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Strong Case

*Questroyal North's Barry Ostrager
having a year to remember*

BY STEVE HASKIN

If it's New York, if it's news, you can bet Barry Ostrager is right in the center of it. Ostrager, one of the leading figures in the New York breeding industry for many years, has had a breakthrough year in 2012, becoming heavily involved in almost every major aspect of the sport from racing and breeding to politics.

In January the 59-year-old native of the Bronx, N.Y., was re-elected president of the New York Thoroughbred Breeders to go along with his position as a member of the New York Racing Association board of directors.

The following month Ostrager, who had leased Questroyal Stud in Hudson, N.Y., until the lease expired, purchased the 265-acre Sez Who Farm near Stillwater, N.Y., near the shores of Saratoga Lake, naming it Questroyal North. He immediately shipped three stallions to the new farm—Roaring Fever, Patriot Act, and El Corredor, who has been recently relocated to New York from Kentucky. Ostrager kept 75%



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Questroyal North near Stillwater, N.Y., boasts 265 acres for Thoroughbreds; above, Barry Ostrager

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2012 Leading Sires in New York

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 New York (exported stallions are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through October 29, 2012. 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/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2012 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	*A-E Index	*Comp Index
1	POSSE (00, Silver Deputy), Vinery New York at Sugar Maple	\$10,000	182/98	4/5	3/4	(Caleb's Posse, \$270,000)	\$4,256,419	*443	17	1.46	1.38
2	BLUEGRASS CAT (03, Storm Cat), Vinery New York at Sugar Maple	\$17,500	168/90	5/7	2/5	(Teeth of the Dog, \$410,900)	\$3,662,287	*288	10	1.42	2.15
3	FREUD (98, Storm Cat), Sequel Stallions New York	\$10,000	122/58	5/9	3/5	(Hessonite, \$441,000)	\$3,231,270	399	30	1.76	1.26
4	TOUCH GOLD (94, Deputy Minister), Adena Springs at McMahon of Saratoga	\$10,000	149/76	1/1	0/1	(Quiet Man, \$93,235)	\$1,790,335	*778	31	1.30	2.01
5	UTOPIA (JPN) (00, Forty Niner), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds	\$2,500	74/32	3/5	3/3	(Matchmadeinheaven, \$180,592)	\$1,700,224	134	3	1.03	1.35
6	CONGAREE (98, Arazi), Highcliff @ Mill Creek Farm	\$7,500	86/45	1/1	0/1	(Jeranimo, \$282,000)	\$1,549,594	*259	11	1.40	1.50
7	SILENT NAME (JPN) (02, Sunday Silence), Adena Springs at McMahon of Saratoga	\$5,000	55/24	2/2	1/2	(Silent Serenity, \$150,767)	\$1,466,543	*108	2	1.25	1.32
8	ALPHABET SOUP (91, Cozzene), Adena Springs at McMahon of Saratoga	\$6,000	128/49	1/1	0/1	(Alpha Bettor, \$173,010)	\$1,427,030	*765	44	1.27	1.26
9	CATIENUS (94, Storm Cat), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds	\$5,000	115/59	3/3	1/3	(Jolienne, \$93,370)	\$1,373,287	*489	26	1.22	1.29
10	GOLDEN MISSILE (95, A.P. Indy), Milfer Farm	\$5,000	92/41	0/0	0/0	(L.A. Girl, \$111,770)	\$1,285,687	*584	15	1.08	1.61
11	ROARING FEVER (00, Storm Cat), Dutchess Views Farm	\$3,500	62/26	1/1	0/1	(Elsarorin, \$94,963)	\$1,100,910	155	5	1.26	1.00
12	DISCO RICO (97, Citidancer), Keane Stud Operations	\$5,000	64/30	1/1	1/1	(Dr Disco, \$78,850)	\$1,029,558	222	8	1.34	1.24
13	RAFFIE'S MAJESTY (95, Cormorant)	\$3,000	37/19	0/0	0/0	(Majestic Raffy, \$105,163)	\$721,281	*165	11	1.52	1.14
14	SAY FLORIDA SANDY (94, Personal Flag), Buckridge Farm	\$2,500	51/24	0/0	0/0	(Say Mr. Sandman, \$71,840)	\$685,061	*180	1	0.83	1.14
15	GREELEY'S GALAXY (02, Mr. Greeley), Sugar Maple Farm	\$3,000	36/19	0/0	0/0	(Verbosity, \$71,036)	\$663,517	71	0	0.78	1.24
16	CONGRESSIONALHONOR (01, Forestry), Sandy Way Farm	\$2,500	43/12	0/0	0/0	(Previous Honor, \$114,285)	\$596,958	147	0	0.62	0.95
17	SUNRIVER (03, Saint Ballado)	Died, 2009	43/16	1/1	1/1	(I Bet Toni Knows, \$98,980)	\$589,614	100	2	1.44	1.43
18	ANDROMEDA'S HERO (02, Fusaichi Pegasus), Dutchess Views Farm	\$2,500	36/14	2/2	2/2	(Tequila Hero, \$89,425)	\$518,990	64	2	0.63	1.08
19	ELTISH (92, Cox's Ridge), Mole's Hill Farm	Died, 2012	38/12	0/0	0/0	(Private Counsel, \$63,511)	\$504,528	299	13	1.22	1.30
20	GOLD TOKEN (93, Mr. Prospector)	Died, 2006	19/11	1/2	0/1	(Inherit the Gold, \$111,300)	\$499,868	*281	10	1.36	1.14
21	FI FROST GIANT (03, Giant's Causeway), Vinery New York at Sugar Maple	\$5,000	12/7	1/1	1/1	(West Hills Giant, \$192,153)	\$490,478	*31	1	1.14	1.24
22	PERUVIAN (92, Conquistador Cielo)	N/A	5/1	1/4	1/1	(Saginaw, \$414,650)	\$446,563	85	2	0.90	0.85
23	WILD DESERT (02, Wild Rush), Unbridled Racing Stable	\$3,000	31/8	1/2	1/1	(Sunny Desert, \$200,000)	\$425,692	69	1	0.74	1.09
24	HERE'S ZEALOUS (97, Dehere), Kaz Hill Farm	\$3,000	42/15	0/0	0/0	(Catch Me Kaz, \$81,450)	\$422,405	99	0	0.62	0.93
25	ONE NICE CAT (00, Storm Cat), Keane Stud Operations	\$1,000	33/15	0/0	0/0	(Papa's Nice Cat, \$58,650)	\$394,227	84	0	0.80	1.08
26	STONESIDER (03, Giant's Causeway), Highcliff @ Mill Creek Farm	\$3,000	27/10	0/0	0/0	(Goodtime Boy, \$62,374)	\$378,295	79	0	0.62	1.18
27	A. P. JET (89, Fappiano)	Died, 2010	21/9	0/0	0/0	(Strong Impact, \$144,875)	\$331,918	451	15	1.15	1.27
28	PATRIOT ACT (02, A.P. Indy), Dutchess Views Farm	\$3,500	24/10	0/0	0/0	(Bedda Regina, \$40,754)	\$285,967	*58	0	0.80	1.01
29	MAYBRY'S BOY (99, Broad Brush), Highcliff @ Mill Creek Farm	\$2,500	6/3	1/1	1/1	(Sportswriter, \$196,184)	\$253,305	9	1	2.60	2.03
30	REGAL CLASSIC (85, Vice Regent)	Pnsd	16/10	0/0	0/0	(System Restore, \$49,950)	\$204,262	*961	44	1.40	1.50

*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.

interest in the farm, with longtime New York breeder Gus Schoenborn Jr. controlling the remaining 25%.

Ostrager said the purchase of the farm was due mainly to the addition of slots in New York, which resulted in richer purses and state breeding awards.

In May, Ostrager, the head litigator with the law firm of Simpson, Thacher, and Bartlett, filed papers in New York Supreme Court calling for the dismissal of a lawsuit filed by the state Attorney General seeking the removal of the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation board due to a series of "financially irresponsible transactions" and other allegations.

In August, Ostrager was elected to NYRA's board of trustees. NYRA board chairman Steve Duncker said of the appointment, "(Barry) brings a brilliant legal mind to the board and passion as a Thoroughbred racing fan, horse owner, significant breeder, and stallion manager."

That same month Ostrager was elected as a member of The Jockey Club. But his remarkable year wasn't over yet.

In October he joined New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's newly formed New York Racing Association Reorganization Board as one of five NYRA appointees.

On the breeding front, Gitchee Goomie,

whom Ostrager bred, captured the Mount Vernon Stakes at Belmont and the Dr. James Penny Memorial Handicap (gr. IIIT) at Parx Racing to go along with her previous stakes victories in the 2011 Yaddo and Mount Vernon stakes, and 2010 Topicount Stakes. He even bred a Rillito Park stakes winner when Little Dude won the Paloma Stakes for the second year in a row.

Ostrager was a typical New York City street kid growing up and has used his street savvy in building a successful career.

"I'm a boy from the boroughs," he said. "When I was in college, I was a stringer for the New York Post and the New York Times and the old *Morning Telegraph* (Eastern and main edition of the *Daily Racing Form*). Working at the *Telly* was just a job to help pay for my education. I didn't become interested in racing until later on. I went to City College and ultimately New York University Law School. While at the *Telegraph*, I got to be very friendly with one of their top columnists, Barney Nagler.

"Barney introduced me to numerous people involved in Thoroughbred racing and breeding, and he became a very good friend of mine. That's when I got the bug. Barney was very fond of my wife (of 40 years), Pamela, and we would have din-

ner from time to time. Barney wrote a couple of columns about us and our early involvement with claiming horses. When I joined my law firm, I represented Madison Square Garden, and by serendipitous circumstances I was doing legal work for MSG boxing, which was run by a Runyonesque character named Teddy Brenner, who was a close friend of Barney Nagler's, as was Lenny Goodman, who was Braulio Baeza's agent. These were the characters I spent most of my time with, so I just had a wonderful time my first 10 years following my employment at the *Telly* to my early legal career."

As Ostrager's law career flourished, he was able to become more heavily involved in racing.

"These were very heady times for me, and it sort of cemented my interest in Thoroughbred racing and breeding," Ostrager said. "As I became financially capable of participating in the sport, I became more involved. I've been delighted to be able to participate in the organizations I've been involved with and run a major breeding operation."

Ostrager first made a name for himself managing the stallion careers of Belong to Me and dual classic winner Hansel, and selling the dams of Haskell Invitational

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In addition to El Corredor, Patriot Act, and Roaring Fever, Ostrager has been involved in active negotiations to expand the stallion roster and is confident there will be additional stallions standing at Questroyal North in 2013. But for now he takes particular pride in El Corredor, a grade I winner for trainer Bob Baffert.

"He's a wonderful stallion and has sired more grade I stakes winners than any stallion standing in New York," Ostrager said. "This year he's had four 3-year-old stakes winners, and has 82 yearlings turning 2 for 2013, so breeders are going to have an excellent opportunity to see a lot of El Corredors in the entries and the winner's circle.

"Syndicates are going to recognize that with the substantial influx of mares in New York and the lucrative purse structure and breeding and stallion awards for state-breds, it was a no-brainer to take a horse like El Corredor and stand him in New York, where he's going to get 100-plus mares. Every mare that foals in New York will generate progeny that has the potential to earn 10% stallion awards for the El Corredor syndicate."

As for *Belong to Me* and *Hansel*, Ostrager said, "We were fortunate to launch the stud career of *Belong to Me* before we sold him to Lane's End. We stood *Hansel* at various points and also stood *Gold Fever* and *Gold Token*, who did very well in New York."

Now that he has his own farm, Ostrager is in the process of making a number of renovations to the property, which has 200 acres of fenced paddocks, 120 stalls, and a six-stall stallion barn. In addition to his three stallions, he has eight mares on the farm.

"A lot of the farm was in disrepair, and we've spent months repairing and upgrading it," Ostrager said. "I have operated farms in New York in the past as a lessee. I leased Questroyal Stud. When the lease expired, a different entity known as Empire Stud assumed the lease, and I moved the stallions elsewhere. Now we are operating as Questroyal North, which I own. It is the holding company that manages the stallions."

Ostrager felt this was the perfect time to invest in his own farm.

"I am quite convinced the governor is going to support the New York State breeding industry because it is an important economic engine that creates jobs and expands the state economy," Ostrager said. "I thought this was the time to double down on my Thoroughbred breeding interests. And I was attracted to this particular property because the prior operator of the farm, Richard Simon, was the leading breeder in

New York for five of the nine years that he operated it. It's a good place to breed and raise horses."

Ostrager's partner, Schoenborn, was the operator of Contemporary Farm for 25 years, and his most notable accomplishment was organizing the syndicate that stood City Zip before the stallion was moved to Lane's End.

Ostrager has raced about a half-dozen



Questroyal North is home for three stallions in 2013

stakes winners and still keeps several horses in training with Bruce Levine and Linda Rice. Although he sold *Gitchee Goomie* as a weanling, he still owns the dam and has a yearling full sister to the horse. They also have four City Zip weanlings, all out of stakes mares.

On the political side Ostrager is thrilled to be part of the new NYRA board.

"It's an excellent board," he said. "It's quite diverse, and while there are a significant amount of people with prior NYRA associations on the board, all of those people are enormously successful in multiple endeavors outside of racing. The 17 people on the board really do bring a mix of talents and experiences to the management of NYRA. I think NYRA was moving in a positive trajectory notwithstanding all the historic criticism. But I'm optimistic that things will continue to get better. We're all excited to put any past issues behind us and move forward."

The one negative experience he's had this year has been dealing (on a pro bono basis) with the lawsuit against the TRF board, which he calls a "shocking case of misguided regulators knowingly and in-

entionally making false allegations that would constitute actionable libel if the allegations were not contained in a complaint. The complaint should be dismissed and an inquiry conducted as to how such a misallocation of governmental resources has been permitted to move forward into the courts in this state."

He added, "These are honest, dedicated people who are being persecuted by the attorney general's office for no good reason. I think it ultimately will end well because it would be the right result."

Ostrager has three accomplished daughters and adopted twin siblings, and it is his oldest daughter, Annie, 29, who appears to be following in his footsteps in law and in racing.

"She was a barn rat," he said. "She worked on the backstretch for Bruce Levine from the time she was 11, then graduated to showing yearlings at the Fasig-Tipton yearling sales at Saratoga, working for Craig Bendoroff and Tom Gallo. While at Princeton University, she spent a couple of summers showing yearlings. She's a lawyer at Sullivan and Cromwell but still absolutely loves horses. Of my three daughters, she's the one who wants to be involved in racing long term.

"When she graduated law school, she was fortunate enough to get a federal judicial clerkship with the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals judge, whose chambers were near Finger Lakes and she lived on a horse farm for a year. I always thought she would become a veterinarian, but instead she became a lawyer."

Ostrager's 26-year-old daughter, Katie, is a graduate of Stanford University and was with Teach for America for four years before going back to graduate school to get her Ph.D. in psychology. His 23-year-old daughter, Jane, like Annie went to Princeton, and is completing her second year of a Princeton fellowship working in a Special Victims Unit of the New York District Attorney's office. She will be going to law school next fall.

"They all make me very proud," Ostrager said. "We adopted soon to be 14-year-old twins, a boy and a girl. We've been so fortunate we thought we'd give back a little bit."

Regardless of how accomplished Ostrager and his family are, and all the success he has had, he still is that kid from the Bronx who can look back fondly at a time in New York City that has long passed.

"I've been lucky in my life and done a lot of interesting things, but no matter how successful I've been practicing law and no matter how many billion-dollar cases I've been involved in that turned out well, I never had more fun than when I spent the better part of a decade with Barney Nagler and Teddy Brenner and their various subcultures," he said. "The stories they would tell were unbelievable. It was magic." 🐾