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THOROUGHBRED

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1993

N • E • W • S T O D A Y

W • E • E • K • E • N • D P R E V I E W

DON AMECHE DEAD AT 85 Don Ameche, actor and thoroughbred horse owner, died Monday at his home in Scottsdale, Arizona. Despite battling cancer, Ameche was a familiar sight on the backstretch of Southern California racetracks recently. A film star for 6 decades, his latest films included "Trading Places" and "Cocoon". Trainer Gary Jones, who conditioned Ameche's horses, said, "I feel terrible about his loss. He was a great guy. I knew it was coming, and so did he; he called last week and kind of said goodbye. It's a sad situation, but we certainly had fun together the last part of it." Ameche, who named his horses for towns in Italy, had 4 horses with Jones, including BC Juvenile runner Ferrara.

DEHERE BACK ON TRACK Two-year-old Dehere (Deputy Minister), a candidate for Horse of the Year honors before finishing 8th as favorite in the BC Juvenile, had his 1st breeze since that disappointing effort Monday at Palm Beach Downs, a training center near Delray Beach, Florida. The GI winner went 3 furlongs in :38 1/5. "It was just an open gallop for him," said trainer Reynaldo Nobles, who added that the colt would work another 3/8's Sunday or Monday. Despite his problem bleeding in the Breeders' Cup, Dehere was not treated with Lasix for the work. Nobles indicated that his charge would van to Gulfstream a week to 10 days before his 3-year-old debut, which could come in the Hutcheson Jan.30; **Holy Bull** (Great Above) is also possible for that race.

DEVIL HIS DUE TRAINING AT GULFSTREAM GI winner **Devil His Due** has arrived at Gulfstream Park, where he will begin preparations for the \$300,000 Donn H. Feb 5 and the \$500,000 Gulfstream Park H. March 6. The 4-year-old won the '92 Gulfstream Park H. on his way to taking honors as the last ACRS champ; his nearly \$1.5 million in earnings helped trainer Allen Jerkens to career-best stable earnings of \$4.5 million (through Nov. 21).

News, Cont. on p.2

SATURDAY, AQUEDUCT

Two-year-olds will be in the spotlight in New York Saturday for the Gill Nashua at a mile and a sixteenth over the Aqueduct inner track. Heading the \$100,000a race is SW **Defense Witness** (Skip Trial), winner of 3 added money events in Ohio for owner/breeder Arthur Appleton. Also scheduled to start are Robert Petrin's **Arrovente** (Badger Land), 2nd in the Remsen last time out; **Linkatariat** (Linkage), 3rd in the GII Remsen and 2nd in the Chief's Crown at the Big A; the undefeated **Money of the Mind** (Irish Tower), 2-for-2 at Aqueduct for trainer Ben Perkins Jr.; and Ogden Mills Phipps' **Personal Escort** (Mr. Prospector), a full brother to GI winner Rhythm, who has 2 wins from 8 starts but was 6th in the Remsen in his most recent try. Other possibles are **Able Buck** (Silver Buck), **Popol's Gold** (Strike Gold), an allowance winner last time out, and **Sky Hero** (Conquistador Cielo).

SUNDAY, AQUEDUCT

The juvenile fillies will have their chance in the Gill Tempted, also at a mile and a sixteenth. Trainer Rick Schosberg is prepping a pair of 2-year-olds for this race. Heatherwood Farm's entry of **Exquisite Star** (Star de Naskra) and **Sovereign Kitty** (Sovereign Dancer). The latter has faced some of the best in her division this year, finishing 2nd to Strategic Maneuver in the GII Demoiselle last out, 3rd to that same filly in the GI Matron, and 4th behind Heavenly Prize in the GI Frizette. Her stablemate is making her stakes debut after finishing 4th in an allowance race. The \$100,000a Tempted has also drawn Gilbert Campbell's **Ask Shananie** (Shananie), an allowance winner of 3 of her 8 starts; Caesar Kimmel's **Seeking the Circle** (Seeking the Gold), making her 2nd start after taking her debut by 10 1/2 lengths; and **Wonderlan** (Copelan), 2-for-7 and 2nd in the Bloomfield County at the Meadowlands Nov. 19.

SUNDAY, HOLLYWOOD

Two Hollywood Turf Cup nominees worked yesterday at Hollywood; **Jeune Homme** (Nureyev), who went an easy half in :51 2/5, and **Explosive Red** (Explodent), who covered 6 furlongs in 1:14 3/5 with Gary Stevens up. Also possible for the race is **Miatuschka** (General Holme); co-owner Phil Ramirez said Tuesday, "We're keeping an eye on the weather. She likes a soft turf course, so we're hoping for rain."

WEEKEND PREVIEW	p1
RIDIN' INTO THE SUNSET	p2
NEWS, CONT	p3
RACING REPORT	p3



W · R · I · T · E · R · S U P

RIDIN' INTO THE SUNSET... & BEYOND

By Vic Ziegel

A few minutes past 4, cold, gray Wednesday afternoon, South Ozone Park, there aren't enough people near the Aqueduct paddock to start an argument.

Neal Terracciano, a lifetime in the air-freight business before he became a horse trainer 18 months ago, has his arm around apprentice jockey Filiberto Leon, who has come a long way from Don Serapio's restaurant in Oklahoma City. They are talking about Fun Escort, a 4-year-old gelding who is about to disappoint them.

At 4:12 p.m., they will cross the finish line, Fun Escort and Leon, wearing fluorescent orange silks, a blue "P" on his back. Ten minutes later, the silks replaced by a suede zipper jacket and jeans, the jockey will be behind the wheel of his Pathfinder. He's headed for New Jersey, where 9 more horses are waiting for him at the Meadowlands. He won't get to bed until 1 a.m. And if his agent has made early morning plans for him to work out horses, Leon sleeps for no more than 4, maybe 5 hours before he takes the Pathfinder from his apartment in Richmond Hill to the barns at Belmont.

By 11 a.m., he's in the jockey's room, and the part of the day that has to do with money being won and lost, and fluorescent silks, the races at Aqueduct and the Meadowlands, and the racing to and from, is beginning again.

Tuesday, the only day Aqueduct is dark, the apprentice gets to do his laundry. There's a girl in Albany named Roberta. Albany is far away. Manhattan might as well be Rochester. "I don't got the time," Leon says. "I just got time to work hard and go to bed."

Right now, a few minutes past 4, he's taking Fun Escort on the track. The race is a mile and a sixteenth over the inner track for the cheapest horses on the grounds. Ten days earlier, in the same company, Fun Escort and Leon were a half-length from the lead at the top of the stretch before they dropped to third. Picked up a small check, could have had more. "He (Leon) might have moved him too soon," the trainer says. "He thought he had the race won, and got a little anxious."

LIFE OF AN APPRENTICE

That's how it sometimes happens when a trainer elects to use an apprentice. The weight comes off, 5 pounds in Leon's case, but so does the experience.

This day, the rider is patient, but the horse isn't the least bit interested. They are 10th and last until the turn for home, when they begin to pass horses. A grand total of 3 horses. No check this time.

"I told him," says Tony Stabile, Leon's agent. "Belmont in the summer would be rough, and Saratoga for an apprentice is even rougher." The money would come from September to December, riding day and night. "I hope you're rested," the agent said. "If you have the stamina and the know-how

and you're lucky, it's a small oil well."

Stabile's most recent gusher was a stakes-winning jockey named Julio Pezua. Last July 4, for the publicity, nothing else, Stabile entered him in a silly body-slam contest against YokoZuna, the WWF's 400-pound champion. Lift YokoZuna and slam him to the canvas and win a pick-up truck. Pezua weighed 110 pounds. "He couldn't slam himself," Stabile said. Pezua hit the wrestler on the backside with his whip and raced through the ropes. End of publicity stunt. End of gusher.

A tape of the event was shown in Peru and a horse-owner who knew Pezua must have been impressed. He offered the jockey a 2-year, million-dollar contract.

Wednesday night, driving out of Aqueduct's Rockaway Blvd. gate, Leon had 78 winners and earnings of just under \$1.7 million this year. The jockey gets 10% and a quarter goes to his agent. So nobody's getting poor here.

He won a \$150,000 race at the Meadowlands in October, and his only graded stake 3 weeks ago. He's 27, unusually old for an apprentice. But probably the best reason to know about Filiberto Leon is the 3rd race at Saratoga, Aug. 30, closing day. Turning for home, riding a 33-1 shot named Bejilla Lass, he came off the rail a bit. The horse to his right and just behind him, the favorite, Seattle Way, was ridden by Julie Krone. Leon didn't have enough room. "He knocked her horse off-stride," said steward Dick Hamilton. The horse clipped heels and Krone was thrown. A 3rd horse ran over her.

She doesn't put away the crutches until next month. Hopes to be race-riding again by July.

Leon was suspended for 7 days. "Careless riding," the steward said. It's their lightest punishment.

Leon wasn't aware that anything happened to Krone. "I see a loose horse," he said. When he was about to unsaddle, he glanced at the tote-board, "and I see my number flashing. I say, 'what happened?' I didn't know it was Julie. She didn't scream when she went down."

A few weeks before that incident, he was on the rail and Krone, just behind him, hollered that she wanted to get through. He had a strong horse, he said, and wouldn't oblige her. "After the race, I was talking to the trainer. She came by me and pushed me," Leon said.

Now she was in the hospital--his fault, the stewards ruled--and "I didn't want to call her, because I heard she was so mad at me. I was scared to call," he said. Finally, he sent her roses, and did pick up the phone. She told him not to worry. He tells this story on the George Washington Bridge. The 1st part of his life was delivered on the Cross Bronx Expressway. Growing up on a farm in La Cienaga, Mexico, riding the family horse. Came to Oklahoma City at 17, and began working in Don Serapio's. ("Very good restaurant. Clean.") After 6 years, "I got bored so I decided to try California." He was a short-order cook in Santa Monica when he had to visit a Western Union office. "Another man in the office was looking at me," Leon said. "He asked me, 'Would you like to ride horses?'"

The other man, Wayne Murty, owns a Kentucky horse farm. Gave Leon a job, more long hours, and they taught him how to gallop horses. Forty-nine weeks ago, at Beulah

Cont. on p.3



Writers Up, cont.

Park, near Columbus, Ohio, he rode his 1st winner. In February, Stabile convinced him to come to New York.

They have nothing in common. Leon speaks softly, isn't entirely comfortable with English. Stabile, who looks as if he swallowed a jockey, goes from loud to louder.

It's 58 minutes, gate to gate, when Leon pulls into the jockey's lot at the Meadowlands, 2 hours before his 1st-race ride. Wally Pascal, who books his Jersey horses, has him on Cyebert, the 14-1 outsider.

Stabile and Pascal are watching from the clubhouse seats. "He's got a shot," Stabile says. Pascal would rather talk about a horse in the 9th. They don't bet the 1st race. The 7-5 favorite takes the lead in mid-stretch, but Cyebert, with Leon pushing hard, is 2nd. Stabile looks to the ceiling.

"We shoulda had the exacta," he shouts.

"We shoulda," Pascal says.

"Did I tell you I loved him?"

"You told me," Pascal agrees.

The 2nd race, Leon's horse is 15-1. Stabile finds at least 6 reasons his jockey can win. "Of course," he adds, "if the horse is a garbage can, there's nothing we can do about it."

Leon finishes 3rd. He collects 3 more 2nds that night, no winners. He's 0-for-5 at Aqueduct, 0-for-9 at the Meadowlands.

Another 2 months, and Leon's apprenticeship will end, and he loses that valuable weight break.

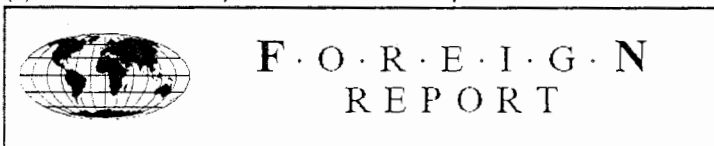
Stabile insists Leon can become a New York regular, but admits he's betting from the heart.

"I think of him as my son," the agent says. "I believe in him. But I have got to put food on my table. I've got a wife and 2 kids who'll both be in college by 1995. I can't afford to sell from an empty pushcart."

He leaves after the 6th race, talking up Leon all the way to the Lincoln Tunnel.

It's not quite 10 p.m. His jockey won't get to sleep for at least another 3 hours. Four, maybe 5 hours later, Filiberto Leon will be ready to ride another horse.

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Yesterday's Result

PRIX MASSINE, Maisons-Laffitte, France, 12-7, \$35,939.
3yo/up, 8fT, 1:48 3/5, hy.

1--#**PATER NOSTER**, c. 4, Stately Don (C.B. Stud-Jpn) --Sainera, by Stop the Music. O-M. Myers; B-Stud Crown Limited (KY.); T-Mrs. Julie Cecil; (\$85,000 yearling 1990 Keeneland September yearling sale); \$20,537.

2--**Gulf Water**, c. 3, Al Nasr (Fr) (Haras du Mezeray-Fr) --Paddle (Fr), by Jim French. O-Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum; \$8,215.

3--**Tarquina**, f. 4, Niniski (Lanwades Stud-Eng) --Nekhbet (Ire), by Artaius. O-P. Pritchard; \$4,107.
Margins: 3/4, 1 1/2, 1 1/2.

News Cont.

BERTRANDO TO STAND 1994 SEASON AT RIVER EDGE FARM; FRANKEL RESIGNS

1993 Breeders' Cup Classic runner-up **Bertrando** (Skywalker-Gentle Hands, by Buffalo Lark) will stand the 1994 season at Mr. and Mrs. Marty Wygod's River Edge Farm near Buellton, California. His stud fee will be \$20,000 live foal and he will continue to be the property of 505 Farms and Ed Nahem. Nahem will also function in the official capacity of "Syndicate Manager." While Bobby Frankel has resigned as the colt's trainer due to a disagreement over these plans, Nahem intends to return Bertrando to the races after his stud duty is over in May. "He'd have to be laid up a few months anyway," said Nahem. "We're only delaying him going back into training by a few months at the most. Meanwhile, we've got 25 mares of our own and another 25 mares committed to him. We'd have to pay about \$20,000 to breed each of our 25 mares to outside stallions anyway." Nahem is not worried about the possibility of Bertrando losing interest in racing after performing stud duty. "He's not a studdish horse," Nahem said. "He's very sensible. His father Skywalker did the same thing the season after he won the Breeders' Cup Classic." Skywalker went on to win 1 of 4 races as a 5-year-old, finishing 2nd in the Gill Arcadia H. and 3rd in the Gill Goodwood H.

SALES TOPPERS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

SUDDEN FROST, by Northern Dancer-Betty's Secret (Secretariat)

1988 Keeneland July Select Yearling Sale, Hip #251

Top-Priced Filly at \$1,000,000

Consignor: Windfields Farm

Buyer: Robert Sangster

A full sister to Epsom Derby winner Secreto, Canadian-bred Sudden Frost was unraced and first bred at age 3. Her 1st foal, a 1991 filly by Pleasant Colony, sold at the 1992 Keeneland September Yearling Sale for \$50,000. The Pleasant Colony filly was consigned to the sale by Windfields Farm and purchased by Walnut Green Bloodstock. Sudden Frost has also produced a 1992 colt by Meadowlake and a 1993 filly by Conquistador Cielo. She currently resides at Windfields Farm in Ontario, Canada and is in foal to Hous-ton.



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Stakes Result

KATTEGAT'S PRIDE S., Lrl, 12-7, \$27,700, 2yo, f, 6f, 1:11 4/5, ft.

- 1--#**BABY ZIP**, f, 2, Relaunch (Wimbledon Farm-KY)
--Thirty Zip, by Tri Jet. O/B-Robert Harris (KY.);
T-Timothy Ritchey; \$16,620.
- 2--**Premier Mombo**, f, 2, Premiership (Franks Farms, Southland Division-FL) --Mardi Gras Mombo, by Tampa Trouble. O-Guy B. Snowden; (\$100,000 two-year-old 1993 Fasig-Tipton February 2yos in training sale at Calder); \$5,540.
- 3--**Lady Hunter**, f, 2, Jade Hunter (Brookside Farm-KY)
--Modern Grecian, by Mr. Leader. O-Harvey Vogel Jr.; \$3,047.
- Margins: nose, 1, 2.

Allowance Results

8th-Pha, 12-7, \$24,000 Alw., 3yo/up, 7f, 1:22 4/5, ft. William Backer's KY-homebred LATE GUEST (g, 4, Fit to Fight--Sleepytime Gal, by Drone), a 1/2 brother to MIDNIGHT CALL (\$261,131, by Top Command), led after the first 1/4, and held on to triumph by 3 1/4 for his 4th '93 win. Stakes-placed earlier this year, the gelding runs out of Barclay Tagg's shedrow and increases earnings to \$146,747, race record to 20-7-7-0.

9th-Grd, 12-7, \$19,800 Alw., 3yo/up, 8f, 1:40 4/5, sy. Ontario-bred CANADA FIRST (c, 3, Cool Halo--Golden Spirit, by Plugged Nickle) found the lead early and defended it throughout to gain a 1/2 length victory over the 7 horse field for trainer John LeBlanc. The Kingsbrook Farm homebred enhances record to 22-4-3-4, advances income to \$71,156.

8th-Lrl, 12-7, \$18,000 Alw., 3yo/up, 6f, 1:10 1/5, ft. Former claimer RAGTIME DANCING (g, 4, El Raggas--Princess Quillita, by Pretense), saddled by Dale Capuano, picked up his 1st Alw. win of the year in a stretch move that saw him in front by 4 at the wire. Bred in MD by Carey Miller, the gelding now carries purses of \$66,023, and improves record to 34-9-3-6, for owner Louis Ulman.

7th-Pha, 12-7, \$16,000 Alw., 2yo, 8.5f, 1:47 3/5, ft. Leading a 10-horse field from wire-to-wire, WISSIE'S WISH (c, 2, The Cool Virginian--Bold Woman, by Bold Victor), in his 2nd lifetime Alw. start, prevailed by a nose for trainer Steve Rowan. The Jacques Moore & Ann Brede homebred gets his 2nd win overall (1 place) in 4

starts. Finishing just shy of the board in last outing, the MD-bred has now earned \$20,630.

Maiden Winners

- Ensign Mickey, g, 2, Blue Ensign--Strapped, by Ambernash. Crc, 12-7, ab8.5fT, 1:47 2/5. B-Chabboquasset Farm (Ky.). *1/2 to Jyp (\$340,169, by Princely Game).
- +Zigland, f, 2, Danzig--Angel Island (G2-\$203,251), by *Cougar II. Lrl, 12-7, 5.5f, 1:05. B-Heronwood Farm, Inc. (Va.). *1/2 to Sharrood (G2-\$427,280, by Caro {Ire}) and Chicote County (G2-\$213,426, by Pleasant Colony).
- Personal Prince, c, 2, Personal Flag--Stunning Princess, by Our Native. Crc, 12-7, 8.5f, 1:48 1/5. B-James Thomas (Ky.).
- Otter, c, 2, Private Terms--Dormir, by Halo. Pha, 12-7, 6f, 1:13 1/5. B-Black Gates Nursery Trust (Pa.). *13th winner for freshman sire.
- +Lady Reiko (Ire), f, 2, Sadler's Wells--Willamae, by Tentam. Lrl, 12-7, 5.5f, 1:04 3/5. B-R. Quinchett & Calgo Bloodstock (Ire.). *1/2 to Willa on the Move (G1-\$442,063, by Assert {Ire}). *Won by 8.
- K. O. Lady, f, 2, Two Punch--Rolfes Jet, by Tom Rolfe. Grd, 12-7, 4.5f, :53 4/5. B-Candy Land Farm (N.Y.).

A # will distinguish first-time stakes winners, a @ will indicate first-time graded stakes winners, and a + will denote winners who are first-time starters.

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