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# Family Ties

BY DAN JOHNSON

## *The Von Hemel clan proves powerful throughout the Midwest*

**R**oylynn Von Hemel isn't surprised that her sons Donnie K. and Kelly have flourished as trainers. "They've been very successful at it," she said. "They've had a good teacher."

That teacher would be Roylynn's husband, Don, who is the patriarch of one of the nation's most successful training families.

That was illustrated during Oaklawn Park's racing Festival of the South, when all three Von Hemels won a stakes. Kelly sent out Semaphore Man to win the Count Fleet Sprint Handicap (gr. III). Two days later, Don won the Northern Spur Stakes with Sebastian County, and Donnie saddled Euphony to win the Instant Racing Stakes.

"They're just terrific people," said Josephine Abercrombie of Pin Oak Stud, who has Euphony and other horses with Donnie. "They're all horsemen, and that's the most important thing. They grew up with horses; they know horses. They know all about them. That's different from quite a lot of trainers. The Von Hemels are horse people, and I think they're terrific."

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COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

Family of trainers: Don Von Hemel (center), with sons Kelly (left) and Donnie



Don Von Hemel in his early days on the racetrack



Don (right) receives the 1976 Fonner Park leading training award from Al Swihart

Together, the three Von Hemels have won more than 5,000 races and \$82 million in purses with an 18.6% winning rate.

Don Von Hemel, 74, has amassed 2,363 career victories in a training career that began in 1956 in western Kansas. He won or tied for the leading trainer title at Ak-Sar-Ben six times in eight years from 1987-94, and was inducted into the Nebraska Racing Hall of Fame. In 1984, his Win Stat set an American dirt record of 1:38 $\frac{2}{5}$  at a mile and 70 yards at Oaklawn.

Donnie, 47, has won 1,684 races and holds many of the training records at Remington Park, where he is a member of that track's hall of fame. He started training in 1984 and ascended quickly with the success of runners such as grade I winner Clever Trevor and multiple stakes winner Explosive Girl. He has maintained a steady stream of stakes winners ever since, including millionaires Mr Ross and Bien Nicole, plus graded stakes winners Going Ballistic, Brownie Points, Bedanken, See How She Runs, and Evansville Slew.

He and Don took turns overseeing Mariah's Storm, who won 10 of 16 races and upset eventual champion Serena's Song in the 1995 Turfway Park Budweiser Breeders' Cup (gr. II).

Kelly, 43, won his 1,000th race in 2007 and has a 20.1% career winning rate. He is based at Prairie Meadows, where he holds the record for most stakes victories by a trainer. His runners have included Miss Macy Sue, third in the 2007 Breeders' Cup Filly & Mare Sprint; the aforementioned Semaphore Man; and Sure Shot Biscuit, the only Iowa-bred to win more than \$1 million.

"My dad is an excellent horseman and so is my brother," Kelly said. "Just growing up with Dad and watching him operate and how he does things day-to-day, you can't put a price tag on that. I couldn't have had a better teacher."

The Von Hemels' start came in Manter, Kan., a town of 250. Don's father worked for rancher Guy Roric, and Don started helping with chores at the ranch at age 9 in 1943. By age 12, he was starting to groom and gallop horses. He began training for Roric in 1956 and did so until 1968, when he started his own stable.

"I was just making a monthly wage, and there was more month left at the end of the money," Von Hemel said. "That's when I decided to get out on my own and give it a try."

"There were a lot of times when I didn't know if I could make a living at it, but I loved it enough that I was willing to give it a hard try."

Beginning with four horses, including two maidens, at Sunland Park, Von Hemel did his own grooming and galloping. He struggled for two years before he started winning and attracting the attention of owners, who gave him more horses.

## The Von Hemels

Trainer	Starts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earnings
Don Von Hemel	13,903	2,363	1,926	1,794	\$27,173,812
Donnie K. Von Hemel	8,317	1,684	1,336	1,219	\$36,779,795
Kelly Von Hemel	5,376	1,086	803	767	\$18,245,661

Through Oct. 29, 2008

During the school year, Roylynn would be at home in Manter with Donnie, Kelly, and daughter Pam, now a speech pathologist in Omaha. When he could, Don flew home to catch one of his children's athletic events, even though the nearest airport was 80 miles away.

"He did that several times," Donnie said. "You always wanted to do well, of course, but when he was there, you wanted to do extra well. It made you appreciate that he made the effort to get there."

In the summer, the family would join Don at whatever track he was at.

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**Also Standing: El Nino, Evil Minister, Saf, Saintly Look**

# 2008 Leading Sires in Canada

State sire lists updated daily online.  
Go to <http://breeding.bloodhorse.com/sirelists.asp>

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in Canada (exported stallions are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through November 5, 2008. As supplied to The Blood-Horse by The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., earnings exclude monies from Japan and Hong Kong. \*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	2009 Stud Fee Can\$	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2008 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	<b>BOLD EXECUTIVE</b> (84, Bold Ruckus), Gardiner Farms	\$15,000	134/63	6/9	3/6	(Legal Move, \$364,339)	<b>\$3,998,490</b>	614	38	1.73	1.36
2	<b>GILDED TIME</b> (90, Timeless Moment), Bar None Ranches	\$7,500	165/89	3/4	1/3	(Gayego, \$687,820)	<b>\$3,502,753</b>	*1013	46	1.43	1.80
3	<b>TRAJECTORY</b> (97, Gone West), Gardiner Farms	\$5,000	87/45	6/8	5/6	(Dancer's Bajan, \$202,396)	<b>\$2,599,586</b>	187	9	1.45	1.38
4	<b>CAPE CANAVERAL</b> (96, Mr. Prospector), Highfield Stock Farm	\$7,500	118/60	3/4	2/3	(Cape Time, \$136,602)	<b>\$1,948,065</b>	279	15	1.34	1.43
5	<b>MAZEL TRICK</b> (95, Phone Trick), Canmor Farms	\$3,500	106/52	1/2	0/1	(Ride Em Cowgirl, \$171,016)	<b>\$1,613,267</b>	*317	9	1.21	1.61

\*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.

# 2008 Leading Sires in Indiana

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								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	<b>WILD ZONE</b> (90, Wild Again), Breakway Farm	\$3,000	73/24	1/2	0/1	(Tortuga Flats, \$170,960)	<b>\$678,656</b>	*421	12	0.84	1.13
2	<b>CROWN AMBASSADOR</b> (94, Storm Cat)	Pnsd	49/20	0/0	0/0	(Deal Me Aces, \$49,442)	<b>\$428,219</b>	151	10	0.87	0.97
3	<b>CENTURY CITY</b> (IRE) (99, Danzig), Breakway Farm	\$2,500	34/15	0/0	0/0	(Joannie Not Jo, \$67,604)	<b>\$369,355</b>	*95	0	0.60	1.56
4	<b>BLACK MOONSHINE</b> (87, Mt. Livermore)	N/A	22/15	1/1	1/1	(Brean Can, \$55,440)	<b>\$356,259</b>	67	3	0.93	0.79
5	<b>MORO ORO</b> (93, Moro), L/J Sorrell Farm	\$1,000	36/14	0/0	0/0	(Brass Bolt, \$47,635)	<b>\$321,352</b>	86	2	0.69	0.76

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## MICHIGAN LEADERS

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Line-bred to Leading Sire **NORTHERN DANCER**.

Family of Travers S.-G1 winner **UNSHADED**.

### MEADOW PRAYER

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#1 Sire by Michigan-Bred Earnings

#1 Sire by 2008 SWs, incl. **MEADOW VESPER** (\$430,918),

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"The boys started walking hot around the barn and then turned to rubbing horses and exercising horses," Don said. "They were pretty attentive all the way along."

"They showed a passion. They were ready to go to work in the morning, and a lot of times they'd work into the night."

As Donnie and Kelly got older, their parents told them to go to college, get their degrees, and then decide if they wanted to train. When Donnie graduated in accounting and took his CPA exam, Don and Roylynn thought their son was headed for a 9-to-5 job.

They were in for a surprise.

"It wasn't that close (of a decision)," Donnie said. "I did everything I was supposed to in school, but I was ready to give the track a try when I got out."

"Explosive Girl was probably the first real good horse I had a chance to go with, then 'Clever' was the first national horse I ever had. They give you a chance, and you have to make something of your chances."

Explosive Girl earned eight stakes victories between 1987 and 1989, and banked \$467,592 for her career, which included 15 victories, 10 seconds, and five thirds in 40 starts. Clever Trevor, a Slewacide gelding, earned \$1,388,841, winning half of his 30 lifetime starts, including a victory in the 1989 Arlington Classic (gr. I), one of nine stakes wins in his career. He ran unplaced behind Sunday Silence in the 1989 Kentucky Derby (gr. I).

Kelly followed a different script. He attended Bethel College in Kansas as a freshman, where he played football, but quit after a semester. With prodding from his parents, he tried another college, but left in 1985 to help his father at the racetrack.

"We tried to keep him in," Don Von Hemel said. "He just wasn't satisfied."

"When he came out of school and started to work, I made it as hard on him as I could. If he could keep his nose to the grindstone with me after him all the time, I knew that's what he wanted to do."

Don gave Kelly 10 horses to train at Fonner Park, and in 1986, Kelly won 30 of 86 races.

# 2008 Leading Sires in Ohio

State sire lists updated daily online.  
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For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in Ohio (exported stallions are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through November 5, 2008. As supplied to The Blood-Horse by The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., earnings exclude monies from Japan and Hong Kong. \*Foal counts include Southern Hemisphere. Cumulative stakes winners includes all countries. (A ¶ indicates a sire represented by his first crop to race).

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								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	MERCER MILL (94, Forty Niner), Fair Winds Farm	N/A	75/37	1/1	1/1	(J'espere, \$73,201)	\$667,694	185	11	0.68	0.88
2	GOLD MARKET (96, Seeking the Gold), Fair Winds Farm	N/A	29/18	0/0	0/0	(Indian Ink, \$29,206)	\$287,136	65	2	0.64	0.75
3	NOBLE CAT (95, Storm Cat)	Died, 2003	13/5	1/4	1/1	(Catlaunch, \$164,845)	\$247,943	68	4	0.92	0.86
4	PART THE WATERS (94, Stalwart), Rocky Valley Training Center	N/A	11/7	3/3	3/3	(Part Girlie Girl, \$68,235)	\$212,807	22	3	0.93	0.78
5	ACADEMY AWARD (86, Secretariat), Win Row Farm	N/A	29/11	0/0	0/0	(Award Yu, \$15,378)	\$110,665	*381	9	0.82	1.01
6	KING TUTTA (00, A.P. Indy), Double D Farm	N/A	15/5	0/0	0/0	(Tuts Queen, \$31,824)	\$108,458	23	0	0.37	0.75
7	KEEP IT DOWN (82, Native Uproar)	N/A	12/6	0/0	0/0	(Kid's Prize, \$18,780)	\$105,028	46	3	0.71	0.77
8	MAHOGANY HALL (91, Woodman), OSU Agricultural Tech Institute	N/A	23/2	0/0	0/0	(Ramblin Mike, \$33,962)	\$83,075	*144	2	0.77	0.98
9	PRIDE OF BURKAAN (90, Burkaan)	Pnsd	10/5	0/0	0/0	(Burky's Pride, \$22,675)	\$81,489	43	0	0.47	0.56
10	PRIVATE SCHOOL (87, Bates Motel)	Died, 2007	8/4	0/0	0/0	(Diamond Lass, \$30,940)	\$81,357	116	1	0.52	0.83

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# 2008 Leading Sires in Michigan

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								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	SERVICE STRIPE (91, Deputy Minister), Belair Farm	\$2,000	104/60	1/1	1/1	(Field Commission, \$211,117)	\$1,836,241	290	14	1.34	1.15
2	SYNCLINE (97, Danzig), McMaster Farm	\$1,500	32/13	1/4	0/1	(Sugar Bay, \$528,359)	\$827,158	64	1	1.07	0.99
3	THE DEPUTY (IRE) (97, Petardia), Hubel Farms	N/A	79/36	1/1	0/1	(Ruffaroundtheedges, \$105,500)	\$765,617	160	4	0.60	1.03
4	DEMALOOT DEMASHOOT (90, Bold Ruckus), McMaster Farm	\$2,500	66/28	1/3	1/1	(Valley Loot, \$140,043)	\$630,206	284	9	0.97	1.10
5	MEADOW PRAYER (95, Meadowlake), Arnold Farms	\$1,500	23/13	4/4	3/4	(Bucky's Prayer, \$94,575)	\$475,415	60	6	1.27	0.79
6	MATCHLITE (83, Clever Trick)	Died	26/15	2/2	2/2	(It's a Ego Thing, \$75,581)	\$387,765	241	19	0.92	0.89
7	NATIVE FACTOR (87, Foolish Pleasure), Arnold Farms	\$2,500	37/25	0/0	0/0	(Dublin Dutchess, \$46,080)	\$363,069	156	6	0.77	0.77
8	EQUALITY (99, Mt. Livermore), Dickinson Farms	\$1,500	21/14	3/3	3/3	(Bipolar Express, \$103,200)	\$355,004	48	4	1.16	0.86
9	DAYLIGHT SAVINGS (94, Sky Classic), Stonewood Farm	\$2,500	19/14	1/1	1/1	(Hot Chili, \$59,987)	\$276,811	42	2	1.19	0.92
10	ELUSIVE HOUR (00, Elusive Quality)	N/A	9/9	1/3	1/1	(Mr. Conclusive, \$123,052)	\$231,632	16	1	1.32	0.62

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### SYNCLINE

Danzig—Annie Edge (Ire), by Nebbilo

### #2 Leading MI Sire by 2008 Earnings

Sire of 2008 MSW SUGAR BAY (\$542,820), one of Canada's leading 3-year-old fillies and winner of 4 consecutive \$150,000 stakes on synthetic and turf at Woodbine! By sire of sires DANZIG and a half-brother to SELKIRK, leading sire of 72 SWs (12% from starters). Fee: \$1,500 LFSN

### DEMALOOT DEMASHOOT

Bold Ruckus—Trouble Free, by Nodouble

### #1 Leading Dirt Sire of MI Breds by Earnings

With lifetime earnings of nearly \$11M+ and 22 SHs, including leading earner and G1 SW TRICKEY TREVOR (G2, \$701,224), plus 2007-2008 Michigan Horse of the Year VALLEY LOOT (\$420,210, 11 wins in 17 career starts) and 2yo SP Sheza Riot (3rd \$50,000 Sickle's Image S.). Fee: \$2,500 LFSN

Also Standing:

#### Perfect Circle

Unbred—Missed the Storm, by Storm Cat  
Fee: \$1,200 LFSN

#### Man From Eldorado

Mr. Prospector—Promising Girl, by Youth  
Fee: \$1,000 LFSN

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# 2008 Leading Sires in Minnesota

State sire lists updated daily online.  
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								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	<b>GOLD FEVER</b> (93, Forty Niner), Dove Hill Farm	\$2,850	70/30	1/1	0/1	(Hop Skip and Away, \$98,820)	<b>\$1,014,133</b>	*407	8	1.25	1.38
2	<b>APPEALING SKIER</b> (93, Baldski)	N/A	45/19	0/0	0/0	(Morethanclever, \$100,700)	<b>\$685,663</b>	228	5	0.98	1.12
3	<b>DEMIDOFF</b> (90, Mr. Prospector), Cross Creek Farm	\$3,000	52/27	3/6	2/3	(Silver Stairs, \$111,982)	<b>\$661,272</b>	203	19	1.08	0.86
4	<b>GHAZI</b> (89, Polish Navy), Boehlke Farm	N/A	68/25	1/1	0/1	(King Jock, \$122,858)	<b>\$528,536</b>	395	18	1.02	1.33
5	<b>SHOT OF GOLD</b> (95, Jolie's Halo), Dove Hill Farm	\$1,200	33/17	0/0	0/0	(Shot of Silver, \$58,808)	<b>\$326,625</b>	63	0	0.54	0.76
6	<b>SUPREMO</b> (92, Gone West)	N/A	19/7	1/1	1/1	(Happy Henrietta, \$68,251)	<b>\$283,391</b>	*399	6	0.78	1.18
7	<b>SEATTLE SYN</b> (98, Seattle Slew), Roger & Jacqueline Lambert	N/A	7/2	2/2	2/2	(Cool Ventura, \$148,236)	<b>\$230,415</b>	20	3	1.05	0.62
8	<b>MOCHA EXPRESS</b> (94, Java Gold), Epona Farm	\$1,500	22/6	0/0	0/0	(Saygoodnightgracie, \$52,697)	<b>\$187,125</b>	66	0	0.44	0.67
9	<b>TAHKODHA HILLS</b> (97, Prospector's Halo), Timberlake Stable	\$1,000	17/4	0/0	0/0	(Hills of Roses, \$25,837)	<b>\$101,388</b>	40	0	0.40	0.44
10	<b>KYLE'S OUR MAN</b> (88, In Reality)	N/A	16/5	0/0	0/0	(Mr. Inquisitive, \$24,425)	<b>\$100,086</b>	*284	8	0.73	0.96

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Rank	Stallion (Foaling Year, Sire), Farm Standing	2009 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2008 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	<b>PIKEPASS</b> (96, Forty Niner), Madison County Thoroughbreds	\$2,000	94/49	0/0	0/0	(He's No Piker, \$40,597)	<b>\$993,236</b>	200	2	0.76	0.97
2	<b>KING OF SCAT</b> (96, Eastern Echo), Special K Stables	N/A	69/36	1/1	1/1	(C C Tat, \$79,690)	<b>\$769,806</b>	134	9	0.81	0.72
3	<b>WILD GOLD</b> (90, Wild Again), Madison County Thoroughbreds	\$2,000	35/20	0/0	0/0	(R R Gold, \$43,916)	<b>\$534,601</b>	180	4	0.85	0.89
4	<b>VALLEY CROSSING</b> (88, Private Account)	Died, 2004	35/10	0/0	0/0	(Brucker's Brother, \$93,201)	<b>\$338,994</b>	315	15	1.07	1.38
5	<b>WILLIAMSTOWN</b> (90, Seattle Slew)	Pnsd	24/11	0/0	0/0	(Will Never Bend, \$87,444)	<b>\$272,189</b>	345	15	1.09	1.39
6	<b>WINTER GLITTER</b> (97, A.P. Indy), Lee Marie Farm	\$1,750	15/6	0/0	0/0	(Spirit of Winter, \$69,525)	<b>\$233,454</b>	39	0	0.78	0.77
7	<b>DIGNITAS</b> (89, In Reality)	N/A	21/11	1/1	1/1	(C J Ramrod, \$39,138)	<b>\$218,058</b>	168	3	0.84	0.96
8	<b>INDIAN TERRITORY</b> (98, Carson City), Special K Stables	N/A	12/8	0/0	0/0	(Indianpass, \$97,055)	<b>\$200,424</b>	31	0	0.77	1.00
9	<b>TIGER TALK</b> (93, Phone Trick), Green Mountain Farm	N/A	13/6	0/0	0/0	(Soft Purr, \$102,948)	<b>\$194,806</b>	41	0	0.56	0.77
10	<b>HUMMING</b> (96, Summer Squall), Rockin River Ranch	N/A	27/7	0/0	0/0	(Diginandrun, \$52,215)	<b>\$182,594</b>	46	1	0.69	0.88

\*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.



## Love For Sale!

Stallion Service Auction  
January 16, 2009

*Do you have Love to give?*

Stallion seasons are being accepted until December 31st! Call the MTA office to find out how your stallion's season can be donated!

*Are you looking for Love?*

A current listing of stallion seasons donated is available at [www.mtassoc.com](http://www.mtassoc.com)! We offer live phone bidding during our auction! You can buy your love long-distance!

*Minnesota Thoroughbred Association*

952.496.3770 ♥ [mtassoc@voyager.net](mailto:mtassoc@voyager.net) ♥ [www.mtassoc.com](http://www.mtassoc.com)

"He had horses that needed to be worked on," Don said. "They needed their ankles worked on. They needed hosing, and rubbing and icing. You had to get them ready to run."

Kelly showed a lot of the same traits as Don.

"He is patient," said Jason Loutsch, who owns Miss Macy Sue with his father-in-law, Dennis Albaugh. "If the horses aren't ready, they don't run. He's not in a hurry. When they're not ready, they don't run."

"When Macy was 2, she was just a speed bullet. He worked so hard on getting her to settle down, and it paid off."

Miss Macy Sue, by Trippi, is a six-time stakes winner, including a victory in the 2007 Winning Colors Stakes (gr. III) at Churchill Downs. She also won that year's Presque Isle Downs Master Stakes, and has come back this year to finish second in both of those races. She has also won the Saylorville Stakes two consecutive years. Miss Macy Sue has banked \$880,915 to date.

Semaphore Man, also trained by Kelly, is a Formal Gold gelding with three stakes wins and nearly \$400,000 in earnings to

# 2008 Leading Sires in Illinois

State sire lists updated daily online.  
Go to <http://breeding.bloodhorse.com/sirelists.asp>

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in Illinois (exported stallions are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through November 5, 2008. As supplied to The Blood-Horse by The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., earnings exclude monies from Japan and Hong Kong. \*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	2009 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2008 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	CARTWRIGHT (90, Forty Niner)	Died, 2005	102/48	0/0	0/0	(Carts Italian Rose, \$47,205)	\$935,992	*437	16	0.92	0.85
2	FRIENDLY LOVER (88, Cutlass), Fairberry Farm	N/A	78/34	0/0	0/0	(Hands On, \$64,926)	\$874,738	433	11	1.11	1.11
3	UNREAL ZEAL (80, Mr. Prospector)	Died, 2006	69/40	0/0	0/0	(Unreal Rocket, \$92,809)	\$851,465	593	29	1.12	1.19
4	CALLER I. D. (89, Phone Trick)	Died, 2006	53/20	1/1	1/1	(Big City Pat, \$102,160)	\$765,061	*507	21	0.98	1.40
5	DEPUTY WILD CAT (99, Deputy Minister), Fairberry Farm	\$2,500	25/14	1/1	0/1	(Screen to Screen, \$232,960)	\$702,892	40	1	1.44	1.05

\*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.

# 2008 Leading Sires in North Dakota

State sire lists updated daily online.  
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For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in North Dakota (exported stallions are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through November 5, 2008. As supplied to The Blood-Horse by The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., earnings exclude monies from Japan and Hong Kong. \*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	2009 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2008 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	CATEGORY FIVE (95, Storm Cat), Mesa Farms	\$3,500	22/12	0/0	0/0	(Edgerrin, \$88,230)	\$233,380	100	2	0.77	0.65
2	CORPORATE REPORT (88, Private Account), Erfle Thoroughbreds	N/A	12/5	0/0	0/0	(Helen's the One, \$71,710)	\$166,993	369	4	0.91	1.25
3	CODY KEY (89, Corridor Key)	Died, 2006	10/8	1/1	1/1	(Heavens Work, \$13,516)	\$55,041	46	2	0.23	0.51
4	PATRIOT STRIKE (89, General Assembly)	N/A	9/2	1/1	1/1	(Patriot Luck, \$7,661)	\$24,205	40	6	0.35	0.36
5	AFERD (76, Hoist the Flag)	Died, 2001	2/2	1/1	0/1	(Double Bid, \$12,411)	\$24,101	311	26	0.82	0.58

\*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.

date. Sure Shot Biscuit earned a million the hard way. In 54 starts, he recorded 23 victories, 10 seconds, and 11 thirds, and won 13 stakes events between 1999 and 2001. He registered \$1,025,480 in purses

for his career.

The three Von Hemels are together each spring at Oaklawn in Hot Springs, where Don and Roylynn now live.

In the last decade, Don has been treated

for prostate cancer, had a hip replaced, and has a breathing problem, but he has no plans for retiring. When Oaklawn opens in January, he'll be back at the barn.

"I'll still be able to tell people what to do," he joked. "Overall, I'm doing pretty well."

If it's one thing Don has been over the years, it is steady. Like clockwork each morning, after training is over and entries are drawn, he can be found playing cards in the rec room.

He said his favorite memory after more than a half-century at the track hasn't come from the horses he has trained.

"I guess the highlight of my career is seeing those boys compete at the level they're competing at and having the success they're having," Von Hemel said. "Those are the things that make you proud." □



The Von Hemel family: from left, Pam, Kelly, Don, Roylynn, Donnie, and Robin



## 2009 NDTA Stallion Season Auction Online Bidding

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COURTESY DON VON HEMEL