

Cole Country

Jeff and Susan Runco fire on all cylinders at Coleswood Farm

BY JOHN SCHEINMAN



COURTESY PHOTOGRAPHY

Trainer Jeff Runco ranked 16th in the country last year by wins with 158

JEFF AND SUSAN Runco's racing and breeding operation is all about balance. At their Coleswood Farm near Ransom, W.Va., just three miles from Hollywood Casino at Charles Town Races, the couple has built a powerhouse in miniature. They have developed a small and select band of broodmares, breed to race, buy young horses for themselves and for a wide array of clients, claim the occasional runner, and find them good homes when their careers are over.

"Sort of a mutual fund approach," Susan Runco said on an early spring day last month at the farm.

That approach has paid steady dividends. With only five

mares, Coleswood has produced seven stakes winners the past eight years. Jeff Runco is regularly atop the trainer standings at Charles Town. He sent out four horses to win races in last year's West Virginia Breeders Classic, led by Navy Ribbon, a filly co-owned by Coleswood who capped an undefeated 3-year-old season with a victory in the West Virginia Division of Tourism Breeders Classic.

Runco finished the year having won 158 races—ranking 16th in the country—with \$2,803,014 in earnings. Through April 12, he had won 34 times from 145 starts for a 23% strike

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Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB, Sire), Where Stands	2016 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2016 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	BELLAMY ROAD (02, Concerto), Dutchess Views Farm	\$7,500	114/38	3/3	0/3	(Land Over Sea, \$324,000)	\$1,366,116	*471	24	1.21	1.32
2	POSSE (00, Silver Deputy), Rockridge Stud	\$5,000	83/27	0/0	0/0	(Royal Posse, \$99,000)	\$861,187	*678	30	1.36	1.35
3	FREUD (98, Storm Cat), Sequel Stallions New York	\$10,000	87/24	0/0	0/0	(Perfect Freud, \$58,900)	\$849,618	*963	40	1.63	1.29
4	BIG BROWN (05, Boundary), Dutchess Views Farm	\$10,000	95/22	1/1	0/1	(Adore, \$124,600)	\$757,703	*494	14	1.32	1.76
5	HOLD ME BACK (06, Giant's Causeway), Irish Hill Century Farm	\$5,000	70/22	2/2	2/2	(Jet Black Magic, \$112,500)	\$629,408	188	4	1.11	1.26
6	BUSTIN STONES (04, City Zip), Waldorf Farm	\$2,500	31/10	0/0	0/0	(Bust Another, \$120,800)	\$482,011	139	2	1.32	1.46
7	FROST GIANT (03, Giant's Causeway), Keane Stud Operations	\$7,500	32/8	1/1	1/1	(Frosty Margarita, \$85,000)	\$354,127	*221	6	1.68	1.17
8	DUBLIN (07, Affleet Alex), Keane Stud Operations	\$2,500	24/5	0/0	0/0	(Celtic Chaos, \$44,250)	\$241,608	96	0	0.75	1.26
9	HERE'S ZEALOUS (97, Dehere), Kaz Hill Farm	\$1,000	24/6	0/0	0/0	(Here's a Jetpack, \$43,800)	\$200,570	190	1	0.99	0.99
10	DISCO RICO (97, Citidancer)	Died, 2014	20/4	0/0	0/0	(Vicki's Dancer, \$40,500)	\$184,298	260	11	1.38	1.22
11	NOBLE CAUSEWAY (02, Giant's Causeway)	Died, 2014	43/10	0/0	0/0	(Noble and a Beauty, \$51,400)	\$182,492	233	7	0.81	1.09
12	GIANT SURPRISE (09, Giant's Causeway), Rockridge Stud	\$5,000	10/3	0/0	0/0	(Taken by Surprise, \$49,020)	\$174,828	29	2	3.01	1.23
13	DESERT PARTY (06, Street Cry), Sequel Stallions New York	\$4,000	40/7	0/0	0/0	(Arabian Queen, \$23,040)	\$152,851	132	3	0.92	1.46
14	COSMONAUT (02, Lemon Drop Kid), Keane Stud Operations	\$5,000	16/2	1/1	0/1	(Wonderment, \$70,160)	\$125,297	79	2	1.09	1.05
15	D' FUNNYBONE (07, D'wildcat), Rockridge Stud	\$2,500	16/1	0/0	0/0	(Sweet Peaches, \$22,700)	\$118,534	*41	0	0.67	1.32
16	MR. SEKIGUCHI (03, Storm Cat), Irish Hill Century Farm	\$2,500	14/7	0/0	0/0	(Little Daniella, \$23,537)	\$118,072	*90	2	0.96	1.24
17	THE CLIFF'S EDGE (01, Gulch), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds	\$2,500	18/7	0/0	0/0	(Frazil, \$33,800)	\$111,073	243	4	0.82	1.17
18	COURAGEOUS CAT (06, Storm Cat), Qwestroyal North	\$6,000	10/2	0/0	0/0	(Amber Louise, \$61,520)	\$92,343	59	1	0.92	1.21
19	TEUFLESBERG (04, Johannesburg), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds	\$5,000	14/5	0/0	0/0	(Crystal's Cantata, \$22,360)	\$88,644	83	4	1.59	1.16
20	STONESIDER (03, Giant's Causeway), Keane Stud Operations	\$3,500	18/4	0/0	0/0	(Stoneheartedlover, \$26,303)	\$78,015	*189	4	1.16	1.20
21	SIR WHIMSEY (04, Jump Start), Mill Creek Farm	\$2,500	4/1	0/0	0/0	(Organic Gemini, \$33,228)	\$74,818	10	1	1.43	0.93
22	MIRACLE MAN (02, Yankee Victor), Pucker Ridge Farm	Died, 2015	3/1	0/0	0/0	(Lyrical Miracle, \$48,050)	\$74,750	8	1	2.00	1.63
23	MARSH SIDE (03, Gone West), Dutchess Views Farm	\$2,500	7/2	0/0	0/0	(Dr Luber's Kiss, \$44,390)	\$61,578	*119	0	0.24	1.25
24	RELATO DEL GATO (01, Tale of the Cat)	Died, 2014	3/2	0/0	0/0	(Down Town Kitty, \$44,010)	\$58,750	14	0	1.09	0.74
25	HERE COMES BEN (06, Street Cry), McMahon of Saratoga Thoroughbreds	\$7,500	13/1	0/0	0/0	(Big Band Benny, \$24,472)	\$58,350	56	0	0.59	1.15

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rate. Only three trainers among the top 100 in the country are hitting the board more often than Runco.

"Instead of claiming horses and getting horses that are not doing well at other (larger) tracks that get sent here, we focus more on the sales and bringing along young horses," Runco said. "That's been our goal, and that's really our success and what we've done the best at in terms of winning stakes and big purses. Having young horses is what it's all about."

Perfect Match

The Runcos met when Susan was training on a farm in Virginia in the early 1980s. She had shown hunters and jumpers as a kid growing up in the state and went to the University of Virginia. She paid her way through school breaking yearlings for the renowned all-around horseman Delmar Twyman in Orange, Va. She later galloped horses for Maryland trainer Charlie Lewis. Then she went to New York and galloped for Hall of Famer Woody Stephens.

"I got to get on Danzig, which was awesome," she said. "Then I started training horses down in Virginia, just piddling around with a few of my own."

Jeff Runco, 56, grew up the antithesis of the stereotypical horseman. He came of age in the suburbs of Omaha, Neb., son of a professor at Creighton University who was head of the cardiology department at St. Joseph's Hospital in Omaha.

"I had no experience with horses as a kid," Jeff Runco said. "When I was about (continued on page 30)"



Navy Ribbon was unbeaten last year at 3 for Runco and Coleswood Farm and Neil Glasser

2016 NEW YORK SIRES BY WINNERS

Sire	Rnrs	Wnrs
Bellamy Road	114	38
Posse	83	27
Freud	87	24
Big Brown	95	22
Hold Me Back	70	22
Noble Causeway	43	10
Bustin Stones	31	10
Frost Giant	32	8
Desert Party	40	7
The Cliff's Edge	18	7
Mr. Sekiguchi	14	7
Here's Zealous	24	6
Dublin	24	5
Teuflesberg	14	5
Disco Rico	20	4
Stonesider	18	4
Giant Surprise	10	3
Alex's Pal	8	3

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2016 LEADING SIRES IN PENNSYLVANIA

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Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB, Sire), Where Stands	2016 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2016 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative		
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	ROCKPORT HARBOR (02, Unbridled's Song)	Died, 2013	111/30	2/3	1/2	(Weast Hill, \$167,600)	\$1,011,697	466	24	1.34	1.42
2	JUMP START (99, A.P. Indy), Northview	\$10,000	93/25	0/0	0/0	(Prayer for Relief, \$64,552)	\$997,901	*1162	38	1.54	1.34
3	SILVER TRAIN (02, Old Trieste)	Died, 2013	72/24	0/0	0/0	(Meanbone, \$71,800)	\$538,814	*494	10	0.98	1.29
4	CORINTHIAN (03, Pulpit), Pin Oak Lane Farm	\$4,000	94/17	0/0	0/0	(Pancake, \$43,885)	\$352,436	*478	11	0.77	1.40
5	WEIGELIA (01, Safely's Mark), WynOaks Farm	\$3,500	22/8	0/0	0/0	(Secret Garden, \$61,418)	\$343,094	71	3	1.31	1.02
6	FAIRBANKS (03, Giant's Causeway), Northview	\$2,500	53/11	0/0	0/0	(Welcome Fairbanks, \$22,730)	\$309,625	206	3	1.09	1.28
7	MEDALLIST (01, Touch Gold), Northview	\$2,000	26/6	1/1	0/1	(Love Came to Town, \$49,500)	\$201,314	193	6	1.28	1.41
8	TALENT SEARCH (03, Catiensus), Diamond B Farm	\$2,500	27/8	0/0	0/0	(Wilma Lynn, \$34,980)	\$175,709	*103	1	1.05	1.26
9	CITY SHARPSTER (99, Carson City), Woodvale Farm	\$1,000	20/4	0/0	0/0	(Diadema, \$48,149)	\$138,172	59	0	0.66	0.72
10	LORD SHANAKILL (06, Speightstown), Pin Oak Lane Farm	\$5,000	33/7	0/0	0/0	(Regality, \$20,954)	\$131,112	110	1	0.88	0.94
11	GIMMEAWINK (00, Elusive Quality), Mountain Springs Racing Stable	\$2,500	19/5	0/0	0/0	(Gimmeaclue, \$36,329)	\$120,274	*222	1	0.78	1.05
12	ANDIRON (06, A.P. Indy), Xanthus Farms	\$2,000	13/4	0/0	0/0	(Roxbury N Overton, \$43,680)	\$108,892	37	0	0.92	0.56
13	ALBERT THE GREAT (97, Go for Gin), Pin Oak Lane Farm	\$2,500	22/3	0/0	0/0	(She's Chubs, \$18,600)	\$79,642	*378	8	1.13	1.13
14	PARTNER'S HERO (94, Danzig), Castle Rock Farm	\$1,500	11/1	0/0	0/0	(Salty's Hero, \$40,500)	\$75,447	451	15	1.19	1.32
15	AISLE (99, Pulpit), Whirlwind Stables	Private	9/3	0/0	0/0	(Kohl, \$31,440)	\$68,898	84	0	0.80	0.78
16	SIR SHACKLETON (01, Miswaki), Dana Point Farm	\$1,000	9/4	0/0	0/0	(Ameridude, \$24,360)	\$67,631	*97	1	0.69	1.06
17	GOT THE LAST LAUGH (04, Distorted Humor), Diamond B Farm	\$2,500	7/3	0/0	0/0	(Laugh At Life, \$17,989)	\$65,663	41	0	1.20	1.21
18	RIMROD (00, Danzig), Castle Rock Farm	\$1,500	12/3	0/0	0/0	(My Juliana, \$13,944)	\$64,010	101	2	1.34	1.17
19	WISEMAN'S FERRY (99, Hennessy)	Died, 2015	13/2	0/0	0/0	(Tough Weather, \$30,840)	\$60,455	*290	6	1.67	1.08
20	BULLSBAY (04, Tiznow), Northview	\$3,000	12/2	0/0	0/0	(Bronze Bull, \$13,500)	\$60,408	45	1	1.87	1.13



KATHERINE A. TURNBULL

Coleswood Farm, near Ransom, W.Va., is home to a select band of broodmares

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15, I ran across some people we knew that had some horses and went out to the farm and learned to walk them and be around them. Then I was riding the pony. Next thing I know, I was galloping horses out on the farm.

"I graduated from high school and decided to try and give riding a shot, being a jockey."

Runco, much to the chagrin of his father, began riding at Ak-Sar-Ben when the Nebraska track was still going strong.

"He was a Rhodes Scholar, and none of this made a whole lot of sense to his father," Susan Runco said.

Jeff Runco later gravitated to Louisiana and met future Hall of Famer Grover "Bud" Delp at Fair Grounds and began riding for him there and then following him up to Maryland for the spring meet at Pimlico.

"After I lost my bug, I went to Delaware. I started to struggle a little bit. So I came here and rode at Charles Town."

One evening a jockey contracted to ride

for Susan got sick. This was in the days before cell phones.

"The stewards ended up putting him on my horse, and I had no way of knowing I didn't have a jockey," she said. "That was sort of customary back then. He got left (at the gate) and ran second."

Jeff rode a few more for Susan, and when he got too heavy to be a jockey, he started helping her out on the farm. Susan then began to ride races a bit.

"We kind of switched professions for a while," he said.

The couple married in 1985, had their first son, and have been training and breeding horses together for the past 30 years.

The mare that got the ball rolling and has done the heavy lifting for them is Heater, a 19-year-old daughter of Dixieland Heat out of the Elocutionist mare Port Desire. Heater has produced stakes winners Dahlgren Hall, Sea Rescue, and Waves and Tides. Go Navy, her daughter by Silver Ghost, is the dam of Navy Ribbon.

They purchased Heater, bred by Pope McLean, and she won five of 10 starts. She produced her first foal, by Lear Fan, in 2002 and they sold the colt at Keeneland. Her next foal, a colt, they kept and that was Dahlgren Hall, who became champion 2-year-old in West Virginia.

(continued on page 32)

Special Note For Sire Lists:

For stallions that stand, will stand, or stood (deceased) in the states featured in this section (stallions that are dead or exported prior to 2012 are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through April 10, 2016. 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 2015 is \$21,782 or 50% of the 2015 average purse in Japan. To put earnings on par, all Japanese progeny earnings are multiplied by 50% before being credited to a sire's progeny earnings. Hong Kong earnings are adjusted by 17%; Singapore by 57%. Current year stakes winners include all N.H.-black-type stakes results from all available countries. *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.

NA'S LEADING SIRE BY 2YO ABC INDEX

2015 Champion NY Bred two-year-old filly **FROSTY MARGARITA** (\$370,800 to 3, 2016), the three-time stakes winner has amassed a record of 8-4-4-0, she finished 2015 as the leading money earning New York Bred juvenile filly

OBS March 2016 **FROST GIANT 2-year-old filly** recorded the co-fastest work in :20 2/5 before selling for \$200,000, the highest price for a NY Sire and fourth highest price NY Bred.

*Don't miss NY-Bred 2-year-olds selling at
OBS April 19-22, including Hip 96, filly out of
Reata's Vixen, 1/4 work in 20.4*

FROST GIANT

Giant's Causeway - Takesmybreathaway,
by Gone West | \$7,500 LF

2015 LEADING NORTHEAST SIRE

2016 Texas Glitter S. & Fisher Island H. winner **MANHATTAN DAN** and 3-year-old **Adore**, 3rd Fair Grounds Oaks-G2 highlight North American success for their sire.

Down under **BIG BROWN** has been represented by 2016 stakes horses **NEVERLAND (Aus)**, 2nd G1x.com.au Perth Cup (G2) and **Nancy (Aus)**, 2nd Newcastle Newmarket S. (G3)

In 2015, sire of 11 2YO winners, & in April at OBS 8 juveniles on offer

BIG BROWN

Boundary - Mien, by Nureyev
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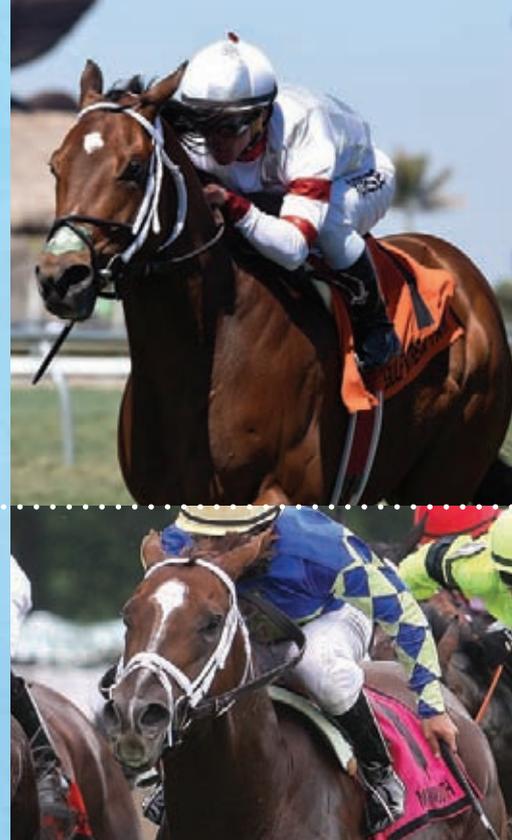
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2016 LEADING SIRES IN WEST VIRGINIA

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB, Sire), Where Stands	2016 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2016 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	LIMEHOUSE (01, Grand Slam), O'Sullivan Farms	\$2,500	54/16	0/0	0/0	(Just Kissing Buck, \$54,810)	\$388,527	*386	19	1.23	1.20
2	SWISS YODELER (94, Eastern Echo), O'Sullivan Farms	\$2,000	33/15	0/0	0/0	(W. Giles, \$86,160)	\$346,480	758	15	1.01	1.04
3	BROTHER DEREK (03, Benchmark), Naylee Farm	\$3,500	43/9	0/0	0/0	(Sibling War, \$49,800)	\$294,671	*130	4	1.20	1.21
4	BOP (97, Rahy)	Died, 2012	35/16	0/0	0/0	(Bops Gold, \$29,814)	\$278,166	*192	4	0.93	0.88
5	WINDSOR CASTLE (98, Lord Carson), Taylor Mountain Farm	\$3,500	52/10	0/0	0/0	(Castle's Boy, \$26,310)	\$237,700	291	10	1.07	1.03
6	CHARITABLE MAN (06, Lemon Drop Kid), Taylor Mountain Farm	\$4,000	36/12	0/0	0/0	(Elo Govna, \$27,840)	\$232,241	112	2	1.06	1.13
7	FIBER SONDE (05, Unbridled's Song), Beau Ridge Farm	\$1,000	21/8	0/0	0/0	(Purer Than Silk, \$19,668)	\$145,777	117	6	1.40	0.79
8	DENIS OF CORK (05, Harlan's Holiday), Taylor Mountain Farm	\$500	27/7	0/0	0/0	(Return to Denis, \$22,880)	\$133,834	88	0	0.63	1.17
9	PEAK DANCER (97, Mt. Livermore)	Private	20/8	0/0	0/0	(Boo Boo Dancer, \$15,945)	\$123,476	90	4	0.93	0.86
10	LUFTIKUS (96, Meadowlake), Taylor Mountain Farm	\$750	24/8	0/0	0/0	(Blisstikus, \$31,290)	\$121,464	284	8	0.99	1.09
11	REAL ESTATE (04, High Yield), Flamingo Run Farm	\$1,000	11/4	0/0	0/0	(March Wind, \$34,020)	\$76,300	38	0	0.66	0.84
12	DURING (00, Cherokee Run), O'Sullivan Farms	\$1,500	9/2	1/1	0/1	(Lucy N Ethel, \$61,380)	\$75,429	195	4	0.84	1.10
13	PROSPECT BAY (92, Crafty Prospector)	N/A	7/5	0/0	0/0	(Forty One and Out, \$17,210)	\$66,922	286	7	0.93	1.47
14	XCHANGER (04, Exchange Rate), O'Sullivan Farms	\$500	12/3	0/0	0/0	(Change My Pick, \$19,667)	\$65,234	54	0	0.32	1.13
15	OFFICER ROCKET (GB) (04, Officer), Bybee Road Farm	Private	6/2	0/0	0/0	(A. P. Rocket, \$32,880)	\$51,834	20	0	0.72	0.66
16	SIENTE EL TRUENO (07, City Zip), Stehr's Farm	\$500	4/2	0/0	0/0	(Siente El Viento, \$22,125)	\$44,097	7	0	0.62	0.57
17	GRAND RESERVE (02, Theatrical), One Sparrow Farm	\$1,000	13/3	0/0	0/0	(Colton's Grand, \$10,330)	\$41,039	47	0	0.34	0.77
18	YARROW BRAE (95, Deputy Minister), O'Sullivan Farms	\$750	7/2	0/0	0/0	(Mr. Prosecutor, \$20,792)	\$40,572	299	6	1.09	0.99
19	FOREST GROVE (01, Forestry)	N/A	5/3	0/0	0/0	(Arborville, \$17,440)	\$29,245	111	2	0.83	1.19
20	MEDFORD (95, Meadowlake)	Pnsd	10/1	0/0	0/0	(One Sweet Ford, \$16,605)	\$28,403	93	1	0.63	0.81



Spa Creek won last year's West Virginia Breeders Classic Distaff

(continued from page 30)

Heater lost her foal this year and another mare aborted, so the Runcos will only have three foals this spring. Susan said they have high hopes for another filly they are retiring, Spa Creek, a stakes winner of \$201,032.

"We didn't really get seriously involved in breeding probably until we started with Heater," Susan said. "We had dabbled in it. I did breed a horse that was on the Derby trail named Dusty's Darby. He got beat a nose by Spend a Buck in the (grade I) Arlington-Washington Futurity, and he won the Mountain Valley Stakes at Oaklawn. I sold him as a yearling in Kentucky. So, that was the little bit of breeding I had

done. When we came here, we were focused more on racing. We bred a couple, but we couldn't be everywhere at once."

Now they can be. They have two assistant trainers: Mike Kaetzel, who managed a barn for Team Valor at Fair Hill and was an assistant to Hall of Fame trainer Bill Mott for eight years; and Stan Blackford, who has been with Runco for more than 20 years.

Between the farm and the track, the Runcos employ approximately 35 people to work with about 45 horses.

"We've got a staff out here of five or six, then I've got probably 25 to 30 people at the track," Jeff said. "I've got a lot of payroll."

The Runcos appear nothing if not methodical in their program. They recognize that if West Virginia stops supporting racing, they would be perfectly capable of winning on a larger circuit, but they've set down roots at Coleswood to grow and refine their business and take advantage of their state's breeders awards.

Before Jefferson County voters approved slot machines in 1996, racing at Charles Town was all but finished. The Runcos moved their operation to Penn National Race Course, rented a friend's property in Hershey, Pa., and stayed four years, putting their two sons into schools there.

"One went to Lehigh and one to the Naval Academy, so that worked out good," Jeff said. "Now, one's a CFO of a hedge fund and one is a Coast Guard helicopter pilot."

The Runcos waited until 1999 to make sure West Virginia had stabilized before returning.

Jeff said when they returned, "We started off with a boom. I think the first night we were here we won three. We had a medium-sized stable, and as Charles Town got going and the track started getting better and the purses started getting better, we grew along with the track."

That growth extends now to racing horses for Team Valor International, West Point Thoroughbreds, Rockingham Ranch, Qatar Racing, and Rick Porter, Runco said. Closer to home, he trains for longtime Maryland-based owner Neil Glasser, who co-owns Navy Ribbon, and David Raim, a lawyer from Bethesda, Md.

It was Raim who scored a major coup
(continued on page 34)

POSSE

Silver Deputy - Raska, by Rahy | \$5,000 LF

2016 Stakes Horse **ROYAL POSSE**



ROYAL POSSE (\$541,245) has finished 1st or 2nd in his last 9 starts, with 4 wins, incl. Saratoga's 2015 **Evan Shipman S.** In 2016, he won the **\$90,000 Mr. Sinatra S.** (4/2/16, shown) and finished 2nd in **\$100,000 Haynesfield S.** and **\$125,000 Jazil S.**

Among New York's Top Sires 7 Straight Years

Sire of an Eclipse Champion and a Breeders' Cup Winner

Sire of 16 Stakes Horses in 2015



Erin Robinson 859.421.7531 Lere Visagie 518.851.6616
5384 Route 9H-23 Hudson, New York 12534 www.rockridgestud.com

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2016 LEADING SIRES IN MARYLAND

➤ Go to BloodHorse.com for daily updated sire lists

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB, Sire), Where Stands	2016 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2016 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	FRIESAN FIRE (06, A.P. Indy), Country Life Farm	\$4,000	32/11	1/2	0/1	(Tisdale, \$101,200)	\$531,802	91	1	1.09	1.31
2	NOT FOR LOVE (90, Mr. Prospector)	Pnsd	58/18	0/0	0/0	(Lovable Lady, \$52,351)	\$478,090	951	77	1.69	1.45
3	LION HEARTED (96, Storm Cat)	Died, 2015	48/12	0/0	0/0	(Bioterp, \$45,201)	\$390,882	*606	18	1.21	1.29
4	ORIENTATE (98, Mt. Livermore), Northview Stallion Station	\$5,000	50/13	0/0	0/0	(Woodland Walk, \$46,651)	\$295,294	*777	31	1.27	1.70
5	GREAT NOTION (00, Elusive Quality), Northview Stallion Station	\$3,500	26/7	1/1	0/1	(Great Soul, \$65,000)	\$292,241	237	13	1.52	1.23
6	LOUIS QUATORZE (93, Sovereign Dancer), Murmur Farm	\$2,500	39/12	0/0	0/0	(Dothat Dance, \$29,534)	\$223,512	*975	21	1.14	1.32
7	PETIONVILLE (92, Seeking the Gold), Murmur Farm	\$5,000	37/9	0/0	0/0	(Cardio Cowboy, \$45,680)	\$222,038	*707	41	1.31	1.28
8	SCIPION (02, A.P. Indy), Murmur Farm	\$2,500	30/6	0/0	0/0	(Whiskey Sour, \$34,158)	\$204,848	123	3	1.08	1.06
9	ROCK SLIDE (98, A.P. Indy), Shamrock Farm	\$2,000	20/5	0/0	0/0	(Aix En Provence, \$29,850)	\$164,408	275	8	1.02	1.19
10	STREET MAGICIAN (04, Street Cry), Heritage Stallions	\$3,000	14/3	0/0	0/0	(Do What I Say, \$33,360)	\$124,299	75	2	1.14	1.22
11	OUTFLANKER (94, Danzig), Shamrock Farm	\$3,000	23/6	0/0	0/0	(Pinkout, \$30,600)	\$119,733	*531	21	1.37	1.14
12	CHEROKEE'S BOY (00, Citidancer), Murmur Farm	\$2,000	18/4	0/0	0/0	(Gracie Merlot, \$24,270)	\$82,801	98	1	1.12	1.02
13	M EIGHTY (99, Lite the Fuse), Shamrock Farm	Private	3/2	0/0	0/0	(Fran's Buckaroo, \$30,033)	\$51,377	14	0	1.41	0.91
14	GATORS N BEARS (00, Stormy Atlantic)	Died, 2012	8/2	0/0	0/0	(Gator Gold, \$12,435)	\$33,609	151	5	1.04	1.19
15	ETCHED (05, Forestry), Bonita Farm	\$3,500	8/1	0/0	0/0	(Chapel of Chimes, \$23,643)	\$27,143	26	0	0.25	1.03

(continued from page 32)

this past winter with a horse selected for him by Runco at the 2014 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga select yearling sale.

"Jeff called me while I was on vacation in Vermont," Raim said. "Normally, I don't spend this kind of money on a horse—\$60,000 is as high as I go—and he called and said there was this horse for sale in Saratoga, and if I was ever going to spend a little more on a horse, this was the one to spend it on.

"I said, 'I need to think about that,' and he said, 'Don't waste a lot of time.'"

The filly was a daughter of Flatter out of the Theatrical mare Comedy, and she had not met her reserve price of \$95,000. She also is a full sister to Taris, and when that filly began to take down graded stakes victories in California, it enhanced their purchase—now named Stoweshoe.

Raced by Runco, Stoweshoe won two of four starts including a small stakes at Charles Town as a 2-year-old.

"We gave her some time off over the winter to let her grow up to be a nice 3-year-old," Runco said. "Taris came back and won a graded stakes going long and she really looked like she was going to head toward the Breeders' Cup and be one of the top fillies of the year (she finished third in the TwinSpires Filly & Mare Sprint, gr. I).

"We talked about it, and this filly was good, but she wasn't a great big filly, so we weren't sure how good she was. She wasn't going to be as good as Taris, but we felt right now was the best time to sell her."

They struck while the iron was hot and put Stoweshoe in the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky winter mixed sale in February. She brought \$330,000 from Rockbridge

Bloodstock.

"It was a touchdown, you know?" Runco said. "We'll take that money and go buy some horses with it."

Raim was very pleased.

"I have a very disciplined business plan, and Jeff is aware of it," Raim said. "He's probably more conservative than I am. He's not looking to spend my money willy-nilly. Before I got into this, I did a fair bit of reading on breeding philosophies. We have a specific type of horse we will look at in terms of breeding, and additionally up until very recently only bought West Virginia-bred horses. The idea was to buy pretty well-bred West Virginia horses by good Kentucky sires, having spent a little bit more money than maybe some of the other folks in West Virginia, and race them in West Virginia. I have followed that pretty religiously."

The strategy dovetails nicely with what the Runcos do with their own mares: send them to the best stallions they can afford—often undervalued ones—in Kentucky.

This year they have bred to Lookin At Lucky, Competitive Edge, Astrology, and Morning Line.

At first blush it might appear to be overkill to go to Kentucky stallions to produce horses to race at Charles Town.

"It takes more than you think," said Susan, who handles most of the couple's breeding decisions.

"It didn't use to, but it does now," her husband added. "You've got to breed up if you want to win. Susan is very good at picking out young stallions that will hit. We've got several mares in foal to Astrology. They'll be his first 2-year-olds on the ground. We own a share in him. We're hoping he's going to be good. The ones we have look awesome."

The Runcos work loosely with Barry and Jan Butzer, who breed and sell brood-



KATHERINE A. TURNBULL PHOTOS

Foals at Coleswood are by the best stallions the Runcos can afford

2016 LEADING SIRES IN VIRGINIA

Go to BloodHorse.com for daily updated sire lists

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2016 Stud Fee	Rnrs/Wnrs	Stakes Wnrs/Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2016 Earnings	Foals	Cumulative		
									Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	COSA VERA (05, Dynaformer), North Cliff Farms	Private	2/1	0/0	0/0	(Max Crown, \$26,150)	\$26,710	25	0	0.57	1.43
2	REBELLION (GB) (03, Mozart), Hickory Tree Farm	\$3,500	6/1	0/0	0/0	(Volstead, \$12,368)	\$21,985	*42	1	1.16	1.31

mares and stallion seasons and shares at their Sun Valley Farm near Versailles, Ky.

"We made contact and he helped me book a couple mares, and he's just a wonderful guy, an old-fashioned, hands-on, top-class horseman," Jeff Runco said.

Butzer said he buys more than 100 stallion seasons for his clients and the farm. Dealing in volume helps him get discounts on the better stallions, which helps smaller outfits like the Runcos.

"With that, you get me, for good or bad," Butzer joked, but Susan Runco is very particular about the value of good conformation, so she values his insight into the Kentucky stallions and which will best fit the Coleswood mares.

"Jeff and Susan are great people because they bring another aspect to it—they breed to race," Butzer said. "You see less and less of that. That's refreshing to me."

Butzer said he and Susan speak maybe a half-dozen times in the spring and reach a deal that will hit the budget. He says she is more collaborative in her approach than other clients who say, "That's an A++ nick, and that's what we're going to do."

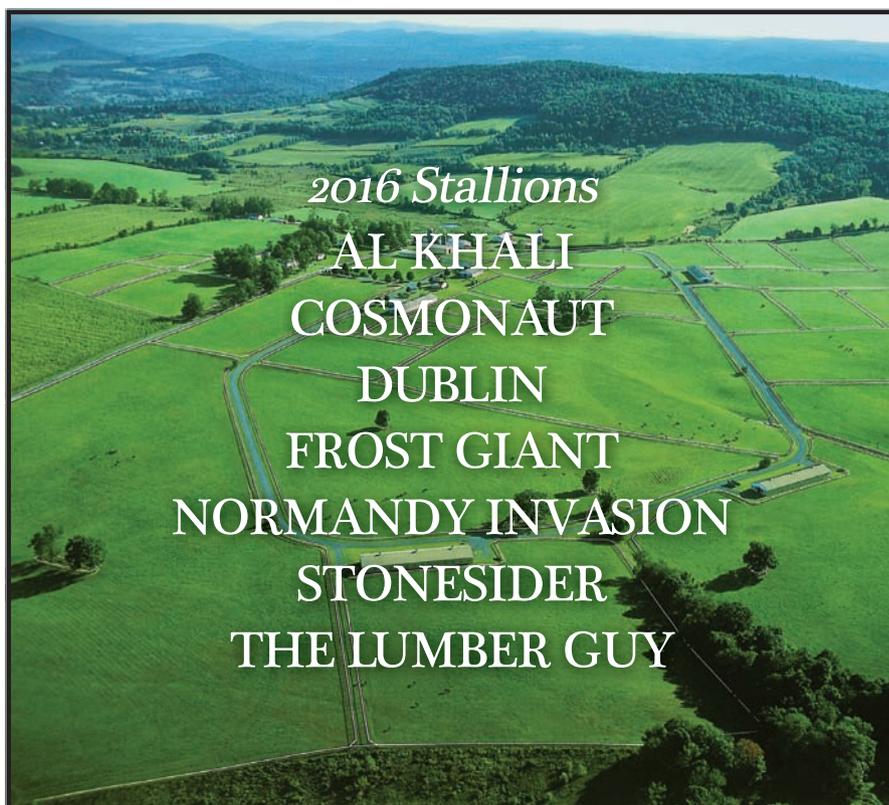
The final piece of the puzzle is aftercare, and the Runcos are very conscientious about it, as is Raim.

Asked what he appreciates most about the Runcos, Raim said, "There are a couple of things. The first thing was the results. We've had quite good results together. The second thing was that they really seemed to care about the horses, and it particularly manifested itself to the attention they've given all my horses after their racing days are done. If they haven't been claimed along the way, they find a good home for them. Either we sell the horse for a couple thousand dollars to be a broodmare or find someone who will take a gelding to be a show horse or find a racing aftercare organization where I can make a charitable contribution and they will take my horse on."

"I've never had a breakdown on the track, and they've always found a good home afterward. These are very intelligent animals, and I'm buying them for my pleasure. (Jeff) really does a good job not racing them when he should not be racing them and finding them a good place afterward." **BH**



Jeff Runco: "You've got to breed up if you want to win."



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