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THOROUGHBRED DAILY NEWS
TUESDAY, JULY 21, 2009

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BIRDSTONE COLT TOPS FASIG OPENER

The dust had settled and it appeared the days' fireworks had ended, but Darley struck late to take home the session-topper at yesterday's first day of the Fasig-Tipton July Selected Yearlings Sale in Lexington. Sheikh Mohammed, represented by bloodstock advisor John Ferguson, secured [hip 228](#), a colt by GI Belmont S. winner Birdstone (Grindstone), for \$400,000. Ferguson, who was noticeably absent earlier in the session, was on hand to sign the ticket on the Apr. 4 foal. Consigned by Dapple Stud, the \$37,000 KEEJAN



Hip 228 Horsephotos

yearling purchase is out of the unraced mare Slew Smarts (Seattle Slew). "We thought he was the right horse and a very good-looking individual," said Ferguson. A resident of Gainesway, Birdstone's oldest crop of foals is currently three-year-olds. The diminutive bay recorded a rare Classic double this season after Mine That Bird took the GI Kentucky Derby and Summer Bird rounded out the Triple Crown with a victory in the GI Belmont S. "He has already produced two Classic horses, so you have to take him seriously," Ferguson said about the young sire. **Cont. p2**

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F-T JULY -- Monday's Top Lots

Hip	Sex	Sire	Dam	Price
228	c	Birdstone	Slew Smarts	\$400,000
(\$37,000 yrl '09 KEEJAN) <i>B-Bob Sliger (Ky)</i> Consigned by Dapple Stud, agent Purchased by John Ferguson				
147	f	Rock Hard Ten	Incredible Story	\$350,000
<i>B-Cobra Farm (Ky)</i> Consigned by Bluewater Sales LLC, Agent VIII Purchased by Mercedes Stables, D. Yokum, agent				
169	c	Bernardini	Lyphard's Delta	\$350,000
<i>B-Palides Investments (Ky)</i> Consigned by Lane's End, agent Purchased by John Ferguson				
246	c	Medaglia d'Oro	Tigresa	\$310,000
<i>B-Ann Lorensen Lynch (Ky)</i> Consigned by Three Chimneys Sales, agent Purchased by Starlight Partners				
209	c	Rockport Harbor	Really Quick	\$210,000
<i>B-Needham/Betz Thoroughbreds & Liberation Farm (Ky)</i> Consigned by Betz Thoroughbreds Inc. Purchased by Hidden Brook, agent for Paul Pompa Jr.				
174	f	Flower Alley	Mazel Tov Betty	\$200,000
(\$150,000 in utero '07 KEENOV; \$120,000 wnlg '08 KEENOV) <i>B-Budget Stables Inc. (Ky)</i> Consigned by Taylor Made Sales Agency, Agent LXXXII Purchased by Cheyenne Stables LLC				
178	c	Henny Hughes	Mighty Lode	\$200,000
(\$100,000 wnlg '08 FTKNOV) <i>B-Dr. Jerry Bilinsky, Martin Zaretsky & Harry Patten (NY)</i> Consigned by Gainesway, agent Purchased by Bruce Headley				
189	f	Rock Hard Ten	Nureyev's Encore	\$200,000
(\$115,000 in utero '08 KEEJAN; \$60,000 RNA wnlg '08 KEENOV) <i>B-Briggs/Cromartie (Ky)</i> Consigned by Legacy Bloodstock, agent Purchased by Starlight Partners				



FASIG-TIPTON JULY YEARLINGS MONDAY, JULY 20, 2009

Session Totals	2009	2008
Catalogued	247	284
No. Offered	221	254
No. Sold	125	142
RNAs	92	112
% RNAs	41.6%	44.1%
High Price	\$400,000	\$330,000
# over \$300K	4	4
Gross	\$8,933,500	\$13,311,000
Average	\$71,468 (-23.8%)	\$93,739
Median	\$50,000 (-33.3%)	\$75,000

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Darley Returns to the Well...

In a year that started off with Barbaro (Dynaformer) dominating headlines, it was Darley's Bernardini (A.P. Indy--Cara Rafaela, by Quiet American) who bagged the three-year-old championship following victories in the GI Preakness S., GI Travers S. and GI Jockey Club Gold Cup. It was of no surprise yesterday that Sheikh Mohammed's interests were back to secure [hip 169](#), a bay colt from the Darley homebred's first crop. Representing Darley bloodstock advisor John Ferguson, Richard O'Gorman shut out the competition with a final \$350,000 bid. Consigned by Lane's End, the May 6 foal is out of G2 Nassau S. winner Lyphard's Delta (Lyphard), dam of GISW Indy Five Hundred (A.P. Indy) and MGSW Delta Princess (A.P. Indy).

"He was a very nice horse," said O'Gorman. "We obviously loved the sire, and we felt that this colt was the right type. We were very high on him."

Also charmed by the handsome colt was Lane's End's Bill Farish.

"He does look a little bit like his sire, Bernardini," said Farish. "He might be a little smaller than him, but this is a May foal, so that is to be expected."

Indy Five Hundred, who was purchased by Peter Minikes from the Lane's End consignment for \$210,000 at the 2001 Keeneland September sale, later sold in foal to Kingmambo to Darley for \$3 million at Fasig-Tipton Kentucky November in 2007. Lane's End also served as acting agent on a pair of other yearling scores out of Lyphard's Delta, including Absolute Return (Carson City), who brought \$300,000 at KEESEP in 2004 and Delta Miner (Mineshaft), who brought \$500,000 at KEESEP in 2006.

"It's very hard to be upset about the price, given the state of this market," said Farish. "We're content with what we got."

Darley also purchased a colt by first-crop sire A.P. Warrior for \$115,000 through O'Gorman. Out of SW Wildcatseye (Forest Wildcat), the Feb. 29 foal ([hip 50](#)) was consigned by Eaton Sales, agent. "We were looking through the horses here and we took a liking to him," said Ferguson. "He was a very athletic and correct horse, that just took our eye."

Give That Man a Cigar...

Not long after the auctioneer stopped his patter on Day 1 at FTKJUL, Dapple Stud's Mike Akers took a moment to savor his success with his session-topping Birdstone colt. "I'm standing here enjoying a fine cigar, courtesy of Darley," remarked Akers, who had adjourned to the Fasig-Tipton cocktail party.



Mike Akers

Dapple Stud acquired hip 228 for a mere \$37,000 as a KEEJAN short yearling, before his sophomore sire had started making big headlines. Akers believed the colt he'd bought was a good one, but he never envisioned the fanfare that would ensue just six months later.

"I can't take the credit," Akers said. "We bought him from [breeder Bob K. Sliger], who raises really good horses,

and he came highly recommended in January. Then we were lucky that Birdstone came up with a couple of Classic horses. We caught a hot stallion."

It comes as no surprise to Akers that Birdstone has been a hit, however. "He was priced right [when he went to stud]," he offered. "We have bred to him every year, and two of the best foals on our farm are by Birdstone. We weren't hesitant about taking a chance, even though the jury might still have been out on him."

Dapple's son of Birdstone proved a real crowd pleaser at Fasig-Tipton. "The buyers were all over this horse," Akers said. "He was scoped nine different times, and I believe some of the scopes were for more than one buyer using the same veterinarian. He was the horse-men's pick of the sale. He's quite an athlete."

Still, the hammer price exceeded expectations. "There was quite a bit of traffic this morning, and he handled it all very professionally," Akers said. "He stepped up to the plate at every call. But, at breakfast, I would have said I'd be tickled to death if he brought \$200,000."

But Akers won't be shocked to see the colt on the 2010 Triple Crown trail. "He has a Classic frame, and I think the buyers are looking to go where the Birdstones have been going--to the Classics," he said.



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