Pie King, named for Buddy's father, who began as a pie deliveryman and grew that into a large business. Later, father and son made headlines by purchasing the cantankerous Fleet Nasrullah from John D. Hertz and developing him into a leading sire before selling him to Kentucky when California instituted onerous tax laws regarding stallions.

Lucky Mel, First Balcony, Victory Morn, Windy Sands, Silveyville, Something Lucky, and Bold Badgett stood all or part of their careers at Old English. Most recently Unusual Heat, California's current leading sire, spent years at the ranch before moving to Harris Farms, and many of his stakes winners were foaled and raised at Old English. The ranch currently stands seven stallions, including millionaire Surf Cat and Vronsky, the sire of Norvsky.

"We've probably raised as many stakes winners for others as for ourselves," said Buddy.

Brilliance in Fillies

The Johnston family has also excelled at producing fillies that have performed

well on the racetrack and as broodmares. They bred Santa Susana Stakes and Hollywood Oaks winner Ruth Lily from a mare they bought in a package of six mares from Wyoming that hadn't even been taught to lead.

Buddy selected the stallion Oceanus II to cross with Star Radiance, resulting in multiple stakes winner Admirably. Old English bred the brilliant June Darling, who beat the boys in the Del Mar Futurity and Norfolk Stakes for Clement Hirsch. A male Del Mar Futurity/Norfolk winner, Macarthur Park, was one of three stakes winners Old English bred from homebred stakes winner Betty's Fortune, who is also the fourth dam of Norvsky.

Balcony's Babe, Fancy 'n Fabulous, Generous Portion, Her Royalty, Our First Delight, Proper Mary, Smart Barbara, Somethingmerry, Special Warmth—the list of good Old English fillies seems endless.

Acclamation resulted from three generations of Old English bloodlines. Buddy's father claimed third dam Solidity at Caliente for \$1,250. Solidity's foals included stakes winners Fleet Treat, Impressive Style, and Chief Hawk Ear and unraced Lady With Style. Lady With Style in turn foaled stakes winners Stylish Stud and Stylish Winner plus unraced Winning in Style, who, when bred to Unusual Heat, produced Acclamation.

Lady With Style was a granddaughter of Fleet Nasrullah. Buddy said that Acclamation didn't inherit any of his ancestor's temperament, however.

Introducing Fleet Nasrullah into a conversation gives Buddy the chance to tell a favorite story.

A brilliant sprinter for Hertz, Fleet Nasrullah impressed E.B. Johnston as a horse who could be even better around two turns. Johnston wanted to run the horse in the 1960 Arcadia Exchange Club Handicap at 1½ miles at Santa Anita before he finished paying for him in installments. Hertz refused because he didn't think Fleet Nasrullah could go a distance of ground, so Johnston had to cough up the money before the race. He didn't want to do it un-

2011 California Sires By 2-Year-Old Winners								
Sires	2yos	2yo Rnrs	2yo Wnrs					
Tribal Rule	111	35	17					
Giacomo	61	27	9					
Kafwain	51	19	8					
Marino Marini	52	16	7					
Southern Image	43	13	6					
	17							
Swiss Yodeler	31	14	5					
Old Topper	48	14	5					
	59							
	51							
	32							
Popular	24	7	4					
Olmodavor	28	11	4					

less Fleet Nasrullah passed a fertility test and told Buddy to test breed the horse.

Buddy enlisted the help of veteran horsemen Charley and Buddy Leavitt at Charley Leavitt's small ranch near Chino, just a few miles from Santa Anita. Johnston made sure he had a new shank and a cavesson bridle so as not to jerk on Fleet Nasrullah's mouth.

As with many inexperienced stallions, it took a while for Fleet Nasrullah to learn what he was supposed to do.

"He got up on the mare, started going sideways, and all of a sudden he fell off the mare onto his back," said Johnston. "I thought, 'Oh no, we're going to kill the horse.'"

As it turned out, Fleet Nasrullah was fine, and the three men rounded up a couple of more people to help the horse try again. This time the brand new shank broke, and Leavitt's property was unfenced.

"He was not a nice horse to fool with," said Buddy, "and now the horse is loose. We're right next to Riverside Drive. There was nothing to stop the horse from going down the road."

Fortunately, Fleet Nasrullah was thinking more about the mare than escape, and Buddy Leavitt was able to grab the bridle. The test breeding concluded successfully without further incident, and Fleet Nasrullah went on to set an American record for nine furlongs in winning the race, proving The Pie Man's faith in him.

From Chino to Sanger

Back then the Los Angeles area hadn't grown to the sprawl that it is today, and Chino was also the site of the Johnston family's original Old English Rancho. In 1948, E.B. Johnston and his business partner, Ted Tepper, bought 37 acres in Chino between Leavitt's ranch and Rex Ellsworth's place, which produced Swaps. They later purchased 120 additional acres in nearby Corona.

As Buddy grew up and Tepper bowed out of the partnership, The Pie Man decided to sell both properties. For Buddy's high school graduation present in 1955, his dad bought land for a new version of the ranch near Ontario, Calif. He wanted to locate it near the Ontario airport because he believed—correctly—that the land would appreciate as the area grew.

Buddy and his father expanded to the





Above: Old English Rancho stallion Lucky Mel; Below, Acclamation, Old English Rancho's three-time grade I winner in Southern California in 2011

Sanger area in the mid-1960s and kept yearlings there from about 1970.

"The next piece of property that I bought was in 1981, just before my dad passed away," said Buddy. "I bought 170 acres across the street. Every time I'd go up that Piedra Road, I would say to Judy, 'Someday we'll buy the land on that side, and we'll have white fence on both sides of the highway.'"

It wasn't the road that attracted Buddy. It was the quality land on the north end of the Kings River, which provides an abundant supply of excellent water. When Buddy felt the time was right to develop the Ontario property in the mid-1990s, he consolidated the entire operation in Sanger, though he keeps an office in Ontario.

The ranch has complete facilities for breeding, raising, and training horses, including a seven-furlong training track. The Johnston family owns 45-50 mares, many in partnership with Patsy Berumen, the general manager of the farm who has worked with the family for some 30 years. Old English was a major boarding facility until the economy made the boarding business too difficult, Johnston said.

The shrinking of the California breeding business may be what ultimately sends Acclamation to Kentucky to stand at

stud when his racing career is finished. Johnston doesn't expect that to happen soon because he feels Acclamation may be even better at age 6 in 2012.

If Acclamation does improve over 2011, then he'll have quite a year. Beginning with the Hollywood spring meeting, Acclamation went on a five-race winning streak. He won Hollywood's Jim Murray Handicap (gr. IIT) and Charles Whittingham Memorial Handicap (gr. IT), both for the second time, added the Eddie Read Stakes (gr. IT) and Pacific Classic at Del Mar, and captured the Clement L. Hirsch Turf Championship Stakes (gr. IIT) at Santa Anita.

Acclamation impressed Johnston so much when he first saw the colt under tack that he briefly considered sending him to trainer John Gosden in England. Even if the horse does stand in Kentucky, Johnston will breed mares to him and bring them to the ranch to foal California-breds, qualifying the offspring for the lucrative purse incentives in the

Besides, Johnston still

owns the family. He has Acclamation's stakes-placed half sister Always in Style in training with Warren. He hopes to win a stakes with her before she retires, probably to be bred to Unusual Heat in 2012. Always in Style recently finished a good fourth in the California Cup Distaff Stakes.

Johnston tried twice to win the E.B. Johnston Stakes at Fairplex Park with Always in Style to pay tribute to his father, for whom the race is named. Luck went against him, however, first in 2010, when Always in Style got hurt, and then this year, when the race was called off with too few nominations. The family did win the race in 1995 with Fancy 'n Fabulous and in 2006 with Allswellthatnswell.

Acclamation and his siblings allow Buddy to bring his family together at the racetrack. He added daughter Mary and son-in-law Pete to the horse's ownership line, and now their son Jonny is taking on more responsibility at the ranch.

"Jonny is doing a great job," said Buddy.
"He's one of the main reasons why I've wanted to stay in the business."

Buddy and Judy also have 10 greatgrandchildren. Thus, it may not be long before a fifth generation becomes involved with Old English to take it into its second century.