



FUN IN THE SUN

Tucson's Rillito Park creates racing fans

BY ALEXA RAVIT / PHOTOS BY COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

IF ASKED TO NAME A STATE known for horse racing, few would mention Arizona. Although Turf Paradise outside Phoenix runs for parts of eight months a year, the state does not host a graded stakes race for Thoroughbreds or Quarter Horses. Yet, at a dusty bullring track in Tucson, racing is alive, and is starting to make waves. In the shadows of the Santa Catalina Mountains sits Rillito Park, a historic landmark that has survived decades of adversity to become the epitome of resolve, a learning laboratory for the next generation of racing leaders, and the embodiment of the live racetrack experience.

Rillito, built in 1943, has long been known as the birthplace of modern Quarter Horse racing. The venue, home to the first three-eighths-mile straightaway, or “chute,” did not host Thoroughbred racing until 1953, when the current five-eighths oval was constructed. Hall-of-Famers Ismael “Milo” Valenzuela and Bob Baffert both rode at Rillito, with Baffert fortuitously switching careers and



Breaking from the gate at Rillito Downs; inset, general manager Mike Weiss

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recording his first Thoroughbred training victory at the track in 1979.

Despite its impressive credentials Rillito has faced uncertainty throughout its history. Closed for much of the 1980s, fair racing returned to the track under the direction of the Pima County Horsemen's Association, keeping racing alive through the 1990s and early 2000s.

The 21st century brought a new threat: soccer. The racetrack's infield contains four soccer fields, and another seven lie outside the oval within a corner kick of the far turn. A 2006 resolution called for the demolition of the track and grandstand to add more fields. Fortunately for the racing community, the funds for the project were never raised. In 2017 the Pima County Board of Supervisors voted to extend the lease for racing to continue at Rillito through 2021, rescuing the historic venue from being razed.

Given the track's unsettled history and aged facility, creating excitement and local traction for a race meet at Rillito could have proved to be a futile effort. Enter Mike Weiss.

Weiss, 61, has been involved in horse racing for more than 40 years. He has worked in countless positions in the industry, but he is perhaps best known for



Rillito Park hosted 12 days of racing in 2018

his role at Beulah Park, where he served as executive vice president and general manager for 14 years.

Known for his innovative ideas, Weiss introduced the Beulah handicapping twin sisters and the Fortune 6 bet (now known as the Rainbow 6), and he was the first director of racing to use Equibase past performances. The former executive vice president and general manager of AmericaTab, an advanced deposit wagering platform that was purchased by Churchill Downs Inc., Weiss now runs a consulting business and is the president of the ADW PariBet.

However, it was Weiss' success in bring-

ing racing back to the North Dakota Horse Park that eventually led him to Tucson.

"I had a call from the North Dakota Racing Commission one day saying this track had been closed for three years, and the horsemen were trying to put together a meet, and they asked if I would fly to a meeting there," Weiss said. "I went out to North Dakota for the meeting, and, afterward, I literally flew home, packed a bag, and came back to North Dakota for six weeks on my own dime just to open that place."

Weiss' time in North Dakota attracted the interest of the Rillito Park Foundation, a 501(c)(3) created to oversee the Rillito

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WON EVERY YEAR FROM AGES 2 THROUGH 7

AT 2 Allowance Winner, Placed 3rd in the **Display Stakes** at Woodbine

AT 3 **WON G3 Bold Ruler Handicap** at Belmont Park, **G3 Swale Stakes** at Gulfstream Park; 2nd **G3 Gallant Bob Stakes** at Parx Racing, **G3 Bay Shore Stakes** at Aqueduct, **Charlie Barley Stakes** at Woodbine; 3rd **G2 Woody Stephens Stakes** at Belmont, **G3 Holy Bull Stakes** at Gulfstream Park

AT 4 **WON G3 Belmont Sprint Championship Stakes** at Belmont; 3rd **G1 Carter Handicap** at Aqueduct, **G2 Churchill Downs Stakes** at Churchill Downs.

AT 5 2nd **G3 Belmont Sprint Championship Stakes** at Belmont, **Diablo Stakes** at Belmont; 3rd **Thanksgiving Handicap** at Fair Grounds; **WON Allowance** at Saratoga

AT 6 2nd **Thanksgiving Handicap** at Fair Grounds; **WON Allowance** at Fair Grounds

AT 7 **WON Allowance** at Gulfstream Park **SETTING A NEW TRACK RECORD** (7 furlongs in 1:20) while carrying top weight, in the final start of his racing career.

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sire of **Givemeaminit** 3rd in the **G1 HOPEFUL STAKES** (SAR) at two.

9 STAKES HORSES IN 2018

Givemeaminit, 3rd **G3 Pat Day Mile Stakes** (CD); **DOUBLE STAR**, **WON Louisiana Legends Cheval S.**, **Equine Sales Derby**; 3rd **Pelican S.**, **Big Drama S.**; **TESTING ONE TWO**, **WON Treasure Chest S.**, **Louisiana Legends Soiree S.**, **Crescent City Oaks**, **Take Charge Brandi S.**; **BERMUDA STAR**, **WON Tom Benson Mem. S.**, **River Cities S.**, **Louisiana Cup Distaff S.**; **Jimi's A Star**, 2nd **Louisiana Legacy S.** at 2;

Shamrock Star, 3rd **Louisiana Premier Night Matron**; **Tap Dance Star**, 3rd **Louisiana Cup Sprint S.**; **Divine Bean**, 2nd **Heitai Overnight S.**, 3rd **Louisiana Cup Sprint S.**; **Blue Suade Guitar**, 3rd **Acadiana S.**

2YO Maiden Special Weight Winners Asongforyou, Jimi's A Star, Iona Guitar, etc.

As well as 2017 juvenile SW **MINIT TO STARDOM**, **WON Louisiana Champions Day Juvenile**.

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Concluded his racing career with a Track Record Setting win in the Louisiana Legends Classic

1st Yearlings sold for \$95K, \$40K, etc

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Custom for Carlos

More Than Ready-Meadow Oaks, by Meadowlake

Sire of '17 G1 LaTroienne Winner **BIG WORLD**

2017 Louisiana Horse of the Year and Champion Older Female, 2016 Louisiana Champion 3-year-old Filly (\$629,190) Winner of the '17 **\$300K G1 La Troienne S.**, At two, she won the **\$200K G3 Tempted Stakes**. **BIG WORLD** was a \$98,000 OBS Select Yearling.

Sire **MONTE MAN** 6 wins from 6 starts in 2018, 5 stakes wins!

1st Louisiana Premier Night Sprint, Costa Rising S. Louisiana Legends Sprint S., Louisiana Cup Sprint S., and Heitai Overnight S., Lifetime record 28-10-4-3, \$373,745

SEASIDE AMOUR, 3YO 2018 Stakes Winner, 1st Acadiana S. Won 1st out in a MSW at FG. On the board in 5 of 5 starts!; **READY PROSPECTOR** 2nd '18 Louisiana Premier Night Prince S.; **Beto**, 2YO stakes placed winner! 2nd Louisiana Cup Juvenile, 3rd D.S. Shine Young F.; **Frolic**, stakes placed winner, 3rd Louisiana Cup Filly and Mare Sprint, 3rd Louisiana Legends Mademoiselle; **Tensas Secret** 3rd '18 G3 Clasico Jorge Washington S.; **Gracida** 3rd '18 Crescent City Derby; **Bionic Butterfly**, 3rd Elge Raspberry S.; 2YO **Whodat-whodat**, 3rd Louisiana Cup Juvenile; 2YO **Brother Richie**, 3rd Jean Lafitte S. etc.

BIG WORLD SOLD FOR \$725,000 AT FTNOV20172YO FULL BROTHER TO GSW BIG WORLD SOLD FOR \$400,000 FTFEB2017

2yos have sold for \$400K, \$160K, \$125K, \$80K, \$75K, \$55K, \$50K, etc.

Yearlings have sold for \$98K, \$80K, \$70K, \$55K, \$44K, etc.

Fee: \$3,000 Live Foal, 9-1 or \$3,500 LFSN • Nominated to Breeders' Cup • Enrolled in eNicks, G1 Goldmine Stallion Match and TrueNicks



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2018 Stakes Horses

OURS TO RUN 1st Happy Ticket Overnight S., Louisiana Premier Night Matron S., Louisiana Legends Mademoiselle S.; **ROCK N SAKE** 2nd Costa Rising S.; **INVENIAM VIAM** 3rd Marie G. Krantz Memorial S.; **Safari Calimari** 2nd Magnolia S.

Sire of: **GENTLEMEN'S BET** (\$744,155) G1 Xpressbet Breeders' Cup Sprint placed. Stakes Winner. *Now standing stud*; **OUR QUISTA** (11-5-3-1, \$266,380) Louisiana Bred Champion.

2018 winners: 2YO MSW winner **GLADEE'S GRAY LADY**; 3YO MSW winners **HALF SEXY, AW SHUCKS, C'MON VE**; ALW winners **HALFFLATT, OUR VALOR, Smiley Briley, TOR CON SIX, AFRO BLUE, HALF A MILLION, JOCKAMO'S SONG, OUR SMITTY**, etc.

Fee: \$4,500 Live Foal, 9-1 or \$5,000 LFSN • Nominated to Breeders' Cup • Enrolled in eNicks, G1 Goldmine Stallion Match and TrueNicks

Also Standing:

G. W.'S D'ORO, by Medaglia d'Oro - Sarah Lane's Oates, by Sunshine Forever, \$1,500 9-1 or \$2,000 LFSN

OLE REBEL, by Carson City-Velvet Tulip, by Valid Appeal, \$1,500 9-1 or \$2,000 LFSN



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Ole Rebel
Star Guitar



2018 LEADING SIRE IN LOUISIANA

For daily updated sire lists visit BloodHorse.com

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2018 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2018 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Stks Foals	Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	COURT VISION (05, Gulch), Acadiana Equine@Copper Crowne	\$3,500	129/60	2/4	1/2	(Mr Havercamp, \$393,080)	\$2,555,413	*273	6	1.10	1.45
2	ASTROLOGY (08, A.P. Indy), Acadiana Equine@Copper Crowne	\$4,000	110/54	2/3	2/2	(Amy Farah Fowler, \$154,900)	\$2,166,626	*202	4	0.89	1.25
3	STAR GUITAR (05, Quiet American), Clear Creek Stud	\$7,500	71/41	3/8	1/3	(Testing One Two, \$184,925)	\$1,833,345	104	6	1.16	1.11
4	CUSTOM FOR CARLOS (06, More Than Ready), Clear Creek Stud	\$3,500	87/39	2/6	2/2	(Monte Man, \$246,690)	\$1,596,553	178	6	0.90	1.02
5	HALF OURS (03, Unbridled's Song), Clear Creek Stud	\$5,000	102/47	1/3	1/1	(Ours to Run, \$175,196)	\$1,591,865	*420	20	0.99	1.15
6	D'WILDCAT (98, Forest Wildcat), Whispering Oaks Farm	\$2,500	84/38	0/0	0/0	(Cougar Country, \$89,144)	\$1,332,506	*471	16	1.27	1.21
7	COUNTRY DAY (06, Speightstown), Peach Lane Farms	\$2,000	46/23	1/1	0/1	(Will Call, \$263,687)	\$1,130,865	89	1	0.96	1.01
8	LINE OF DAVID (07, Lion Heart), Red River Farms	Died, 2017	87/33	0/0	0/0	(Fear No Evil, \$150,650)	\$1,068,886	*250	3	0.90	1.09
9	MASS MEDIA (01, Touch Gold), Red River Farms	\$1,500	63/32	1/1	1/1	(Yes Gorgeous, \$139,325)	\$948,926	*234	5	1.02	1.02
10	MY PAL CHARLIE (05, Indian Charlie), Elite Thoroughbreds	\$2,500	64/27	0/0	0/0	(Lovely Charlie, \$80,710)	\$837,207	168	2	0.71	1.04
11	GREELEY'S GALAXY (02, Mr. Greeley)	Died	53/22	0/0	0/0	(Mariah's Galaxy, \$73,560)	\$831,208	169	2	1.00	1.00
12	REDDING COLLIERY (06, Mineshaft), Red River Farms	\$2,000	51/19	0/0	0/0	(Pursuit of a Dream, \$47,500)	\$784,372	75	1	0.69	1.34
13	CLOSING ARGUMENT (02, Successful Appeal), Whispering Oaks Farm	\$3,000	51/26	1/1	0/1	(Fillupcohensapiker, \$77,250)	\$752,580	*471	19	1.19	1.13
14	YANKEE GENTLEMAN (99, Storm Cat), Le Mesa Stallions	\$2,500	68/24	0/0	0/0	(Adios Yankee, \$69,160)	\$752,004	*526	21	1.05	1.16
15	FOREFATHERS (04, Gone West)	N/A	71/24	0/0	0/0	(Overthegardengate, \$73,760)	\$707,068	181	1	0.57	1.04
16	RUN PRODUCTION (00, Saint Ballado), Whispering Oaks Farm	\$1,500	50/18	0/0	0/0	(Wonder Run, \$53,110)	\$590,963	231	8	0.99	0.92
17	TIZ THE ONE (07, Tiznow)	N/A	47/17	0/0	0/0	(Suzie's Dream, \$63,055)	\$519,251	83	1	0.61	0.93
18	LION TAMER (00, Will's Way)	Pnsd	37/13	0/0	0/0	(A We Bit Flirty, \$75,770)	\$510,943	149	2	0.73	1.02
19	INTERACTIF (07, Broken Vow), Red River Farms	\$2,000	36/16	0/0	0/0	(So Sorry Ruston, \$47,290)	\$481,198	73	1	0.70	1.04
20	TENPINS (98, Smart Strike), Elite Thoroughbreds	\$2,500	38/16	0/0	0/0	(Queeten, \$50,540)	\$462,850	*381	8	0.85	1.02

land, which includes the racetrack and soccer fields, a farmers' market, public parks, and the J. Rukin Jelks Stud Farm, a historic Quarter Horse farm. Weiss became the general manager of Rillito for the 2015 meet and has returned every year since.

Since taking control of operations, Weiss has overseen the installation of a new dirt surface, upgrades in concessions and entertainment, and a partnership with the University of Arizona's Race Track Industry Program.

"I didn't expect to be here this many years," said Weiss. "But everything started happening with the students, and I started getting some real satisfaction out of it, and it's hard to walk away."

Weiss is specifically referring to the PariBet Racetrack Industry Student Experience (PRISE), a program he sponsors that enables students in the RTIP to work in a variety of roles at Rillito. In these positions students gain the skills necessary to work at a racetrack while interacting with the public and educating attendees about horse racing.

The RTIP has churned out hundreds of enthusiastic employees for the racing industry over the years, including Weiss.



Enthusiasm for racing at Rillito is high, despite the low-level purse structure

Thus, it should come as no surprise that when Weiss walked into the RTIP offices to interview a room full of students, he found an eager group that hoped he would give them the opportunity to work at Rillito.

"Some came in very nervous like it was a first job interview. I would say, 'Relax, have a cookie, and tell me about you. The fact that you showed up today means you have a job!'"

The list of jobs filled by students each year reaches to all corners of racing operations: racing office, track handicapping, photo finish operations, graphics, clocking, mutuels, social media, grooming, ponying, and more. At Rillito Park, it is almost impossible not to see or directly engage with a student involved with PRISE.

Comparing the working experience at a small track such as Rillito to a larger

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Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2018 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2018 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	ATTILA'S STORM (02, Forest Wildcat), A & A Ranch	\$4,000	88/45	1/1	1/1	(Go for a Stroll, \$104,380)	\$1,357,391	242	17	1.08	0.82
2	DIABOLICAL (03, Artax), A & A Ranch	\$4,000	68/39	2/2	2/2	(Diabolical Gator, \$132,140)	\$1,228,171	167	12	0.95	0.92
3	SOUTHWESTERN HEAT (04, Gone West)	Died, 2017	50/27	2/2	2/2	(Sunscreen, \$109,325)	\$948,250	*112	5	0.72	0.95
4	ROLL HENNESSY ROLL (00, Hennessy), A & A Ranch	\$2,500	44/24	1/1	1/1	(Hennessy Express, \$165,106)	\$937,683	182	11	0.94	0.96
5	QUINTON'S GOLD (97, Carson City), Doubletree Farm	\$5,000	45/23	0/0	0/0	(Orogrande, \$71,665)	\$795,667	149	10	1.19	0.86
6	READ THE FOOTNOTES (01, Smoke Glacken), Creekside Farm	\$2,000	41/20	0/0	0/0	(Proletariat, \$68,998)	\$604,676	*336	19	1.28	1.15
7	INDIAN FIREWATER (07, Indian Charlie)	Died, 2017	43/17	0/0	0/0	(Movin On, \$160,160)	\$563,374	65	2	0.66	1.12
8	FUSAICHI ZENON (JPN) (97, Sunday Silence), Weatherly Horse Farms	\$2,000	34/17	0/0	0/0	(Mike and Trixie, \$61,295)	\$455,623	118	4	0.67	0.83
9	DOME (98, Storm Cat), Double LL Farm	\$2,500	32/14	0/0	0/0	(Thunder Dome, \$257,580)	\$415,294	255	7	0.72	0.79
10	THE WAY HOME (04, Giant's Causeway), Doubletree Farm	\$2,500	29/15	0/0	0/0	(Westa, \$56,770)	\$378,595	125	5	0.79	0.97
11	SONG OF NAVARONE (04, Sultry Song)	N/A	18/10	1/1	1/1	(Blazing Navarone, \$211,000)	\$370,965	33	1	0.81	0.83
12	ABSTRACTION (10, Pulpit), Doubletree Farm	\$3,500	17/5	1/2	1/1	(Hustle Up, \$165,143)	\$336,818	32	1	0.89	1.05
13	MR. GOLD MOVER (08, Mr. Greeley), Bar Y Equine	\$1,500	21/10	0/0	0/0	(M G Ms Victory Run, \$43,122)	\$306,075	49	2	0.76	0.88
14	WEATHER WARNING (04, Storm Cat)	N/A	27/7	0/0	0/0	(Western Warning, \$62,625)	\$263,747	*144	4	0.93	1.00
15	MCKENNA'S JUSTICE (07, Medaglia d'Oro), McKenna Thoroughbreds	Died, 2017	16/9	0/0	0/0	(McGlorious, \$47,757)	\$254,060	22	0	0.65	0.62
16	PRO PRADO (01, El Prado), Hourigan Horse Farm	\$2,000	27/10	0/0	0/0	(Citizen Geller, \$52,260)	\$238,832	95	2	0.68	0.81

racetrack, Weiss noted, "It's the same game with different numbers. We're missing a couple of zeros at the end of our purses. It doesn't matter if you run six days or 120 days, you still have to be prepared in the same way. Your racing surface has to be safe for the athletes. The racing office, accounting, concessions, admissions, parking, security, marketing, and social media—everything still has to be in place."

However, Rillito's smaller size lends itself to a true hands-on experience.

"We don't have all of the layers of people," Weiss said. "If you're involved, you're involved, whether you're taking an entry or running out to rake the paddock because we just had a quick rain. You become a team and a family, and you get your hands dirty."

"I think having a racetrack right there by the university and getting the firsthand experience is really great for the students," said Erin Doty-McQuaid, an RTIP graduate who worked the 2018 meet as Rillito's program manager and is now the assistant program coordinator and administrative



The grandstand at Rillito was built in 1943

assistant for the Racing Officials Accreditation Program. "If you can work at a place such as Rillito and make it work, I think you can do it anywhere."

Executives from Breeders' Cup reached out to Weiss after learning about his program at Rillito. Through PRISE, Weiss sponsored trips for RTIP students to work

at the Breeders' Cup in 2017 and 2018.

Dr. Shane Burgess, the Charles-Sander Dean of the University of Arizona's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, has seen the benefits of students' working at the track firsthand. The college is in the midst of formalizing a partnership with the Rillito Park Foundation so students in the college can participate in paid internship opportunities spanning all aspects of Rillito Park, from the racetrack to the farmers' market.

"One of the things about Rillito that is really good is that the students get an integrated view of how the whole system runs," Burgess said. "People often look at the size of the budget, but the size of the budget has nothing to do with the complexity. You've got an organization here that has all of the complexity that exists anywhere

else, and yet it's small enough for you to get your arms and your mind around it. And because of its size, the students are comfortable there. It's a good atmosphere for people to learn in."

Yet, Rillito is more than a classroom. Its race cards may be anchored by \$2,000 claimers and \$5,000 stakes races, but Weiss



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Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2018 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2018 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	WILBURN (08, Bernardini), River Oaks Farms	\$3,500	149/75	3/4	0/3	(Afleet Willy, \$187,750)	\$2,474,972	*294	7	0.81	1.10
2	LIAISON (09, Indian Charlie), Mighty Acres	\$2,500	89/37	2/3	0/2	(Moonlight Romance, \$359,600)	\$1,725,153	151	3	0.87	1.23
3	POLLARD'S VISION (01, Carson City), Mighty Acres	\$2,500	61/28	2/3	1/2	(Vision Perfect, \$235,385)	\$1,321,656	*713	20	1.19	1.18
4	AMERICAN LION (07, Tiznow), River Oaks Farms	\$1,000	78/40	0/0	0/0	(Lion in Wait, \$171,798)	\$1,271,557	*183	1	0.72	1.05
5	MAGNA GRADUATE (02, Honor Grades), Brewster Ranch	\$2,500	51/28	1/1	1/1	(Bellarmine, \$119,364)	\$967,231	*224	7	0.95	1.02
6	LATENT HEAT (03, Maria's Mon), River Oaks Farms	\$1,500	62/31	1/1	1/1	(Rocket Heat, \$139,612)	\$946,011	*340	6	0.87	1.08
7	EUROEARS (04, Langfuhr), Dunn Ranch	\$1,500	55/28	1/2	1/1	(Three Chords, \$149,381)	\$857,431	109	4	0.88	0.92
8	CACTUS RIDGE (01, Hennessy)	Pnsd	39/25	1/1	0/1	(Lovely Loyree, \$87,352)	\$758,142	*457	23	1.23	1.02
9	KIPLING (96, Gulch)	Pnsd	47/21	0/0	0/0	(Goddess of Kip, \$106,128)	\$721,389	358	9	0.98	0.88
10	MR. NIGHTLINGER (04, Indian Charlie)	Died	54/28	0/0	0/0	(Sunday Night Miss, \$56,955)	\$715,840	175	4	0.62	0.85
11	ORATORY (02, Pulpit)	Died, 2016	31/18	1/1	0/1	(Shes Our Fastest, \$81,600)	\$583,523	*224	6	1.12	1.14
12	CHITZO (05, Forest Wildcat), River Oaks Farms	\$1,500	20/11	1/1	1/1	(Okie Diva, \$105,127)	\$476,501	48	2	0.80	0.96
13	THE VISUALISER (03, Giant's Causeway), Mighty Acres	\$1,500	16/5	1/4	0/1	(Welder, \$329,550)	\$420,297	68	2	0.77	0.83
14	SPECIAL RATE (00, Pulpit), Glasses Creek Ranch	\$2,000	23/13	1/1	1/1	(Patrona Margarita, \$71,900)	\$415,550	175	4	0.58	0.64
15	MAIMONIDES (05, Vindication), Silver Star Breeding Center	\$1,500	23/14	0/0	0/0	(Maimo, \$109,430)	\$408,145	*106	1	0.74	1.94
16	SAVE BIG MONEY (03, Storm Cat), Mighty Acres	\$1,500	44/13	2/2	2/2	(Inagoodway, \$79,326)	\$403,562	118	3	0.67	0.96
17	LIQUOR CABINET (IRE) (01, Hennessy), Oklahoma Equine	\$1,000	23/12	0/0	0/0	(Only Liquor, \$67,667)	\$307,762	91	1	0.58	0.85
18	TACTICAL CAT (96, Storm Cat), Raywood Farm	\$1,000	30/12	0/0	0/0	(Dazzling Okie, \$64,572)	\$263,140	615	24	0.99	1.17
19	FOREIGN POLICY (02, Danzig), River Oaks Farms	\$1,250	10/5	0/0	0/0	(Master's Bouquet, \$72,931)	\$222,142	40	1	1.00	0.83
20	DA STOOPS (03, Distorted Humor), Rockin BB Ranch	\$1,000	16/8	0/0	0/0	(Da Wildcat Girl, \$54,950)	\$202,495	*89	1	1.03	1.05

describes the atmosphere as "amazing."

"Every day is like a big race day at a larger track. You can have a 1-9 shot turning for home, 10 lengths in front, and the

whole clubhouse is erupting and waving their tickets. They're screaming like it's American Pharoah coming down the stretch," Weiss said. "The demographics at

Rillito are better than at any track I've ever been to. You have a mix of all ages from college students to the typical older demographic. You have 120 tables in the clubhouse that are sold out every day, and then you go out into the grandstand, and you put a mariachi band out there, and you'll have 1,000 people in a big circle dancing in between races. It is just so much fun."

The excitement sounds contagious, but does such a small track create racing fans?

Scott Little would answer that question with an emphatic "yes." Little worked in the hospitality industry for more than 25 years before he decided to follow his passion and attend the RTIP. He worked two racing seasons at Rillito while living in Tucson and served as the assistant general manager in 2018. His hospitality roots have never left him, and Little spent parts of race days walking among the crowd to see if he could assist customers.

"There was a lady that got to the track



Fans pack the paddock area

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 2014 are excluded), and have runners in North America. Listed below are all available statistics for the Northern Hemisphere through November 25, 2018. As supplied to *BloodHorse* by The Jockey Club Information Systems Inc., lists 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 2017 is \$22,593 or 47% of the 2017 average purse in Japan. To put earnings on par, all Japanese progeny earnings are multiplied by 47% before being credited to a sire's progeny earnings. Hong Kong earnings are adjusted by 15%; Singapore by 68%. Current year stakes winners include all Northern Hemisphere black-type stakes results from all available countries. *Foal counts include Southern Hemisphere. Cumulative stakes winners include all countries.

*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.

2018 LEADING SIRES IN ARKANSAS



For daily updated sire lists
visit BloodHorse.com

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2018 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2018 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	BRAHMS (97, Danzig), Trophy Club Training Center	\$2,000	34/15	0/0	0/0	(Zack Ridge Road, \$74,098)	\$565,904	*673	13	1.05	1.13
2	PORTOBELLO ROAD (04, Storm Cat)	Died	34/16	0/0	0/0	(Spanish Avenue, \$58,906)	\$513,916	150	1	0.73	0.89
3	JONESBORO (02, Sefapiano), Lake Hamilton Equine Center	\$500	28/18	0/0	0/0	(Hoonani Road, \$165,438)	\$505,217	79	2	0.74	0.77
4	STORM AND A HALF (97, Storm Cat), Tommy Ives Thoroughbreds	Private	22/13	1/1	1/1	(J. E.'s Handmedown, \$125,500)	\$415,786	452	20	0.76	0.93
5	ORDAINED (08, Pulpit), Starfish Stallions	\$1,000	14/5	0/0	0/0	(Ministry, \$172,140)	\$233,317	40	1	0.60	0.74

2018 LEADING SIRES IN ARIZONA

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2018 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2018 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	ROCKY BAR (98, In Excess), Triple AAA Ranch	Private	36/19	0/0	0/0	(Royal Privacy, \$54,129)	\$469,737	175	9	0.80	0.79
2	TOP HIT (98, Twining), Triple AAA Ranch	Private	35/20	0/0	0/0	(Sierrita, \$67,415)	\$384,194	116	5	0.81	0.84
3	EZ DREAMER (05, In Excess), Triple AAA Ranch	Private	24/14	0/0	0/0	(Let Me Fly, \$53,443)	\$273,569	44	1	0.56	0.85
4	UH OH BANGO (07, Top Hit), Triple AAA Ranch	Private	12/7	0/0	0/0	(Ultimate Bango, \$104,874)	\$267,753	24	0	0.75	1.01
5	MARGIE'S WILDCAT (01, Storm Cat), Fleming Thoroughbred Farm	Private	29/15	1/1	1/1	(Loud N Proud, \$71,127)	\$264,654	139	1	0.64	0.81

2018 LEADING SIRES IN COLORADO

Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2018 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	Cumulative				
							2018 Earnings	Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	GRAND MINSTREL (05, Grand Slam), Menoken Farms	\$1,500	33/14	0/0	0/0	(Maybea Grand, \$17,110)	\$178,326	93	0	0.32	0.63
2	CRAFTY SHAW (98, Crafty Prospector)	Pnsd	23/7	0/0	0/0	(Crafty Chief, \$47,062)	\$177,881	*111	3	0.80	0.92
3	OLIVER'S TWIST (92, Horatius), Menoken Farms	\$1,000	18/5	0/0	0/0	(Pretty Twisted, \$15,300)	\$89,774	272	2	0.51	0.72

way before the first race, and I heard her talking to somebody and saying that she had never been here and was not sure what to do," Little said. "I just decided to strike up a conversation with her, and I was sitting with her for 15 minutes going over the program. Her friend showed up later, and I saw them at a table in the clubhouse right down on the glass. I talked to them at least three or four more times throughout the rest of the year."

In another fortuitous meeting, Little hooked his downstairs neighbors on horse racing.

"I ran into them one day when they were driving by Rillito. They had never been, and they saw me and wanted to know what I was doing there. This was in early February before the first day of the meet, and I gave them a couple of passes to come check it out."

Little's neighbors ended up buying a table for the entire season.

Now a product manager for AmTote and based in Maryland, Little noted that his wife, who still lives in Tucson, reports that those neighbors have told her that they are looking forward to going back to Rillito in 2019.



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2018 LEADING SIRES IN TEXAS



For daily updated sire lists
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Rank	Stallion (Foreign foaled), (YOB,Sire), Where Stands	2018 Stud Fee	Rnrs/ Wnrs	BT SWnrs/ Wns	Rstrct SW/ BT SW	(Chief Earner, Earnings)	2018 Earnings	Cumulative			
								Foals	Stks Wnrs	A-E Index	Comp Index
1	TOO MUCH BLING (03, Rubiano), Valor Farm	\$6,500	78/50	3/4	2/3	(Direct Dial, \$109,134)	\$1,415,860	242	27	1.10	1.06
2	MY GOLDEN SONG (03, Unbridled's Song), Valor Farm	\$5,000	45/22	4/6	3/4	(Cowgirls Like Us, \$91,185)	\$707,396	149	13	0.96	1.05
3	CONGAREE (98, Arazi), Valor Farm	\$3,000	34/15	0/0	0/0	(Jersey Joe B, \$67,025)	\$453,473	*387	13	1.22	1.38
4	GRASSHOPPER (04, Dixie Union), Valor Farm	\$3,500	46/17	2/3	1/2	(Supermason, \$76,140)	\$437,510	115	3	0.77	0.92
5	EARLY FLYER (98, Gilded Time), Valor Farm	\$2,500	37/17	0/0	0/0	(Mucho Dinero, \$43,951)	\$385,062	288	16	0.75	0.91
6	REVOLVING (09, A.P. Indy), Double S Thoroughbreds	N/A	18/12	0/0	0/0	(High Flying Guy, \$51,910)	\$383,482	32	0	0.71	1.42
7	LUNARPAL (02, Successful Appeal)	N/A	16/7	0/0	0/0	(Mygirlfriday, \$60,647)	\$314,294	112	2	0.81	0.91
8	STONESIDER (03, Giant's Causeway), Valor Farm	\$2,000	21/9	0/0	0/0	(My Last Million, \$94,220)	\$293,119	*208	4	1.03	1.19
9	INTIMIDATOR (01, Gone West), Asmussen Horse Center	\$1,500	29/11	0/0	0/0	(Roundabout Robbie, \$35,890)	\$229,825	204	6	0.56	0.74
10	UNCLE ABBIE (97, Kingmambo), Key Ranch	\$2,000	16/6	1/1	0/1	(lbaka, \$68,535)	\$228,423	250	7	0.66	0.63
11	LITTLEEXPECTATIONS (97, Valid Appeal)	N/A	19/8	0/0	0/0	(Darylslittleengine, \$52,778)	\$186,084	217	5	0.74	0.97
12	CROSSBOW (08, Bernardini), Valor Farm	\$2,000	17/10	0/0	0/0	(Texas Long Bow, \$26,082)	\$157,793	33	1	0.52	1.09
13	GAFF (02, Maria's Mon)	N/A	14/5	0/0	0/0	(Hook, \$41,490)	\$135,576	96	0	0.58	0.99
14	UNBRIDLED'S HEART (05, Unbridled's Song)	Died, 2015	12/7	0/0	0/0	(Heartsetsmeonfire, \$21,676)	\$121,103	30	0	0.48	0.53
15	DRUMS OF THUNDER (04, Concerto)	N/A	11/4	1/1	1/1	(Witt's Town, \$34,573)	\$119,223	38	2	0.53	0.33
16	WIMBLEDON (01, Wild Rush), Key Ranch	\$2,000	11/5	0/0	0/0	(Fred's Lucky Boy, \$48,310)	\$113,376	135	4	0.73	0.76
17	MORO TAP (10, Tapit), Double Infinity Ranch	\$3,500	12/5	0/0	0/0	(Stormie's Blue, \$26,380)	\$112,189	33	0	0.43	0.86
18	EATON'S GIFT (05, Johannesburg)	N/A	23/7	0/0	0/0	(Ramblin Fever, \$17,147)	\$112,093	58	0	0.37	0.58
19	JOE'S SON JOEY (98, Fast Play), Averett Farm	\$1,000	5/3	0/0	0/0	(Why Joey Why, \$70,080)	\$110,660	31	0	0.98	0.96
20	FEARLESS EAGLE (04, Invisible Ink)	N/A	6/4	0/0	0/0	(Fearless Alex, \$33,110)	\$108,046	19	0	0.62	0.27

Unfortunately, enthusiasm does not pay the bills.

"With the crowds we get, we show we can make money during the season," said Weiss. "However, racing has a lot of expenses, and we definitely need some benefactors to help keep this program alive."

In 2018 Rillito hosted 12 days of Thoroughbred and Quarter Horse racing during February and March, and 12 days are planned in 2019. With increased funding, Weiss would like to run 20 days of live racing at Rillito in future years.

Should the racing industry choose to support selected small racetracks such as Rillito, it will be able to ensure that new fans have the opportunity to attend the

races and longtime fans are able to sustain their passion. This year The Jockey Club commissioned McKinsey & Company to conduct a current analysis of the Thoroughbred industry and fan development, the results of which were presented at The Jockey Club's annual Round Table Conference on Matters Pertaining to Racing, held this summer in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

Among the McKinsey team's findings was that more than 60% of surveyed fans stated that the most significant factor in their becoming a fan was going to the racetrack with their family or friends. Based on this data, Stuart S. Janney III, the chairman of TJC, concluded this year's Round Table by announcing the organiza-

tion's intent to consider ownership of racetracks in important markets.

"We have done a great job with increasing television coverage through TVG and national network broadcasts and getting the word out about the sport using websites and social media through initiatives such as America's Best Racing," said James L. Gagliano, president and chief operating officer of TJC. "However, when race fans reflect on their early interest in horse racing, it more than likely came from trips to the track with friends and family. We believe that having major league and minor league tracks is necessary to sustain a national sport."

As those who have visited or worked at Rillito can attest, it is not the size of the purses or the facility that makes a racing fan. It is the experience.

"There are people who have looked at me, and they go, 'What are you doing? Why are you at Rillito?'" Weiss said.

His response?

"You don't get it. You have to come see it and feel it."

For the sake of horse racing, let us hope that new fans can be exposed to that feeling for years to come. **BH**

Alexa Ravit is the communications coordinator for The Jockey Club. She served as Rillito Park's social media manager for two racing seasons while enrolled in the Race Track Industry Program.



Betting lines run long at Rillito

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Stallion	State	LF or N/G	Elnaawi	IN	LF	Midshipman	KY	N/G	Micromanage	NY	LF
Moonshine Mullin	AR	LF	Fear the Kitten	IN	N/G	Mshawish	KY	N/G	Affirmatif	OK	LF
Street Strategy	AR	LF	Hunt Crossing	IN	LF	Not This Time	KY	N/G	Blake's Passion	OK	LF
EZ Effort	AZ	LF	Lentenor	IN	LF	Palace	KY	N/G	Blueskiesrainbows	OK	LF
Lotsa Mischief	AZ	LF	Mustanfar	IN	LF	Paynter	KY	N/G	Calebs Posse	OK	LF
Hidden Blessing	CA	LF	Pass Rush	IN	N/G	Poseidon's Warrior	KY	N/G	Chitoz	OK	LF
James Street	CA	LF	Pataky Kid	IN	N/G	Protonico	KY	LF	Code West	OK	LF
Lightnin N Thunder	CA	LF	Santiva	IN	LF	Run Away and Hide	KY	N/G	Da Stoops	OK	LF
Osiris of the Nile	CA	LF	Ventana	IN	LF	Secret Circle	KY	N/G	Den's Legacy	OK	LF
Wolfcamp	CA	LF	Rock Star Status	KS	LF	Shackleford	KY	N/G	Doctor Chit	OK	N/G
Bahamian Squall	FL	LF	Afleet Alex	KY	N/G	Sky Kingdom	KY	N/G	Dramedy	OK	LF
Drill	FL	N/G	Algorithms	KY	N/G	Tale of Ekati	KY	N/G	Excaper	OK	LF
Field Commission	FL	LF	Alternation	KY	LF	Tapiture	KY	N/G	Foreign Policy	OK	LF
First Dude	FL	N/G	Anchor Down	KY	N/G	Tourist	KY	N/G	Home of the Brave	OK	LF
C'mon Boys	IA	LF	Army Mule	KY	N/G	Cool Cash	MD	LF	Latent Heat	OK	LF
D Mac	IA	LF	Atreides	KY	N/G	Matt's Broken Vow	MN	LF	Liaison	OK	LF
Entourage	IA	LF	Bee Jersey	KY	N/G	Turkowar	MO	LF	Maimonides	OK	N/G
Flight West	IA	LF	Brody's Cause	KY	LF	El Caballo	NE	LF	Midnight Crooner	OK	LF
Formidable	IA	LF	Cinco Charlie	KY	N/G	I Will Score	NE	LF	Pollard's Vision	OK	LF
Kirkendahl	IA	LF	Daddy Long Legs	KY	N/G	Shadow Hawk	NE	LF	Sebastian County	OK	N/G
Launch Commander	IA	LF	Dialed In	KY	N/G	Sports Talk	NE	N/G	Special Rate	OK	LF
Native Ruler	IA	LF	Dominus	KY	N/G	A Shin Forward	NY	LF	Tactical Cat	OK	LF
Newport	IA	LF	Fed Biz	KY	N/G	Alpha	NY	N/G	The Visualiser	OK	LF
Self Control	IA	LF	Flintshire	KY	N/G	Boys At Tosconova	NY	N/G	Vulcan's Forge	OK	LF
Sing Baby Sing	IA	LF	Free Drop Billy	KY	LF	Courageous Cat	NY	N/G	Wilburn	OK	LF
Spaniard	IA	LF	Gio Ponti	KY	LF	Dr Large	NY	LF	Uptowncharlybrown	PA	LF
Stroll	IA	LF	Include	KY	N/G	Frank Conversation	NY	LF	Gray Meteor	SD	LF
Tiznow R J	IA	LF	Justin Phillip	KY	LF	Giant Surprise	NY	LF	Too Much Bling	TX	N/G
Woke Up Dreamin	IA	LF	Klimt	KY	N/G	Golden Ticket	NY	N/G	Atta Boy Roy	WA	LF
Domestic Dispute	IN	LF	Mark Valeski	KY	N/G	Honorable Dillon	NY	LF			
Elite Squadron	IN	LF	Midnight Storm	KY	N/G	Majestic City	NY	N/G			

LF = A one year Breed Back to the same mare if she does not conceive, aborts the fetus, or does not produce a live foal which stands and nurses in 2020.

CHECK FOR NEWLY ADDED STALLIONS DONATED - LIST UPDATED DAILY



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