

SOUTHEAST

Good Drama

Hal Queen breeds royalty

BY JULIE HAZELWOOD CASTRO

ANNE M. EBERHARDT PHOTOS

HAROLD "HAL" QUEEN has gone from horseplayer to trainer to the proud owner of a homebred champion and Breeders' Cup World Championships winner. Auspicious decisions with a dash of unwitting good fate have shaped not only his life but also his influence on the modern breeding industry in Florida. One of his mares in particular, Florida's 2010 broodmare of the year Riveting Drama, has produced five stakes winners including champion sprinter Big Drama, now a leading freshman sire; and a worthy award candidate in Sheer Drama.

Now pensioned at 21, Riveting Drama was a nicely proportioned \$36,000 2-year-old purchase by Queen, yet she was plagued with sore shins and never raced. The daughter of Notebook produced 10 foals in all. Nine started and all have won. Her last foal by Chapel Royal delivered in March 2012, died.

Originally Queen bred her to stallions owned by friends. Yet the mare's foals showed substance. Her first foal, Drama's Way by Farma Way, won the Scarlet and Gray Handicap for Ohio-breds at 3 in 2002; two geldings by Tejano Run had 18 wins between them; and Coffee Can (by Kissin Kris) placed in Mountaineer's Autumn Leaves Stakes at 4 in 2008. Her 2003 Yes It's True colt fetched \$130,000 at the Ocala Breeders' Sales Co.'s March sale in 2005.

In 2008 Queen briefly considered selling Riveting Drama while she was in foal to Burning Roma. As it turned out, she became ill and was pulled out of the OBS October mixed sale. At about the time that her colt Maltese Massive tallied \$560,883 racing in Japan, Queen made the decision to take the time and start racing her foals himself. Good fortune sided with Queen; she rewarded him with Big Drama (\$2,746,060), by Montbrook, and three full sibling stakes winners—Little Drama (\$359,299), Queen Drama (\$127,225), and Sheer Drama (\$1,438,840), all by Burning Roma.

"I learned to breed for speed, not five-furlong speed, but 'speed distance,'" Queen said.

Big Drama is the only horse since Smile to sweep the Florida Stallion Stakes Series and also win the Sentient Jet Breeders' Cup Sprint (gr. I). Like Smile, he received an Eclipse Award as champion sprinter and retired to stand



Harold Queen and his wife, Jean, at the 2010 Breeders' Cup World Championships

stud in Florida. Queen believes Big Drama's brilliant speed could hold up to a mile. A 10-time stakes winner, Big Drama also set two track record at Gulfstream Park for six furlongs (1:08.12) and seven furlongs (1:20.88).

Big Drama currently ranks sixth nationally on the freshman sire list. His leading earner is the undefeated Tribal Drama, who won the \$300,000 Florida Sire Affirmed Stakes at seven furlongs. The David Fawkes-trained colt is out of Tribal Music, by A. P. Warrior.

From 68 foals in his initial crop, Big Drama had the \$230,000 sale-topper at the OBS August yearling sale in 2014. Of 33 offered in 2015 2-year-old in training sales, 31 sold while averaging \$82,726. Trainer Linda Rice, as agent, paid \$410,000 for a Big Drama filly out of a Jeblar mare that zipped a bullet quarter at the OBS April sale in :20½ seconds. Big Thrill broke her maiden by four lengths in her debut Aug. 12 at Saratoga.

Florida-bred Sheer Drama is sired by Futurity Stakes (gr. I) winner Burning Roma, a son of Rubiano who brought home \$1,500,200 while winning 13 of 36 starts for Queen. Fortune smiled on him after he "bid him back" at the Fasig-Tipton Florida select sale in 2000 for \$40,000.

"He was such a nice colt," Queen remarked.

Sheer Drama broke her maiden at Saratoga for trainer Tony Dutrow at 3, then set a track record for about 1½ miles at Laurel (1:41.79) while winning an allowance by 8¾ lengths. By October, she had gained black type at Belmont. The following year under Fawkes' care, she won Laurel's Thirty Eight Go Go Stakes at a mile.

Eleven different riders rode the filly in her first 12 starts before jockey Joe Bravo teamed with her at Gulfstream Park in January 2015.

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2015 LEADING SIRES IN FLORIDA



Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2015 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2015 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	WILDCAT HEIR (00, Forest Wildcat)	Died, 2015	231/140	5/10	1/5	(Wild Dude, \$634,667)	\$6,579,464	*544	26	1.44	1.43
2	WILD DISTINCTION (01, Storm Cat), Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds	\$7,500	163/90	2/3	1/2	(Distinctiv Passion, \$146,220)	\$2,941,305	*429	10	1.12	1.21
3	EXCLUSIVE QUALITY (03, Elusive Quality), Journeyman Stud	\$2,500	117/60	2/2	2/2	(Sr. Quisqueano, \$186,400)	\$2,141,586	240	7	1.07	1.12
4	MAGNA GRADUATE (02, Honor Grades), Woodford Thoroughbreds	\$3,000	93/51	2/2	0/2	(Magna Light, \$139,334)	\$1,939,312	*178	6	1.02	1.13
5	BURNING ROMA (98, Rubiano), Prestige Stallions	\$6,000	45/27	1/3	0/1	(Sheer Drama, \$1,234,720)	\$1,875,069	*177	5	0.96	1.17
6	HIGH COTTON (03, Dixie Union), Ocala Stud Farm	\$5,000	120/56	1/1	1/1	(Dream of Me, \$168,440)	\$1,866,216	*259	5	0.98	1.29
7	IN SUMMATION (03, Put It Back), Ocala Stud Farm	\$2,500	90/57	2/2	0/2	(Summation Time, \$110,858)	\$1,855,691	155	3	0.95	1.44
8	TWO STEP SALSA (05, Petionville), Get Away Farm	\$7,500	76/38	2/2	1/2	(Classic Salsa, \$190,710)	\$1,613,868	117	3	1.31	1.01
9	KANTHAROS (08, Lion Heart), Ocala Stud Farm	\$5,000	44/28	4/4	2/4	(Katie's Kiss, \$178,195)	\$1,589,329	73	4	1.68	1.26
10	AWESOME OF COURSE (00, Awesome Again), Journeyman Stud	\$5,000	58/27	3/4	2/3	(Fellowship, \$391,150)	\$1,559,305	132	8	2.15	1.45
11	MONTBROOK (90, Buckaroo)	Died	84/43	0/0	0/0	(Score One, \$90,820)	\$1,359,948	*892	47	1.49	1.52
12	VALUE PLUS (01, Unbridled's Song), HallMarc Stallions at Stonewall Farm Ocala	\$4,500	78/42	1/1	0/1	(Long On Value, \$142,560)	\$1,196,514	*348	3	0.96	1.14
13	HEAR NO EVIL (00, Carson City), Journeyman Stud	\$2,500	33/18	1/3	0/1	(Ballet Diva, \$339,675)	\$1,067,537	95	7	1.83	1.50
14	¶ FIRST DUDE (07, Stephen Got Even), Double Diamond Farm	\$7,500	40/15	1/1	1/1	(Flora Dora, \$355,332)	\$950,850	89	1	1.15	1.46
15	BENNY THE BULL (03, Lucky Lionel), Bridlewood Farm	\$2,500	49/21	0/0	0/0	(Benny's Bullet, \$89,000)	\$931,177	*144	1	0.97	1.00
16	GREATNESS (99, Mr. Prospector), Prestige Stallions	\$6,000	56/30	0/0	0/0	(Great Attack, \$74,181)	\$839,931	*232	7	1.39	1.02
17	WEST ACRE (95, Forty Niner)	Died, 2012	24/17	0/0	0/0	(Fast Flying Rumor, \$103,695)	\$800,728	335	13	1.38	1.19
18	COOL COAL MAN (05, Mineshaft), Journeyman Stud	\$3,500	42/24	0/0	0/0	(Competitive Player, \$83,470)	\$791,637	57	1	0.79	1.12
19	¶ BIG DRAMA (06, Montbrook), Bridlewood Farm	\$10,000	28/10	1/1	1/1	(Tribal Drama, \$209,000)	\$710,965	64	1	1.20	1.36
20	INDY WIND (02, A.P. Indy), Journeyman Stud	\$2,000	28/14	0/0	0/0	(A. P. Cino, \$107,730)	\$619,932	59	1	1.11	1.08
21	FLASHSTORM (04, Storm Cat), Northwest Stud	\$2,500	25/17	1/1	0/1	(Golden Pirate, \$104,915)	\$599,402	37	1	1.06	1.00
22	¶ GONE ASTRAY (06, Dixie Union), Northwest Stud	\$4,500	37/8	2/2	1/2	(It's High Time, \$224,200)	\$590,391	*64	2	0.81	1.21
23	CONCORDE'S TUNE (89, Concorde Bound)	Died, 2011	34/21	0/0	0/0	(Tune Me In, \$95,175)	\$488,614	487	25	1.24	1.11
24	¶ BROOKS 'N DOWN (05, Montbrook), Journeyman Stud	\$1,500	3/2	0/0	0/0	(Silent Prayer, \$218,550)	\$420,490	8	0	6.84	2.98
25	WAGON LIMIT (94, Conquistador Cielo), Bridlewood Farm	\$2,000	14/6	1/1	1/1	(Delta Bluesman, \$116,405)	\$406,154	190	6	1.31	1.11
26	ROCK HAMPTON (04, Storm Cat), Ric Deg Farm	Private	18/9	0/0	0/0	(Condestable, \$63,015)	\$334,479	33	0	1.70	1.08
27	THE GREEN MONKEY (04, Forestry), Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds	\$5,000	13/9	1/2	0/1	(Green Doctor, \$66,006)	\$318,274	37	4	1.19	0.98
28	KISS THE KID (03, Lemon Drop Kid), Journeyman Stud	\$3,500	15/7	0/0	0/0	(Just Kidding, \$99,380)	\$280,066	29	0	0.78	1.91
29	SWEET RETURN (GB) (00, Elmaamul), Ocala Stud Farm	\$3,500	34/15	0/0	0/0	(Sweet Miri, \$33,590)	\$273,690	91	0	0.62	0.86
30	HELLO BROADWAY (06, Broken Vow), Ups and Downs Farm	\$3,000	16/8	0/0	0/0	(My Sweet Dove, \$62,050)	\$270,553	19	1	0.95	1.00
31	ADMIRAL'S CRUISE (02, A.P. Indy)	Died, 2011	9/5	1/1	0/1	(Crucero, \$142,690)	\$269,402	*75	1	0.99	0.78
32	SPELLBINDER (01, Tale of the Cat), HallMarc Stallions at Stonewall Farm Ocala	\$2,000	16/6	0/0	0/0	(Gryvon, \$78,600)	\$246,490	33	1	1.03	1.15
33	¶ CROWN OF THORNS (05, Repent), Woodford Thoroughbreds	\$2,000	12/4	1/1	0/1	(Swagger Jagger, \$83,630)	\$243,900	20	1	0.99	1.44
34	SCORPION (98, Seattle Slew)	N/A	13/7	0/0	0/0	(Scorpion Aly, \$87,225)	\$237,536	*126	0	0.80	1.06
35	MACH RIDE (03, Pentelicus), Bridlewood Farm	\$2,000	7/5	1/1	0/1	(Ackeret, \$75,000)	\$231,262	11	1	1.37	1.13
36	SARAVA (99, Wild Again)	Pnsd	20/9	0/0	0/0	(Star of Sarava, \$30,020)	\$203,436	195	2	0.66	1.14
37	UNITED STATES (06, A.P. Indy), Northwest Stud	\$1,500	15/6	1/1	0/1	(La Irunesa, \$59,928)	\$182,583	21	1	0.70	1.05
38	SPENSIVE (00, Ponche), Y-Lo Racing Stables	\$1,500	8/2	0/0	0/0	(Aces for John, \$123,957)	\$164,515	39	0	0.61	0.77
39	INDIAN EXPRESS (00, Indian Charlie)	N/A	10/3	0/0	0/0	(Chica Fabulosa, \$59,080)	\$153,923	35	1	0.85	0.65
40	LIFESTYLE (00, Indian Charlie)	N/A	6/5	0/0	0/0	(Right Now Richie, \$75,216)	\$150,151	10	1	1.39	1.11
41	FORTY GRAMS (04, Distorted Humor), Ups & Downs Farm	\$2,500	7/3	0/0	0/0	(Chief Attraction, \$50,855)	\$147,248	17	0	1.04	1.08
42	DARK KESTREL (03, Stormy Atlantic), University of Florida Veterinary Medical Center	\$1,500	3/2	0/0	0/0	(Stormofthecentury, \$80,473)	\$131,123	18	1	1.70	1.37
43	¶ J P'S GUSTO (08, Successful Appeal), Journeyman Stud	\$2,000	12/3	0/0	0/0	(Exactamente, \$27,520)	\$116,462	23	0	0.47	1.11
44	¶ ADIOS CHARLIE (08, Indian Charlie), Ocala Stud Farm	\$3,000	7/3	0/0	0/0	(R Lucky Charlie, \$31,233)	\$115,470	22	0	0.91	1.35
45	BOASTFUL (98, Cozzene), Covington Oaks Farm	\$1,000	12/3	0/0	0/0	(Bonnie Breeze, \$41,980)	\$112,452	35	0	0.59	0.89
46	THE KAISER (95, Tasso)	N/A	4/3	0/0	0/0	(Kaiser's d'Light, \$40,515)	\$96,158	34	0	0.78	0.90
47	AMERICAN SPIRIT (96, Storm Boot), Double Diamond Farm	Private	7/4	0/0	0/0	(Hereshecomesagain, \$59,854)	\$92,477	62	2	0.74	0.85
48	SKIP TO THE STONE (98, Skip Trial)	Died, 2015	3/3	0/0	0/0	(Single Malt Female, \$42,852)	\$91,594	81	0	0.58	0.90
49	¶ IQBAAL (06, Medaglia d'Oro)	N/A	4/3	0/0	0/0	(Revolver Sessions, \$42,100)	\$87,350	5	0	1.07	0.97
50	WEEKEND CRUISE (97, A.P. Indy)	N/A	10/5	0/0	0/0	(Weekend Appeal, \$24,330)	\$81,655	148	0	0.56	0.78
51	UNTUTTABLE (96, Unbridled)	Pnsd	6/3	0/0	0/0	(I'm a Good Looker, \$48,185)	\$78,919	197	9	1.05	1.25
52	CONSCIENCE CLEAR (97, Relaunch)	N/A	4/3	0/0	0/0	(Lucy's Finale, \$41,455)	\$62,588	51	0	0.82	0.68
53	COLONY LIGHT (89, Pleasant Colony), Rising Hill Farm	Private	6/2	0/0	0/0	(Destiny Joy, \$25,210)	\$59,345	412	11	1.00	1.04
54	DON RIGO (04, Straight Man)	N/A	5/2	0/0	0/0	(Flying Nurse, \$27,425)	\$54,111	14	0	0.43	0.57
55	UNBRIDLED TIME (98, Unbridled's Song)	Died, 2012	10/2	0/0	0/0	(Valley King, \$12,965)	\$52,101	202	1	0.76	1.00
56	SEVENTYSEVENSTREET (02, Storm Cat)	N/A	2/1	0/0	0/0	(Seventyseven Ilene, \$48,080)	\$48,080	23	0	0.48	0.72
57	¶ RODMAN (05, Malibu Moon)	Died, 2012	4/2	0/0	0/0	(Kim, \$19,282)	\$43,152	5	0	0.53	0.47
58	ORCHARD PARK (99, Hennessy)	Pnsd	3/2	0/0	0/0	(Moonlit Park, \$19,919)	\$30,464	24	0	0.55	2.01
59	¶ VINEYARD HAVEN (06, Lido Palace), Woodford Thoroughbreds	\$2,000	5/1	0/0	0/0	(Williamette Valley, \$12,600)	\$29,887	8	0	0.29	0.72
60	SEÑOR EDUARDO (05, Holy Bull)	N/A	2/1	0/0	0/0	(Ghost of Anapa, \$18,980)	\$29,292	8	0	0.32	0.65
61	WEKIVA SPRINGS (91, Runaway Groom)	Died, 2014	7/0	0/0	0/0	(Classic Speed, \$10,694)	\$25,025	408	13	0.86	1.19
62	¶ BACKTALK (07, Smarty Jones), Bridlewood Farm	\$3,000	1/1	0/0	0/0	(Sasstalk, \$20,500)	\$20,500	11	0	1.00	0.81
63	MR. ELWAY (97, Saint Ballado)	N/A	3/1	0/0	0/0	(Balino, \$19,395)	\$19,795	6	1	0.71	0.45
64	BLOWING ROCK (98, Kris S.), Blowing Rock Ranch	\$5,000	6/1	0/0	0/0	(Flightriskcowgirl, \$11,179)	\$17,101	23	0	0.32	0.76
65	¶ FACTUM (08, Storm Cat), Stonehedge Farm South	\$10,000	6/1	0/0	0/0	(It's a Factum, \$8,594)	\$16,254	16	0	0.15	1.47

Special Note For Sire Lists:

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in New York (stallions that are dead or exported prior to 2011 are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through November 29, 2015. As supplied to Blood-Horse by The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., include adjusted money from Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. Adjusted earnings are put on par with average North American earnings from the previous year. For example, the average North American purse in 2014 is \$21,617 or 45% of the 2014 average purse in Japan. To put earnings on par, all Japanese progeny earnings are multiplied by 45% before being credited to a sire's progeny earnings. Hong Kong earnings are adjusted by 19%; Singapore by 54%. 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.

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23 Found Money	24 Van Damme	25 Slickstatelydude	26 Rare Candy	27 Put Da Blame On Me
28 Bahamian Squall	29 Florida's Song	30 Square Eddie	31 Langfuhr	32 First Dude
33 Twirling Candy	34 Just Wicked	35 Flora Dora	36 Width	37 Blame
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Sheer Drama winning Saratoga's Personal Ensign

(continued from page 34)

"It was perfect timing that I was able to step into the play when Dave got her down here," Bravo said. "The first time I rode her she didn't get away from the gate the cleanest; she came from last and ran a great race. I learned so much and was able to build from there."

Together they have finished first or second in seven of eight starts.

In the July 18 Delaware Handicap (gr. I), she stalked Frivolous before pulling ahead to win by two lengths going 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles. Her first top-level victory came in 2:01.58 on the very track where her sire won the Leonard Richards Stakes in 2001.

With a "Win and You're In" ticket to ensure a berth in the Longines Breeders' Cup Distaff (gr. I) on the line at Saratoga Aug. 29, Sheer Drama challenged some of the best fillies in the country in the 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ -mile Personal Ensign Stakes (gr. I). Champion Untapable, a seven-time grade I winner, and multiple grade I winner Stopchargingmaria, along with Got Lucky, Tiz Windy, and America joined the fray. In her best effort to date, Sheer Drama raced well into the bit. Under minimal urging from Bravo, the mare cruised home with daylight to spare from late-charging Got Lucky.

For many years Queen was a regular at the Keeneland sales. These days it takes a special horse on a special day to draw him away from Ocala, as the Breeders' Cup at Keeneland did this year.

"It was the first time I had been at a racetrack in two years," he admitted.

He and his wife, Jean, were pleased

to have their five children in attendance with them, as they did when Big Drama romped in the 2010 Sprint.

"Keeneland really treated us great," he said.

In the Distaff, though, Sheer Drama had a troubled trip and could not evade kick-back the entire race but did manage to finish fourth.

"Nothing you can do about it drawing the 14 hole," Queen noted.

"Horses were on top of her the whole race," Bravo said. "It was a lot to overcome, and I was proud of her."

Queen's first real account of "going racing" was after his family moved from their New Jersey farm to Pittsburgh and



Jockey Joe Bravo has been aboard Sheer Drama in her last eight starts

on one Saturday he drove with a friend to Waterford Park in West Virginia. When he became a partner in a firm in Cleveland—one of the country's original data companies, Queen would visit the local track. Cranwood Race Course was billed as the "Biggest Little Racetrack in America" in those days.

Queen has always had a desire to lift the people around him. He relates to his peers in a genuinely caring manner.

"I really wanted my trainers to do well. When they did, I did well," he said.

Queen has a stack of black-and-white photographs dating back to 1961 that he can't bring himself to part with. The photos evoke memories of good times shared on the Ohio racing circuit; of people and horses that meant so much.

"Gasmegas won the Ascot Gold Cup Handicap—a two-mile race (in 1965)," he recalled. "He raced until he was 8. He was such a nice horse."

The grandson of Noor raced 98 times. Always sporting a suit and tie, Queen always appeared dapper in the winner's circle was sported a grin, "We knew we were going to win.

"Our first stakes winner, we bred ourselves," he said, pointing to a picture of I Jean E., who was affectionately named for his wife, Jean Evelyn.

She won the Annie Oakley Stakes at Thistledown in 1978. A young Heriberto "Herbie" Rivera Jr. was aboard that day, also celebrating the biggest leg-up of his career. Rivera would go on to win more than 3,200 races and rode innumerable horses for Queen including five-time stakes winner Learn By Heart, who earned \$312,103.

When in 1998 the journeyman suitably booted home Pleasant Too to capture the Super Stakes at Tampa Bay Downs, it turned out to be Rivera's last stakes triumph before retiring.

Another good friend of Queen's from Ohio was shopping mall magnate Edward J. DeBartolo. As Queen told it, "Eddie owned Thistledown, and he built Louisiana Downs and Remington Park." He would often invite the couple to join him at big races such as the Super Derby.

"It is so different now to what it was back then. Eddie would say, 'C'mon. I need your help.' He knew everyone; and he was treated to whatever he wanted," Queen mused, "It was always a good time when you were with him."

Queen remembered back to when he first met his future bride "riding an old plow horse," he remembered.

Jean still enjoys the races. As Queen puts it, "She likes to have a wager." When asked about her favorite horses, he said, "The ones that win."

In the late 1960s the pair moved their family to Lodi, Ohio, where they transformed a 170-acre cattle farm into a successful Thoroughbred nursery. It was their home base for the next 37 years, even though they often traveled to Florida to race and buy horses. Eventually, they moved to Clearwater, Fla.

"I couldn't handle that weather up north anymore, so I sold the farm," Queen noted.

Florida proved ideal. Queen spent a lot of time in Ocala, where he formed a fast friendship with Robert N. Scanlon, whom he considered to be one of the best pinhookers in the country. Scanlon's wife also hailed from Lodi. They enjoyed a good deal of success buying yearlings to resell. One of them was Texas Glitter, an \$826,077 earner who set course records sprinting at Gulfstream Park, Calder Race Course, and Laurel. The colt's 11 wins (nine in stakes) were capped by the Hollywood Turf Express Handicap (gr. IIIT).

Nelson Jones contacted Queen about the former Circle H Farm, previously owned by racing giant Fred W. Hooper. Jones had purchased the entire complex.

"The place was a wreck at that particular time, but had some really nice layouts, especially the part where Hooper had his horses," Queen recalled.

In 2003 he purchased an 82-acre parcel. All of the fencing needed replacing, but one of Hooper's training barns was kept as the broodmare barn. On a plateau adjacent to the racetrack, Queen had a 24-stall training barn constructed beneath a soaring, insulated steel-framed roof with ample room for its circumference shed row.

The fields gently angle upward toward the guest homes and his office. Out of habit, Queen takes in the view. He can't help being amused at the antics of his weanlings. He explains the advantages of the Florida weather and how yearlings can be turned out with hay after training hours.

"It cuts down on accidents," he said.

The track lights at Nelson Training Center enable his crew to have the first set out by 5 a.m. Fittingly at dawn, the sun streaks a golden crown against a burnished coral sky. His silks bear a similar noble emblem.

Queen has three key people in his oper-

ation. His son, Mark, who also managed the farm near Lodi, tends to the needs of the broodmares, weanlings, and yearlings up until they are ready to be broken. Trainer Ian Warden, son of a top riding instructor in England and a mother that fox hunted, was himself an advanced show rider and served his apprenticeship in a prominent Thoroughbred yard. He has been with Queen for 11 years. Maintenance manager Juan Garcia has been there 12. The loyal team works hard to send the horses to the races in good form. Queen has rolled his successes forward, appreciatively rewarding the entire staff when they win. Since 2000 Queen's horses have rung up more than \$8.7 million in earnings.

Out in a paddock, Sheer Drama nibbles on grass. The sun illuminates her copper-hued coat. The sleek mare is taking a well-deserved break from a hard-fought 2015 campaign. Queen has spent the last

was stubborn."

Conflicted as a 2-year-old, she did seem to enjoy the racetrack...once she got there.

Queen said: "She always had a long, gentle stride, like we saw in the Delaware."

Her trainer would be thrilled to have another campaign with her.

"She really came into herself as a 5-year-old," Fawkes said. "I think she's got another good solid year in front of her. That is up to Mr. Queen."

Queen is leaning toward breeding her.

"She will be a valuable broodmare," he said.

With the ease at which she handled the 10-furlong Delaware Handicap, she just might produce a classic horse.

Up until a few years ago, Queen was completely hands on. These days he works more with the people than he does with the horses. He says he is retired. But should a problem arise with a horse, he



Queen isn't sure Sheer Drama's racing career is over

few weeks deliberating his mare's future.

"I have had several solid offers in writing," he said.

Although undecided, Queen doesn't feel the urge to sell. Sheer Drama could easily return to race as a 6-year-old. The greatest hurdle would be her dainty eating habits.

"We've had a difficult time keeping weight on her," he explained. "She's sound. We are very fortunate in that respect."

Reflecting on Sheer Drama's early years, Queen had to laugh.

"She was meaner than a snake," he said, shaking his head. "Let's just say she

wants to see the horse right away. Good decisions come from experience.

Queen, 79, has been kept young by his animals and the racing game.

"You have to have something to look forward to," he said. His new focus is on improving Big Drama's next crop. His stallion stands at Bridlewood Farm near Ocala.

Bristol, a gift puppy given him by Fawkes, took a break from inspecting every nook and jumps up on Queen's knee. The pint-sized Jack Russell that won over Jean with her warm eyes looks up at him. Queen glances back, "C'mon, let's go check on the barn." **BH**