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Loose and Free

*Terry Gabriel instills teamwork
at Pelican State Thoroughbreds*

BY GARY McMILLEN

TERRY GABRIEL HAS mastered the art of deception. In his role of owner and manager of Pelican State Thoroughbreds, Gabriel is next to invisible. Hands thrust in his jacket pocket on a February morning, Gabriel steps between clusters of pine cones on the walking path from his two barns at the Folsom Training Center near Folsom, La., to the training track. At first glance Gabriel appears to be doing nothing. The reality is that nothing is being left undone.

Gabriel is a man who wears many hats, and they all seem to fit. With a surface effortlessness, he functions as a sales consignee, pinhooker, farm manager, trainer, and bloodstock agent. Gabriel does everything but change the oil in the tractors.

"This is a competitive business, and getting up early and working long hours is part of the drill," the 55-year-old said while inspecting a delivery of fresh alfalfa. "On a horse farm where you are breaking babies and going off to sales almost every week, you don't have time to be everywhere. At some point you have to hand it over to staff you can trust."

There are eight hands on the Pelican State Thoroughbreds' payroll. Two exercise riders, five groomers, and Gabriel's assistant Jeremy Duit.

"These are the people behind the scenes that do all the work and never get recognized," Gabriel explained. "They have been around horses most of their lives, and they don't need me standing over them telling them how to do their jobs. Everybody plays a critical role. My blacksmith, for instance, is more important than a brain surgeon."

Listening to Gabriel speak to the Hispanic groomers gives insight into his management style. Speaking in Spanish, Gabriel ends every sentence with "por favor" or "gracias." He points to a groom named Luis Rodriguez as an example of identifying talent.



Terry Gabriel, owner and manager of Pelican State Thoroughbreds

ALEXANDER BARKOFF PHOTOS

THE LANE'S END TEXAS STALLIONS FOR 2013

VALID EXPECTATIONS

Valid Appeal-Mepache
Fee: \$7,500 Live Foal

TOO MUCH BLING

Rubiano-Rose Colored Lady
Fee: \$4,000 Live Foal

GRASSHOPPER

Dixie Union-Grass Skirt
Fee: \$3,500 Live Foal

SING BABY SING

Unbridled's Song-Roll Over Baby
Fee: \$2,500 Live Foal

TOUCH TONE

Pick Up the Phone-Super Seniorita
Fee: \$1,500

SUPREME CAT

Hennessy-Sweet Little Lies
Fee: \$1,000



2013 LEADING SIRES IN TEXAS

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2013 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2013 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	TOO MUCH BLING (03, Rubiano), Lane's End Texas	\$4,000	26/9	1/1	1/1	(Texas Bling, \$61,200)	\$296,946	95	9	1.52	1.23
2	VALID EXPECTATIONS (93, Valid Appeal), Lane's End Texas	\$7,500	37/11	1/1	1/1	(Valentine Eddie, \$29,710)	\$229,040	606	43	1.26	1.19
3	MY GOLDEN SONG (03, Unbridled's Song), Valor Farm	\$2,000	19/9	2/2	2/2	(Triumph and Song, \$50,400)	\$219,597	62	4	1.08	1.14
4	ORATORY (02, Pulpit), Eureka Thoroughbred Farm	\$3,500	26/7	0/0	0/0	(Tujoes, \$52,682)	\$192,588	*147	2	1.31	1.17
5	EARLY FLYER (98, Gilded Time), Valor Farm	\$3,000	42/9	0/0	0/0	(Flyer's Spirit, \$16,493)	\$174,450	195	11	0.88	0.90
6	WIMBLEDON (01, Wild Rush), Valor Farm	\$1,500	15/4	1/2	1/1	(Worldventurer, \$80,500)	\$139,595	100	4	0.80	0.78
7	SCRIMSHAW (00, Gulch), Double S Thoroughbred Farm	\$1,500	20/6	0/0	0/0	(Nikaluk, \$26,400)	\$126,304	*167	3	1.07	0.92
8	UNCLE ABBIE (97, Kingmambo), Key Ranch	\$2,500	21/7	0/0	0/0	(Lillie Abbie, \$16,062)	\$105,378	191	5	0.67	0.64
9	SPECIAL RATE (00, Pulpit), Key Ranch	\$3,000	22/4	0/0	0/0	(Shezararebird, \$32,945)	\$93,848	106	1	0.68	0.52
10	PINE BLUFF (89, Danzig), Duncan 21 and Change Farm	N/A	11/4	0/0	0/0	(Up and Out of Site, \$28,380)	\$82,962	*579	35	1.52	1.62
11	DAY OF THE CAT (01, Storm Cat), Bradford Thoroughbred Farm	\$1,500	11/4	0/0	0/0	(Cat's Classy Rider, \$34,780)	\$79,281	59	0	0.62	0.77
12	GOT THE GOODS (01, Pulpit), R&R Farms	\$1,500	13/1	0/0	0/0	(Goods Gone West, \$64,200)	\$78,144	38	0	0.54	0.49
13	CITY STREET (99, Carson City), Bullard Farms	\$1,500	13/5	0/0	0/0	(Last Wager, \$16,953)	\$71,692	127	3	0.62	0.86
14	CAPTAIN COUNTDOWN (96, Relaunch), Double S Thoroughbred Farm	\$500	23/3	0/0	0/0	(Captain Buddy L, \$12,450)	\$71,302	169	1	0.56	0.68
15	SEEKING A HOME (98, Seeking the Gold), Rolling Oaks Farm	N/A	12/5	0/0	0/0	(Doc R U It, \$15,421)	\$65,499	117	4	0.83	0.80

2013 LEADING SIRES IN ARKANSAS

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2013 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2013 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	STORM AND A HALF (97, Storm Cat), McDowell Farm	\$1,500	55/13	1/1	1/1	(Hatter Nu Nu, \$50,540)	\$333,953	395	18	0.83	0.96
2	BRAHMS (97, Danzig), Trophy Club Training Center	\$2,000	51/13	1/1	1/1	(Sunbean, \$60,600)	\$281,833	*605	16	1.10	1.10
3	HESABULL (93, Dispersal), Lake Hamilton Equine Associates	\$500	24/8	0/0	0/0	(Terre Noire, \$18,510)	\$136,276	174	5	0.96	1.07
4	THE DADDY (02, Valid Expectations), Trophy Club Training Center	\$1,500	29/7	0/0	0/0	(Just Win Baby, \$33,850)	\$134,856	*111	1	1.02	1.27
5	PRIMARY SUSPECT (01, Hennessy), McDowell Farm	\$1,000	23/5	0/0	0/0	(Sashabye, \$42,400)	\$133,936	74	3	0.60	1.16
6	PORTOBELLO ROAD (04, Storm Cat), Anderson Farms	\$1,000	12/3	0/0	0/0	(Pistolpackinpenny, \$31,954)	\$90,551	44	0	0.65	1.06
7	TOP VENTURE (99, Storm Cat), Lost Lake Ranch	N/A	13/2	0/0	0/0	(Soldier's Courage, \$20,700)	\$77,545	90	0	0.71	0.91
8	PRODEST ROMEO (90, Proud Truth)	Died, 2009	20/3	0/0	0/0	(Proud Mandy, \$14,390)	\$70,619	183	7	0.95	1.13
9	CINNAMON CREEK (95, Darn That Alarm), Three Boys Stables, LLC	\$500	9/2	0/0	0/0	(Bikini Bella, \$35,400)	\$64,981	95	1	0.56	0.67
10	FATHER STEVE (99, Pulpit)	Died, 2012	24/3	0/0	0/0	(Arky Spring's, \$10,600)	\$59,289	108	0	0.55	0.75

Special Note For Sire Lists:

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in North America (stallions exported prior to the 2009 breeding season are excluded), and have runners in North America. All available statistics listed for the Northern Hemisphere through March 19, 2013. 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.)

*AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX and COMPARABLE INDEX: Lifetime AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX indicates how much purse money the progeny of one sire has earned 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; 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 AVERAGE-EARNINGS INDEX higher than their mares' COMPARABLE INDEX.

"This kid traveled to the sales with us and was always watching. He wanted to learn the art of showing horses. Now he is one of the best," Gabriel said. "He knows how the buyers want to see a horse stand, and his size is small so it makes the horse look bigger."

Pelican State Thoroughbreds is located on the outskirts of Folsom, which is a two-stoplight town in the rolling hill country north of Lake Pontchartrain. Unplug your GPS because it is not going to help you find the place. Secluded and shaded under a canopy of river ash and live oak trees, the last half-mile of unpaved red clay road leading into the farm delivers an immense atmosphere of quiet. It's a place that makes you roll your windows down and listen to the sounds of birds chirping. Not exactly urban sprawl, it is the preferred country property for Gabriel to break babies and train horses for the last 16 years.

Tranquility interrupted. Gabriel was at a yearling sale in Dallas when Hurricane Katrina delivered her devastating punch to

the Gulf Coast. It was time to improvise. Driving a 4x4 pickup and pulling a horse trailer, Gabriel headed home the day after the storm. Gabriel's father lives on the farm, and there was a sense of urgency. Loading the truck and trailer with 160 cases of bottled water, five generators, dry goods, and canned food, Gabriel navigated through country roads littered and blocked by fallen trees.

"We had to use chain saws to clear some of the roads," Gabriel remembered. "With no electricity, it was pretty western around here for a couple of months. The tree damage was horrific, but we didn't lose one horse. The only fuel around was in Baton Rouge, and we got up at 1:30 every morning to go in and get in line and get our 10-gallon allotment of gas."

Nowadays Gabriel is still calling the shots but under less-demanding conditions. As a consignor at horse sales in Louisiana, Texas, Florida, California, and Maryland, he represents and advises owners in the process of selling horses. Preparation begins

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2013 LEADING SIRES IN OKLAHOMA Go to BloodHorse.com for daily updated sire lists

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2013 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2013 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	READ THE FOOTNOTES (01, Smoke Glacken), River Oaks Farm	\$3,500	35/11	0/0	0/0	(Readtheprospectus, \$75,600)	\$471,681	*239	9	1.38	1.21
2	LATENT HEAT (03, Maria's Mon), River Oaks Farm	\$3,500	49/17	0/0	0/0	(Petit Trianon, \$44,460)	\$370,201	*175	2	1.01	1.06
3	TOCCET (00, Awesome Again), Mighty Acres	\$2,500	50/19	0/0	0/0	(English Manor, \$37,000)	\$271,653	*295	13	1.18	1.27
4	DON'T GET MAD (02, Stephen Got Even), Rockin Z Ranch	\$2,000	28/12	0/0	0/0	(Populist Politics, \$47,000)	\$215,633	*115	2	1.21	0.94
5	KIPLING (96, Gulch), Mighty Acres	\$2,500	45/15	0/0	0/0	(Kiptastic, \$33,540)	\$208,809	265	8	1.24	0.90
6	OMEGA CODE (00, Elusive Quality), Rockin Z Ranch	\$2,000	31/7	0/0	0/0	(Singingwithangels, \$13,950)	\$116,489	276	7	0.72	1.28
7	SERVICE STRIPE (91, Deputy Minister), Caines Stallion Station	\$1,000	18/3	0/0	0/0	(Service for Ten, \$33,150)	\$101,925	357	18	1.19	1.05
8	EVANSVILLE SLEW (92, Slew City Slew)	Died, 2012	30/6	0/0	0/0	(El Otro, \$17,940)	\$82,329	*497	34	1.12	0.92
9	STATE CITY (99, Carson City), Caines Stallion Station	\$1,000	15/5	0/0	0/0	(Strong Response, \$17,460)	\$73,711	*226	1	0.70	1.01
10	ARTAX (95, Marquetry)	Died, 2012	17/3	0/0	0/0	(Gimme Credit, \$16,120)	\$69,523	*434	6	1.02	1.31
11	RUBIYAT (95, Rubiano), Spears Racing	\$1,000	6/1	0/0	0/0	(Danny Newman, \$52,850)	\$64,123	70	0	0.76	0.88
12	TACTICAL CAT (96, Storm Cat)	N/A	15/3	0/0	0/0	(Tactical Gift, \$15,600)	\$60,402	505	24	1.09	1.29
13	MONSIEUR CAT (98, Tabasco Cat), Legend Farm	\$1,500	3/3	0/0	0/0	(Alley Oop Oop, \$42,180)	\$59,570	53	1	0.93	1.83
14	WESTERN EXPRESSION (96, Gone West), Kirton Farms	\$1,500	10/2	0/0	0/0	(Aunt Topsy, \$23,900)	\$58,772	*304	5	1.15	1.32
15	MALABAR GOLD (97, Unbridled)	N/A	7/2	1/1	0/1	(Gallant Son, \$45,050)	\$52,393	*249	4	0.67	1.10
16	DIAMOND (95, Mr. Prospector), Oklahoma Equine	\$2,500	12/2	0/0	0/0	(Thisladyisadiamond, \$13,204)	\$43,782	282	6	1.10	1.06
17	LUCKY LIONEL (93, Mt. Livermore), Diamond G Ranch	\$1,000	17/4	0/0	0/0	(Xtra Spicy, \$13,204)	\$37,107	329	14	1.20	1.25
18	FREEFOURINTERNET (98, Tabasco Cat), Equi-Center Veterinary Clinic	\$2,000	13/3	0/0	0/0	(Smoking the Field, \$21,660)	\$35,473	81	1	0.87	0.99
19	SASHA'S PROSPECT (96, Mr. Prospector), Charlton Ranch	\$1,200	10/5	0/0	0/0	(Polly's Pro, \$7,302)	\$34,621	*104	1	0.83	0.80
20	DANCE MASTER (97, Gone West), JEH Stallion Station-Oklahoma Div.	\$1,000	11/3	0/0	0/0	(Sugarcreekdancer, \$12,408)	\$31,575	243	8	0.85	1.08

six months, sometimes a year in advance of the sale.

"It's a matter of building rapport," Gabriel said. "I go out and visit with them. Look at their horses and provide advice in terms of the horse's value and the best venue to sell them. From there it's a matter of education on feeding, foot preparation, and whatever it takes to bring the horse to the sale in peak condition and the way we want them to look."

It is not unusual for a consignor such as Gabriel to spend several weeks with a horse in the final stages leading up to a sale. For 2-year-olds in training sales, Gabriel oversees any workouts and basically gets the horse acclimated to the track and to the environment. On the day of the sale, a consignor will start showing horses at 8 o'clock in the morning and a horse could be brought out for viewing 50-75 times before the day is over.

"Buyers can see videos of how fast the horse runs, but they want to be there in person to evaluate conformation, physical appearance, and attitude," Gabriel said. "It's like selling anything. You got people that want to engage in conversation to hear what you got to say about your horse, and then there are other people that just want to look and not talk. Buyers are becoming so sophisticated and professional at this point that they just get aggravated with details that you feel are important. You have to find the diplomatic balance and leave them alone."

The risks of being a pinhooker are evident. Acting

alone or as part of a group of investors, Gabriel makes the circuit of mixed sales, looking at every weanling or yearling and trying to forecast where the baby might be situated seven or eight months down the road.

"The simple formula is to try to buy something that will be worth more later," Gabriel explained. "You get a fair product, take



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2013 LEADING SIRES IN LOUISIANA

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Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB, Sire), Where Stands	2013 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2013 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative		
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	SONGANDPRAYER (98, Unbridled's Song), The Stallion Stn @Copper Crowne	\$5,000	130/35	3/3	1/3	(Celtic Chant, \$71,790)	\$943,987	*774	30	1.25	1.63
2	CLOSING ARGUMENT (02, Successful Appeal), Louisiana Stallion Stn North	\$7,500	73/23	0/0	0/0	(Determinato, \$106,950)	\$655,659	*322	14	1.28	1.28
3	YANKEE GENTLEMAN (99, Storm Cat), Le Mesa Stallions	\$5,000	38/17	1/1	0/1	(Ive Struck a Nerve, \$248,000)	\$470,390	*358	17	1.39	1.32
4	LEESTOWN (94, Seattle Slew)	Died, 2008	75/18	1/2	0/1	(Hit the Road Lee, \$97,800)	\$453,557	576	19	0.86	0.98
5	D'WILDCAT (98, Forest Wildcat), Louisiana Stallion Station South	\$4,500	56/15	0/0	0/0	(D'princess, \$33,800)	\$351,682	*310	11	1.46	1.36
6	TENPINS (98, Smart Strike), Elite Thoroughbreds	\$3,500	57/19	0/0	0/0	(Smart Tori, \$27,200)	\$303,452	*286	8	1.01	1.13
7	GREELEY'S GALAXY (02, Mr. Greeley), Averett Farm	\$2,500	15/3	1/1	0/1	(Cluster of Stars, \$129,600)	\$289,478	75	1	0.89	1.22
8	IDE (93, Forty Niner), Clear Creek Stud	\$2,500	54/14	0/0	0/0	(Sweet Ide, \$35,460)	\$280,433	525	16	1.17	1.11
9	PRIVATE VOW (03, Broken Vow), Red River Farms	\$2,000	34/8	0/0	0/0	(Skinny, \$66,000)	\$258,251	88	0	0.62	1.42
10	WIRE ME COLLECT (93, Clever Trick), Traders Rest Farm	\$1,500	14/6	2/2	2/2	(Wire Me Bessie, \$115,680)	\$254,666	162	6	0.81	0.75
11	GOOD AND TOUGH (95, Carson City)	Died, 2012	42/9	0/0	0/0	(Say Somethin Good, \$32,420)	\$225,927	*420	16	1.20	1.17
12	WILDCAT SHOES (01, Forest Wildcat)	Died, 2009	30/9	0/0	0/0	(Lucky Shoes, \$28,080)	\$205,830	101	2	0.85	0.97
13	LION TAMER (00, Will's Way), Clear Creek Stud	\$2,500	30/4	1/1	1/1	(Heavy On Themister, \$120,000)	\$204,019	82	1	0.91	1.19
14	HALF OURS (03, Unbridled's Song), Clear Creek Stud	\$4,000	32/6	0/0	0/0	(Gentlemen's Bet, \$65,400)	\$200,461	*163	2	0.92	1.41
15	SUN KING (02, Charismatic), Elite Thoroughbreds	\$3,500	33/7	0/0	0/0	(Big Chief Deke, \$45,635)	\$191,360	193	0	0.78	1.09
16	GOLD TRIBUTE (94, Mr. Prospector), Red River Farms	\$2,000	39/6	0/0	0/0	(Nubin Ridge, \$34,200)	\$189,772	*449	11	1.00	1.12
17	SEFAPIANO (89, Fappiano)	Died, 2010	25/5	0/0	0/0	(O P Nut Butter, \$51,360)	\$169,508	336	23	1.31	0.93
18	MY FRIEND MAX (92, Danzig)	N/A	30/5	0/0	0/0	(My Genius Friend, \$20,420)	\$166,255	202	10	1.07	0.92
19	SALUTE THE SARGE (05, Forest Wildcat), Red River Farms	\$2,500	20/8	0/0	0/0	(Salutos Amigos, \$42,960)	\$163,524	*75	1	1.00	1.39
20	GRAND APPOINTMENT (98, Unbridled), Fallen Oaks Farm	\$1,500	14/5	0/0	0/0	(Get in Da House, \$36,000)	\$159,873	53	1	1.07	0.96

good care of it, bring it to the right sale, and hope for the best. In the case of 2-year-olds, we break them here on the farm and teach them to run a little bit before assigning them to a sale."

Success stories such as the purchase of a yearling colt by Songandaprayer for \$65,000, breaking him at Pelican State Thoroughbreds, and then selling him as a 2-year-old for \$250,000 can lead to a good night's sleep.

Dropping to the bottom of Gabriel's résumé is the work he does as a bloodstock agent. Mentors for hire, bloodstock agents represent people who own horses or are looking to buy horses, a "go-between" in the transactions involved in buying and selling.

"Supposedly, a bloodstock agent is the educated person concerning pedigree," Gabriel said with humor dry as a soda cracker. "You are looking at monetary value and a horse's basic potential. A lot of time trainers don't have the free time to buy horses, and you have owners that simply don't know what they are looking at in the first place."

Gabriel's efforts as a bloodstock agent for the general public

have dwindled in recent years as Pelican State Thoroughbreds is investing its money in its own horses.

If you stay in the shallow water too long, you will never learn how to swim. Gabriel's skill and knowledge of horses have not been cut and pasted from textbook theory. The entire fabric of his life experience has cut a deep channel for him to navigate safely through the world of horses and people. From grandfather to father to uncles and brother, racehorses are the common denominator within the Gabriel family circle. His first childhood memory of the racetrack reveals just how early the fire was beginning to burn.

"I must have been around 7 years old, and I woke up from a dream in which my father had gone off to the racetrack and left me and my older brother behind," Gabriel remembered. "I laid on my bed, stared at the ceiling, and kept looking out the window trying to see if my Dad's truck was still in the driveway."

On weekends the first stop (before going to the Fair Grounds backstretch with his father) was the Circle Food Store. Located in a predominately Creole neighborhood near the racetrack, the Circle Food Store was a New Orleans landmark. Like other business establishments of the early '70s in New Orleans such as barrooms and newsstands, the Circle Food Store was a magnet for gamblers and a wide range of street characters. If you knew whom to ask for, you could buy a bunch of bananas, an ear of boiled corn, a sweet potato pie, and make post time for the Daily Double at Bowie or Hialeah all in the same breath. It was the center of young Gabriel's universe. Two of Gabriel's uncles owned the store, and his grandfather was the produce manager.

"The first thing we did was walk through the neighborhood and pick up the shopping baskets," Gabriel recalled. "Then we went to the French Market to buy vegetables. I rode in the back of a pickup truck with a scale and weighed cabbages, tomatoes, and peppers or whatever my grandfather needed that day. Next we drove along the Mississippi riverfront to buy shrimp, oysters, and crabs off the boats."

By then the sun was coming up, and Gabriel and his brother sat in a wooden booth above a row of cash registers and waited for Uncle Herbie to give them permission to get their bottle of chocolate milk.



One of Gabriel's maxims is 'if you rush it, you break it'

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Dams' Percentage of 2YO Winners

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2013 LEADING SIRES IN NEW MEXICO

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2013 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2013 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	DESERT GOD (91, Fappiano), A & A Ranch	N/A	39/7	1/1	1/1	(Attitude E Racer, \$52,125)	\$279,185	244	24	1.51	0.72
2	ROLL HENNESSY ROLL (00, Hennessy), A & A Ranch	\$3,500	22/5	1/1	1/1	(Hennessy Smash, \$51,000)	\$204,620	104	7	1.09	1.07
3	PREMEDITATION (99, Afternoon Deelites), A & A Ranch	\$2,500	18/5	0/0	0/0	(Mr. Wizard, \$60,692)	\$163,520	69	4	1.19	0.80
4	DEVON LANE (93, Storm Cat)	Died, 2012	22/7	1/1	1/1	(Devons Ca Ching, \$51,000)	\$129,269	415	19	0.81	0.83
5	GHOSTLY MOVES (92, Silver Ghost)	N/A	36/6	0/0	0/0	(Me Catchum, \$24,087)	\$128,666	229	22	1.10	1.06
6	GOLD CASE (94, Forty Niner), Mesa Vista Stud	\$5,000	27/11	0/0	0/0	(Silent Purpose, \$14,551)	\$114,986	*568	21	1.07	1.12
7	MINISTER ERIC (01, Old Trieste)	N/A	21/4	1/1	1/1	(Manyriverstocross, \$30,000)	\$96,124	80	1	0.51	0.91
8	ATTILA'S STORM (02, Forest Wildcat), A & A Ranch	\$2,500	17/3	0/0	0/0	(Hush's Storm, \$20,060)	\$93,546	67	5	1.50	0.95
9	TO TERAS (00, Unbridled's Song), New Mexico State University	\$2,500	13/4	1/1	1/1	(Tyger Teras, \$51,000)	\$87,638	67	1	0.82	0.65
10	DOMINIQUE'S CAT (97, Storm Cat), McKenna Thoroughbreds	\$2,500	13/3	0/0	0/0	(Ryangela, \$19,562)	\$64,039	84	3	0.85	0.63
11	YOUR EMINENCE (01, Saint Ballado)	Died, 2012	20/2	0/0	0/0	(Dance With Trixie, \$16,366)	\$62,428	139	3	0.69	0.76
12	SILVER SEASON (96, Silver Ghost)	N/A	8/5	0/0	0/0	(Seasar M D, \$12,288)	\$57,741	74	5	1.06	0.94
13	PRECOCITY (94, Aferd), Mesa Vista Stud	\$4,000	10/3	0/0	0/0	(Super Salty, \$16,080)	\$55,928	183	6	0.90	0.89
14	PROUD IRISH (86, Irish River), Tricar Stables	\$4,000	11/2	0/0	0/0	(Big Blaze, \$24,434)	\$55,721	283	10	0.91	0.82
15	THE WAY HOME (04, Giant's Causeway), Doubletree Farm	\$3,500	10/4	0/0	0/0	(Keagan's Way, \$18,338)	\$52,572	51	2	1.36	1.00

Early seasoning. Long days filled with plenty of labor intensive lessons. Next stop on those weekend mornings was the Fair Grounds backstretch and working in his father's barn. Leo Gabriel Sr. conditioned claiming-level stock on the Louisiana-Illinois circuit and maintained a decent win percentage.

"State of the art back in those days was standing a horse in ice for two hours and then two hours in the whirlpool," Gabriel said with a grin. "After you have wrapped several hundred miles of bandages, it begins to sink in that there are no short cuts. Everybody wants to win, but what I learned from my father was that not everybody wants to put in the hard work."

At Pelican State Thoroughbreds the prevailing ethic is a reflection of Gabriel's personality—work smarter rather than harder. As far as Gabriel is concerned, the six-furlong Folsom Training Center is where stopwatches go to die. For Gabriel, breaking babies is a long, slow process.

"If you rush it, you break it," he said, watching a set being led to the training track. "We still have people that come to me and ask why their horse has not gone to the track yet. The answer is that he will go to the track when he's ready."

There is a Eurocizer situated under a cozy umbrella of oak trees, and the high-ceiling barns are equipped with solar-powered exhaust fans.

"That's our contribution to being green," Gabriel offered. Another little-known fact about Pelican State Thoroughbreds is that it provided the training wheels for a 9-year-old boy named Joey Talamo. Talamo today is one of the top riders on the Southern California circuit.

"His family drove him up here from New Orleans on the weekends, and we let him ride ponies in the round pen."

Bright lights, big city. The odometer reading between Gabriel's farm at the Folsom Training Center and the receiving barn at Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots is exactly 65 miles. Measured in terms of natural calm, the two sites are thousands of miles apart.

"Environment plays more significantly than you would think in the racehorse end of things," Gabriel explained. "Shipping a horse anywhere is a trade-off for sure. But it is so relaxing here for horses that the shipping angle is nil because the racetrack environment is so tense and full of distractions. At the training center we can get horses fit without hurting them. A horse can just be a horse."

Patting a 2-year-old filly on the head before legging up his exercise rider, Gabriel shared a snapshot of the moments that

give him satisfaction.

"After all these years I still like the simple things like watching the horses come out of the barn and absorbing the peace and quiet all around. Besides that I like to go out and watch them gallop and walk back to the barn. We are looking for that comment that we call 'training pretty.' It's not about time. It's more about being loose and free." **BA**

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