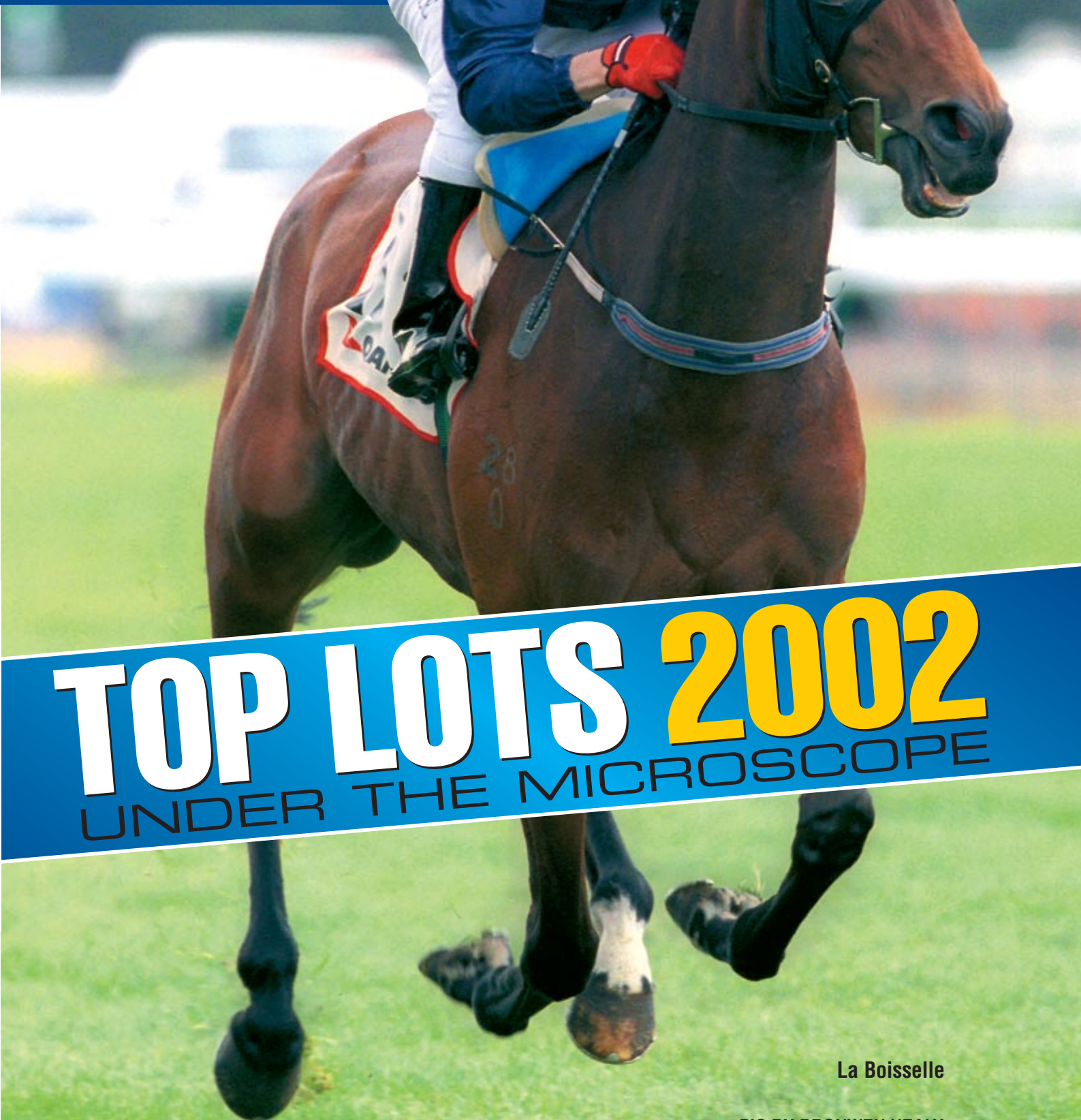




Our resident marketing analyst **KATRINA PARTRIDGE** takes a look at how the expensive Lots from the 2002 Majors have shaped thus far.



TOP LOTS 2002

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

La Boisselle

PIC BY BRONWEN HEALY

They were the yearlings whose confirmation and pedigree, an ounce of luck, and a lashing or two of the marketing dollar, captured the dreams of some of the wealthiest participants in the thoroughbred industry. In so doing, their sales generated the loudest applause from auctioneers and vendors alike across Australian and New Zealand sales rings in 2002...and, perhaps not surprisingly, the biggest outlay in funds.

The annual million-dollar gamble on prospective superstars provides the thoroughbred industry with some of its greatest stories. But just as "champions" can emerge from the glossy price tags, so too can the failures whose stories of lackluster ability seem to almost eclipse the success stories of their peers in terms of the number of times you hear the tales of woe repeated.

One of the best examples of this has to be Keeneland's record-priced 1983 yearling. Offered during the heady selling days of the 1980s, US\$10.2m was paid for a son of Northern Dancer. The colt – Snaafi Dancer – never reached a race track (ability – or, to be more precise – a complete lack of it – denied him that opportunity). To add further salt to his investor's wounds he also failed in his fallback career path. As a stallion Snaafi Dancer suffered the curse of infertility. He sired a total of only four foals – only one of which ever won a race.

The Australian/New Zealand 2002 sales toppers have raced and had mixed success as the 2003 Spring Carnival draws to a close. While some have been diligently repaying their initial investment, the future of others may instead rely on an ability to emulate the mighty Nureyev who earned only \$42,522 on the track, but went on to earn an estimated \$100 million at stud.

Keeping these factors in mind, it is worth taking a look at the "golden graduates of 2002" to see if any have fulfilled – or are on their way to fulfilling – the aspirations of those who first looked at them and saw "future champion" stamped all over the auctioneer's million dollar proposal.

\$1,500,000: The top priced yearling of the 2002 class was the authoritatively bred bay filly by Danehill out of Sommes Sound. Irishman Demi O'Byrne (as agent) held the final bid. She was named **LA BOISSELLE** and she is the half-sister to the exceptional Gr 1 gallopers Assertive Lass (7 wins – 3 in succession – 3 at 2 and \$686,743 inc. AJC Flight S. Gr 1 (d/h), STC Coolmore Classic Gr 1, 2d AJC Oaks Gr 1) and Assertive Lad (Champion 2YO 1999/2000, 3YO Miler 2000/01. 8 wins – 3 in succession – 5 at 2 – and \$3,358,275 including the AJC Doncaster H. Gr 1, Champagne S. Gr 1, Sires Produce S. Gr 1 and 3d STC Golden Slipper S. Gr 1). Although La Boisselle didn't match her siblings' success at two, she has had (apart from a win and four seconds) a stakes plac-

ing in the Hill Smith Stakes. She may have returned less than 1% of her purchase price at this stage of the game but she is a filly who need feel no pressure. Whatever her racing future she stands guaranteed an elite position in one of Australia's most prestigious broodmare bands. By mid November she had earned \$20,000 in stakes.

\$1,400,000: CRITICAL LIST (Danehill (USA)/Verocative) was purchased by Gooree Stud at the Magic Millions Premier Sale.



Keep The Faith

The colt prompted media attention well beyond his sale date when his Queensland breeder Ron Gilbert (at Highgrove Stud) agreed to take him back after failing an x-ray examination. He was subsequently operated on & given time to recover before being placed in work with Brian Mayfield-Smith. **CRITICAL LIST'S** dam was a smart 2-year-old in her day with 6 wins – 3 in succession – 3 at 2 – and \$130,760 including the VASC Thoroughbred Club S G3. As a broodmare she has produced 6 foals, two of whom have raced for one winner. A check of the pedigree page sees the third dam as the mighty Summoned whose winning progeny include the Black Type performers Zeditave, Alannon, Pampas Fire, Zedagal and Square Deal. **CRITICAL LIST** scored a second and a win in his first barrier trials in May of this year and romped home by four lengths at his October debut at Seymour. Word on the grapevine is that this is a colt to keep an eye on. His solid second place finish in Listed company at his second start in a race franked that whisper. By mid November he had earned \$47,270 in stakes.

\$1,200,000: Tony McEvoy trains this already credentialed star named **KEEP THE FAITH** – a brown colt by Sunday Silence out of Duelling Girl. By late July, nominations for this colt included the

Caulfield Guineas, Caulfield Cup, Cox Plate and Victoria Derby – perhaps not unrealistic expectations at the time when you consider the colt won his barrier trial with ease and went out as favorite in his first start at Cheltenham to score an impressive four lengths win. Alas, the colt has shown just one minor placing since that date because of shin problems and we may have to wait until the Autumn Carnival for any major shift in the current ROI figures – which currently stand at less than 1%. By mid

November he had earned \$23,750 in stakes.

\$1,100,000: When Rob McNulty secured the final bid on the full-brother to the Gr 1 Golden Slipper winning Catbird, he took home not only a future star performer, but one that also secured him an early return on investment. Named and now racing as **DANBIRD** he has already repaid his connections \$315,400 after two wins at 1,100 and 1,200m (including the Gr 2 STC Pago Pago S), a dead heat for second in the Gold Coast Magic Millions 2YO Classic RL plus placings in the Spring Stakes and the Up and Coming Stakes. Expect his full-brother to assume a high public profile at the 2004 yearling sales too. By mid November he had earned \$315,400 in stakes.

\$1,100,000: Rob McNulty must have been comfortable with the \$1.1m price tag as he bought a second colt for the same amount. The unraced **SUNDAY GIANT** (a brown colt by Sunday Silence out of Tinaca) is the half-brother to the Gr 2 winner in the USA – Quest Star (3 wins 81/2f. to 11/2m. and USD\$612,590 inc. Gulfstream Park Pan American H. Gr 2, Saratoga National Museum Of Racing Hall Of Fame H. Gr 2. 2d Belmont Bowling Green H. Gr 2). The real value in this colt's pedigree however,

continued page 28



TOP LOTS 2002

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

derives from his dam's half-sister – Mariah's Storm (herself a Gr 2 winner and earner of in excess of US\$950,000) – who is the dam of none other than the 2000 Cartier Horse of the Year – Giant's Causeway.

NZ\$1,050,000: Graeme Rogerson signed the cheque for this colt which was named **MUTHEER**. He was the leading priced colt at the 2002 New Zealand Premier Sale – a brown colt by Zabeel out of Marquise. The dam's name will be familiar to many as she is the regally bred producer of Shower of Roses (a full-sister to MUTHEER) who in her six starts has managed to accrue 3 wins and 2 placings over 1,200 to 2,000m and \$440,030 including the STC Arrowfield Stud S. Gr 1, 2d AJC Australian Oaks Gr 1 and 3d in the AJC Hobartville S. Gr 2. MUTHEER is being trained by Rogerson, and to date has only trialed.

\$950,000: A star in the making perhaps? Our next graduate is the talented Gr 2 placed son of Danehill out of Canny Miss. The aptly named **UNTOUCHABLE** is a full-brother to Camarena (9 wins – 4 in succession – 1,030 to 2,400m and \$938,260 inc. QTC Queensland Derby Gr 1 and 3d AJC Australian Oaks Gr 1). Purchased by Darley and trained by Gai Waterhouse the colt demonstrated early ability at his trials where he scored a 5.5 length win at his first outing. He raced four times as a 2-year old for 2 wins and a placing (2d STC Todman S. Gr 2). By mid November he had earned \$100,600 in stakes.

\$925,000: The third of the Sunday Silence's is the filly **GLENDELVINE** (out of Grilse). Her breeding reflects a heavy influence of talented European horses, and at the third dam, a shift to the US and the talented producer IT'S IN THE AIR (by Mr Prospector) – the Champion 2YO Filly in the USA in 1978 (8 wins – 3 in succession – 2 at 2 – 6f. to 11/4m. and \$626,219). This regally bred filly is inbred to former Champion Sire Halo, one strain coming via his son Sunday Silence, while the other appearing via his daughter Glorious Song. Her first trial (1 August) saw her run over 850m to place fourth. She won her next trial and at her first outing was placed in town then easily won a strong Class 1 race over 1,200m at Newcastle on Newcastle Cup Day. Arrowfield remain part-owners in the filly suggesting she is destined for lofty heights either on the track or back at the farm. By mid November she had earned \$11,700 in stakes.

\$850,000: Summing up the nature of the thoroughbred industry – and indeed the challenges awaiting those who invest at the top end of the curve – is the aptly named **THEATRE OF DREAMS**. Purchased by Demi O'Byrne this impressively bred colt by Danehill (USA) out of the Royal Academy mare Piccadilly Circus has started only once – easily winning at Kyneton showing great promise for trainer Lee Freedman. He has been gelded now. By mid November he had earned \$9,100 in stakes.

NZ\$800,000: Of all the pedigrees of the 2002 graduates, if there was one to make you think "future investment" – it had to be this one. This handsome bay colt is by Danehill (USA) out of the



Kempinsky

superbly bred and performed Tristalove (11 wins – 5 in succession – and \$770,629 incl. AJC Sires' Produce S. Gr 1 and SAJC Australasian Oaks Gr 1; sister to ANTWERP, three-quarter sister to DON EDUARDO and PERUZZI and three-quarter sister-in-blood to KAAPSTAD). The colt (named **KEMPINSKY**) also has a trio of talented siblings – full-brother VIKING RULER, winner of the AJC Spring Champion S. Gr 1 (1,800m) and \$353,300 (now first season sire at Cambridge Stud) and full-sisters Chimeara (Gr 3 placed) and the Listed winner Diamond Like.

KEMPINSKY may have had a few investors anxious with a lack-luster 9th for his first outing. But like a number of the 2002 golden graduates his blue blood simply hadn't warmed sufficiently and by the close of the Spring Carnival he had scorched home with two wins (including the Gr 2 AAMI Vase), followed by a second in the Gr 1 Victoria Derby. He had also run third in the Gr 1 Caulfield Guineas). By mid November he had earned \$453,500 in stakes and rising!

This colt's pedigree ensures him a future in a serving barn no matter how partial (or otherwise) he remains to ongoing Gr 1 racing fame. The \$800,000 was well spent perhaps?

■ AND FOR THOSE WHO PREFER TO BACK THE UNDERDOG: Keep an eye out for ANGELBONNE. The \$300 brown filly by Darbonne out of Christmas Message qualified as the cheapest 2002 yearling currently in training. Of note, the filly ran a credible 4th in her barrier trial at Eagle Farm on 8 July and while you have to look hard to find much Black Type in her pedigree and her sire/dam will be unfamiliar to some... well, stranger things have happened! 🐾

STATISTICS

- Of the ten highest priced lots sold in 2002: Seven were sold at the Australian Easter Yearling Sale, one at the Magic Millions Premier Sale and two at the New Zealand Premier Sale.
- Danehill (USA) sired six of the top ten yearlings, Sunday Silence (USA) 3 and Zabeel 1.
- Colts made up 8 of the top ten yearlings.
- Stratheden Stud consigned 1 lot, Coolmore (as agent) 1, Highgrove 1, Vinery (as agent) 1, Collingrove (as agent) 1, Cambridge 2 and Arrowfield (as agent) 3.
- Demi O'Byrne (as agent) signed for a total of 2 lots, Gooree Stud 1, Darley Australia 1, Rob MacAnulty (as agent) – 2, Emirates Park 1, Inglis (as agent) 1 and Newlands Thoroughbreds 1.

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