



WEST COAST

Life's a Beach

Noosa Beach shines for Doris and Jeff Harwood

BY JACK SHINAR

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Doris and Jeff Harwood know that improbable dreams really can happen, that little guys can beat billionaires, and miracles come on four hooves. They can see the proof right outside the picture window of the den in their two-story ranch home nestled in the cedar-covered rolling hills of the Washington suburb of Kent.

That's where Noosa Beach, the homebred pride of their stable, likes to play in his paddock during the Emerald Downs off-season while he awaits a 2012 campaign that perhaps could include a trip to the Breeders' Cup at Santa Anita Park next fall for the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile (gr. I).

Racing on a circuit where purses are modest, Noosa Beach has amassed earnings of \$520,722 with 14 victories and 20 in-the-money performances from 21 races, becoming one of Washington's all-time greatest horses. But if not for gambles by the Harwoods and some incredible determination and luck, the rambunctious and robust 6-year-old gelding would never have been born.

Noosa Beach's granddam was a broken-down racehorse the Harwoods claimed off the track for \$2,500 after Jeff had had a dream about her. His dam was a crippled foal with a mangled leg that required seven experimental surgeries. His sire was an untested stallion who had never before covered a mare. Noosa Beach became his first offspring.

Now the accomplishments of Noosa Beach, who is named for an Australian vacation spot the Harwoods visited, put him atop the Evergreen State as a two-time Emerald Downs Horse of the Year. And the Harwoods, though they would be the first to tell you they aren't horse breeders in the traditional sense, were honored in 2011 by the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association as the state's outstanding breeder.

Trained by Doris and owned by Jeff, Noosa Beach has raced almost exclusively at Emerald Downs. The big dark bay owns the record for the Seattle-area track, opened in 1996, with 11 stakes wins. His victories include the 2010 Longacres Mile Handicap (gr. III),



Jeff and Doris Harwood with their star Noosa Beach; Noosa Beach winning the 2010 Longacres Mile

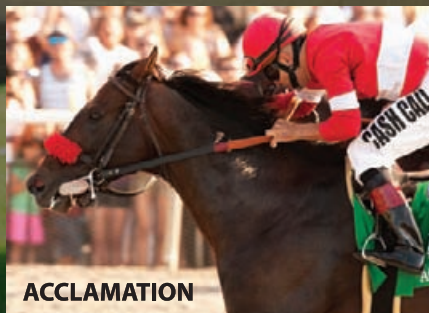
CALIFORNIA'S GOLD STANDARD

Eclipse Award Champion for Unusual Heat

ACCLAMATION wins Eclipse for Champion Older Male

The only five-time graded stakes winner of 2011 to win **Grade I** races on turf (2) and synthetic surfaces (**NTR**), **Acclamation** was voted the 2011 Champion Older Male and was second in the balloting for Horse of the Year and Champion Turf Male honors.

The only stallion to lead California's sire lists by progeny earnings for four consecutive years and by turf earnings for eight consecutive years, **Unusual Heat** has lifetime progeny earnings of \$32,433,118 including \$19,849,548 (2008-2011) and record earnings of \$5,827,513 in 2008. **Fee: \$20,000 Live Foal**



BENOIT PHOTO

PROVEN LEADING SIRE AND RACE PERFORMANCE IN CALIFORNIA

HEATSEEKER

G1 millionaire and four-time record setter by **Giant's Causeway** will have first-crop 2-year-olds racing in 2012.

Fee: \$6,500 Live Foal

LUCKY PULPIT

Averaged \$35,236 per runner and topped two leading sire categories with 25 starters in 2011.

Fee: \$2,500 Live Foal

LUCKY J. H.

Graded winner of \$632,065 second only to **Tiznow** among sire's top earners at stud. First crop races in 2012.

Fee: \$1,500 Live Foal

SWISS YODELER

General sire list leader and 2-time leading sire of 2-year-olds has progeny earnings of \$23,000,000.

Fee: \$4,000 Live Foal

TIZBUD

Sire of **Tiz Flirtatious**, undefeated stakes winner at 3 and Santa Anita G2-placed at 4, 2012.

Fee: \$2,500 Live Foal

SINGLETARY

G1 Breeders' Cup Mile winner and sire of **Logical Single** (\$211,788), 2011 stakes winner on turf/synthetic.

Fee: \$1,500 Live Foal

THORN SONG

Millionaire son of **Unbridled's Song** and multiple wire-to-wire G1 winner. First foals arrive in 2012.

Fee: \$3,500 Live Foal

DESERT CODE

Breeders' Cup winner, millionaire and graded winner on turf and synthetic. First foals are yearlings of 2012.

Fee: \$2,000 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



Harris Farms

John C. Harris, President • David E. McGlothlin, Horse Division Manager • Dr. Jeanne Bowers, Resident Veterinarian
 27366 W. Oakland Ave. • Coalinga, CA 93210 • Tel: (800) 311-6211 or (559) 884-2859 • Fax: (559) 884-2855
 www.harrisfarms.com • E-Mail: davemcglathlin@harrisfarms.com

2011 Leading Sires in California

State sire lists updated daily online. Go to <http://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/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 December 31, 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.

| Rank | Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing | 2012 Stud Fee | Rnrs/Wnrs | Stakes Wnrs/Wnrs | Rstrct SW/ BT SW | (Chief Earner, Earnings) | 2011 Earnings | Cumulative | | | |
|------|--|---------------|-----------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| | | | | | | | | Foals | Stks Wnrs | *A-E Index | *Comp Index |
| 1 | UNUSUAL HEAT (90, Nureyev), Harris Farms | \$20,000 | 120/57 | 3/8 | 1/3 | (Acclamation, \$1,126,000) | \$4,495,713 | *509 | 29 | 2.18 | 1.25 |
| 2 | TRIBAL RULE (96, Storm Cat), Ballena Vista Farm | \$5,500 | 142/83 | 8/12 | 6/8 | (Heleanor Rugby, \$205,306) | \$3,488,563 | 363 | 21 | 1.48 | 1.20 |
| 3 | BENCHMARK (91, Alydar), Ballena Vista Farm | \$5,000 | 152/78 | 4/6 | 0/4 | (Ducky Drake, \$170,669) | \$2,921,641 | 610 | 31 | 1.26 | 1.18 |
| 4 | KAFWAIN (00, Cherokee Run), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds | \$5,000 | 146/77 | 5/10 | 2/5 | (Daisy Devine, \$493,561) | \$2,847,642 | *369 | 16 | 1.12 | 1.31 |
| 5 | SOUTHERN IMAGE (00, Halo's Image), Rancho San Miguel | \$2,500 | 105/67 | 3/6 | 1/3 | (Calibrachoa, \$295,500) | \$2,351,448 | *303 | 4 | 1.71 | 1.43 |
| 6 | OLD TOPPER (95, Gilded Time), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds | \$3,500 | 151/78 | 3/4 | 1/3 | (Ain't No Other, \$214,083) | \$2,184,316 | 452 | 18 | 0.97 | 0.89 |
| 7 | SALT LAKE (89, Deputy Minister) | Died, 2010 | 104/54 | 3/4 | 0/3 | (Teddy's Promise, \$289,408) | \$1,994,329 | *1192 | 52 | 1.43 | 1.42 |
| 8 | BERTRANDO (89, Skywalker), Ballena Vista Farm | \$8,000 | 114/55 | 4/5 | 1/4 | (Liberian Freighter, \$153,000) | \$1,937,362 | 980 | 53 | 1.39 | 1.57 |
| 9 | MARINO MARINI (00, Storm Cat), Rancho San Miguel | \$2,500 | 102/63 | 2/3 | 1/2 | (Bleach Blonde, \$137,508) | \$1,807,950 | 198 | 5 | 0.98 | 1.04 |
| 10 | ARAGORN (IRE) (02, Giant's Causeway), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds | \$4,000 | 91/48 | 1/2 | 1/1 | (Birdie Beats Par, \$185,570) | \$1,770,071 | 130 | 1 | 1.02 | 1.48 |
| 11 | IN EXCESS (IRE) (87, Siberian Express), Vessels Stallion Farm | N/A | 115/59 | 3/3 | 2/3 | (Magic School, \$121,750) | \$1,740,100 | 945 | 63 | 1.67 | 1.43 |
| 12 | SWISS YODELER (94, Eastern Echo), Harris Farms | \$5,000 | 131/64 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Yodelen Dan, \$149,528) | \$1,684,237 | 643 | 23 | 1.06 | 1.09 |
| 13 | MINISTERS WILD CAT (00, Deputy Minister), Tommy Town Thoroughbreds | \$4,000 | 85/49 | 6/8 | 2/6 | (Castinette Dancer, \$140,961) | \$1,655,647 | 170 | 8 | 0.93 | 1.02 |
| 14 | GIACOMO (02, Holy Bull), Adena Springs @ Magali Farms | \$5,000 | 83/48 | 4/5 | 0/4 | (Disposablepleasure, \$161,600) | \$1,451,863 | *133 | 5 | 0.93 | 1.49 |
| 15 | DECARCHY (97, Distant View), Magali Farms | \$4,000 | 85/42 | 4/4 | 1/4 | (Stoney Fleece, \$170,860) | \$1,408,417 | 237 | 7 | 1.05 | 0.99 |
| 16 | STORMIN FEVER (94, Storm Cat), Golden Eagle Farm | \$4,500 | 107/42 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Filled With Wonder, \$92,382) | \$1,391,633 | *593 | 27 | 1.24 | 1.44 |
| 17 | SEA OF SECRETS (95, Storm Cat), Victory Rose Thoroughbreds | \$2,500 | 98/49 | 3/8 | 1/3 | (Hermosillo, \$235,350) | \$1,296,499 | *411 | 20 | 0.97 | 1.09 |
| 18 | ATTICUS (92, Nureyev), Magali Farms | \$2,500 | 64/30 | 2/2 | 1/2 | (Atticus Jack, \$163,344) | \$1,044,066 | 411 | 13 | 1.09 | 1.50 |
| 19 | RICHLI BLENDED (98, Rizzi) | Died, 2006 | 25/15 | 1/4 | 0/1 | (Ultra Blend, \$648,000) | \$1,035,409 | 120 | 2 | 1.06 | 0.77 |
| 20 | DEPUTY COMMANDER (94, Deputy Minister) | Died, 2009 | 92/43 | 0/0 | 0/0 | (Madam Inspector, \$140,152) | \$1,030,885 | *564 | 24 | 1.19 | 1.60 |

*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.

the only graded race at Emerald Downs, which he won even though he suffered a severe cut on his foot when stomped on by another horse early in the race. Attempting to repeat in the \$200,000 event last August, Noosa Beach wound up second to multi-millionaire Awesome Gem while spotting the winner three pounds.

Blessed with superb speed, Noosa Beach has won from 4½ furlongs to 1½ miles but is probably best at one mile. He was nominated to the Breeders' Cup for \$25,000 last year but didn't make the trip to Churchill Downs because of a minor foot bruise.

"Noosa Beach is a once-in-a-lifetime horse," said Doris Harwood. "I wouldn't say he has changed our lives, but he has made it possible for us to think about things like eventually retiring."

Both 59, Doris and Jeff are well-known in the Washington racing community, where Doris is the all-time leading trainer by stakes wins at Emerald Downs with 54 victories. She set a record for earnings in a single season at the picturesque track with \$931,916 in 2009. She also won 12 stakes that year, tying a record she had set in 2007. At just under five-feet-tall, the former Doris Ebersole was a jockey at Longacres and Yakima Meadows for four years. As a trainer, she's totaled 461 winners from 2,813 starts with lifetime purse earnings of nearly \$6.5 million.

A longtime handicapper, Jeff had dabbled in horse ownership with cheap claimers while developing an interest in bloodlines.

"I'd always said the man I marry would have to enjoy racing and know how to read a *Daily Racing Form*," said Doris, who had

been married once before.

Their comfortable home sits on six acres in a ranch subdivision of winding roads just south of Auburn, about a 20-minute drive from Emerald Downs. On a clear day majestic Mount Rainier peers over their house, which is filled with racing trophies and equine art. They share their home with Trevor, 21, the youngest of Jeff's five children from a previous marriage, plus seven dogs—three Chesapeake Bay retrievers, two Chinese shar-peis, and two Jack Russell terriers.

Winter is a relaxed time for the Harwoods. Unlike many of their fellow Washington horsemen, they don't hit the road for California or Arizona once the Emerald Downs season ends in late September. They bring their horses home, allowing Jeff to concentrate on his job as a Waste Connections district manager for three Washington counties and go bird hunting. Doris uses the downtime to be a homemaker, take care of the horses along with Trevor, who is autistic, and "do as little as possible."

"It's good for the horses; I think they are able to last longer with a good break," she said. "It keeps us fresh as well, and when it's time for the new racing season (which begins in March), I'm ready to go."

The Harwoods have been married since 1993, when Doris was just starting as a trainer. They were introduced, coincidentally, by Pam Christopherson, who along with husband Neal owns Noosa Beach's sire, Harbor the Gold, an Overbrook Farm homebred who had a short racing career for trainer D. Wayne Lukas. The 11-year-old son of Seeking the Gold stands at the

Christophersons' Bar C Racing Stables in Hermiston, Ore.

Noosa Beach's story actually begins a year after the Harwoods' wedding when the couple scraped together the money to claim a broken-down mare, Cure My Blue's, at Yakima Meadows. Then 5, the daughter of Cure the Blues had caught Jeff's eye as a 2-year-old at Longacres, not only because of a determined style that produced five wins in 11 starts in her first two seasons but also because of her breeding.

"Cure the Blues was an up-and-coming broodmare sire," said Jeff. "I think he was, in the grand scheme of things, an under-appreciated stallion. He was, from my perspective, a genetic masterpiece. I'm really predisposed to the Hail to Reason line, and he had the Tom Fool breeding. In my breeding program I've centered the whole thing around inbreeding to Tom Fool (for speed and durability). And Cure the Blues was an incredibly fast horse."

When the owner of Cure My Blue's dropped her into a \$25,000 claiming race, a friend of Jeff's claimed the bay filly and took her to California.

While in California "she got very sick, almost died," Jeff said. "So now we're racing at Yakima a couple of years later and she shows up there for \$2,500. I saw that, and I said to Doris, 'We're going to claim this mare. We're going to breed her.'"

Her response, she said, was unprintable. "That's always my reaction," she said. "Well, somebody's got to put the brakes on. At the time, \$2,500 was quite a bit."

They slept on it, but the next morning Jeff said he was more determined than

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| | | | | | | | | Foals | Stks Wnrs | *A-E Index | *Comp Index |
| 1 | PARKER'S STORM CAT (00, Storm Cat), Gibson Thoroughbred Farm | \$2,000 | 63/35 | 3/8 | 2/3 | (Ben's Cat, \$588,250) | \$1,912,717 | *171 | 3 | 1.16 | 1.15 |
| 2 | MATTY G (93, Capote), El Dorado Farms | \$2,000 | 102/50 | 1/1 | 0/1 | (Thanks Be to God, \$64,562) | \$896,257 | *448 | 14 | 0.89 | 1.01 |
| 3 | TRIBUNAL (97, Deputy Minister) | Died, 2008 | 67/39 | 2/2 | 1/2 | (Atta Boy Roy, \$101,284) | \$676,526 | 185 | 11 | 0.79 | 0.76 |
| 4 | POLISH MINER (97, Danzig), St. Hilaire Thoroughbreds | \$600 | 44/20 | 1/1 | 1/1 | (Centripetal Motion, \$87,120) | \$628,777 | 146 | 1 | 1.03 | 0.99 |
| 5 | YOU AND I (91, Kris S.), Woodstead Farm | \$2,500 | 57/28 | 4/6 | 1/4 | (You Me and Ema B, \$74,980) | \$564,044 | *480 | 20 | 1.11 | 1.39 |

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ever to claim Cure My Blue's.

He told his wife, "I dreamed last night she was going to win her last race just on pure heart and determination. I know she's going to win this race, and we're going to bring her home with us because I dreamed we would."

They went to the track and put in a claim for Cure My Blue's, who won easily. However, the Harwoods had to win a shake for the right to claim and retire her, which, as in the dream, also happened.

Cure My Blue's produced two fillies by Basket Weave, a son of Best Turn who was standing at a farm in Washington. After delivering the second, Julia Rose, in 1997, Cure My Blue's was waiting to be bred to another of the farm's stallions.

"She'd only been up there about a month when we got a call from the farm," Jeff related, "informing them that Julia Rose had broken her leg playing in the paddock. They were talking like that there wasn't anything that could be done and were going to have the vet put her down.

"So we were like, 'We're not going to do that.' We jump in the truck, take our four-horse trailer, and drive up there."

They took Julia Rose and the mare to Dr. Robert Schneider, a well-known orthopedic equine surgeon at Washington State University. Dr. Schneider explained the weanling had hyperextended her leg badly; the tendon had pulled off about a four-inch piece of bone above the elbow. Prospects were bleak.

"At the time I didn't have that great a job," Jeff said. "Things weren't booming. I'm paying the vet bills on my credit card, and after about two months and \$10,000 I decide I can't afford this. So I call up Dr. Schneider, and I've got tears in my eyes, but I tell him I can't do this anymore and we're going to have to donate her to the college."

A short time later Jeff drove to the university, in the eastern part of the state, and loaded up Cure My Blue's.

"You want to talk about feeling like a heel. I'm figuring they are going to dissect Julia Rose into little pieces, and I'm trying to pull the mare away from her 3-month old foal and drag her to the trailer. And we're

driving away and the mare's screaming for her baby. I'll tell you, that was a sad, sad time. It makes me cry to this day."

But a couple of months later the Harwoods felt as if they had been party to a miracle.

"I get a phone call from Doc Schneider, who tells me, 'Hey, Jeff, come pick up your horse.' And he starts explaining to me about an experimental surgery."

Because bones in baby horses are too fragile, surgeons cannot use screws to help set a fracture in place. Instead, Jeff said, Dr. Schneider used surgical wire wrapped around the existing bone to hold it together. It took seven tries to get the limb to remain in place long enough for new bone to grow around it. But it was eventually a success.

"So I went to get her and I almost felt bad we saved her," Jeff said. "She looked like warmed-over death. She had complete atrophy. There was no muscle. But I kept thinking, 'She's got a chance.' She's got the heart of her mother, who could win a race when she was in no condition to even try to. And within six months she was like normal."

A few years later Cure My Blue's would die of foaling complications. Julia Rose, however, had proved successful as a broodmare. She produced three foals, all winners, from 2001-03, two of them by Tiffany Ice, a stallion standing at the Christophersons' Bar C Ranch, located about seven miles south of the Washington border in the northeast corner of Oregon.

Julia Rose had been returned to Bar C to mate with Tiffany Ice.

"He was 24 at the time, I think," said Pam Christopherson, "and he just wasn't that into it anymore. She kicked at him a couple of times and that was it; he wanted nothing to do with her."

The Christophersons had reluctantly acquired a new stallion, Harbor the Gold, who had arrived at the ranch a month earlier from New York where he had injured a knee while racing for Lukas.

"A friend I had at Overbrook had called me about this horse," said Pam. "I really wasn't looking for another stallion, but he kept calling me about him. He must have

called me about 20 times. So finally I said to send him out."

With Julia Rose ready to be bred, she suggested to the Harwoods that Harbor the Gold could be a solution.

Said Jeff, "She sends me the pedigree and I'm looking at it, going 'Wow, he's got Seeking the Gold (as a sire), then I go, Holy (cow), he's another cross to Tom Fool.' So I call her up and say, 'let's go for it.'"

The resulting foal was Noosa Beach. The Christophersons kept Julia Rose as part of the deal with the Harwoods for Harbor the Gold's stud fee and other costs associated with foaling Noosa Beach. They bred her back three times to Harbor the Gold before Julia Rose died last year from colic.

The second of those foals, Music of My Soul, was purchased for \$82,000 as a yearling at auction in Washington by Ken Alhadeff, who gave Doris Harwood her start as a trainer and remains her top owner. The colt is expected to debut this year. The third is an unnamed yearling still owned by the Christophersons.

Noosa Beach debuted for a \$12,500 claiming price in August 2008, the Harwoods taking a chance that with his unknown sire, no one would take him. He won the 4½-furlong debut by 4½ lengths and went straight into stakes company. When he won the Captain Condo Stakes by 5¼ lengths in his third start and finished second to Gallant Son in the Gottstein Futurity, the Harwoods thought they had something special. As a 3-year-old, he went on to claim the Auburn Stakes and the Pepsi Cola Handicap.

In two seasons since, Noosa Beach has won 10 of 12 races, including a seven-race stakes-winning streak before his second in last year's Longacres Mile.

Outside the Northwest there remains skepticism about Noosa Beach. Doris said she plans to campaign him in Washington until the fall. She hopes then to prove his ability on the nation's biggest stage.

"That \$25,000 check (to nominate him for the Breeders' Cup) was a hard one to write," she said. "And Santa Anita will be much easier for us to get to than Churchill Downs." 🐾