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THE VIEW DOWNUNDER ~ HAROLD HOWE

MONKEY KING AND THE GLASS MAN

Monkey King has been the darling of Australasian racing this year but owner Robert Famularo takes it all in stride as part of the pure enjoyment he derives from his horses. Photos by Race Images

Robert Famularo is a man who does not take racing too seriously. The owner of Monkey King, the top pacer in the southern hemisphere who won over \$1 million in 19 days, has a true passion for the game and it's not about the money.

"Listen, I am under no illusion that Monkey King is the greatest horse ever to come along. He's not a glamour horse; he's a little gelding that flew under the radar most of his life that has now had a number of things fall into place for him. I've had immense enjoyment seeing him accomplish what he has but I have things in perspective."

Refreshing might be a good word to describe the 53 year-old New Zealander. Unlike some other owners around the globe who have difficulty giving an objective appraisal of their horses, Famularo is disarmingly candid about his horse not unlike the way he is about his life's work.

He started out wanting to become an accountant but discovered it was not for him.

"I was always good with numbers but decided that I wanted to live with them rather than just count them."

He denies being entrepreneurial but after working 10 years in a clerical position for a glass industry firm he decided to strike out on his own. From that day in 1986 when he began as a one man band from his home, the company called Euro-glass Systems has grown to employ a staff of 150. Its' business is the manufacturing of shop front glass, sliding glass doors, shower enclosures, pool fences and the like. He rates it as the third largest such firm in New Zealand.

It is that success that has allowed Famularo to create a horse farm and it is an exceptional facility. Located near Christchurch the property began with a 125 acre block followed by an additional 60 acres.

"It was set up as an orchard and truthfully there was no great plan in building this. One of the great negatives to having succeeded financially is that



Monkey King's owner Robert Famularo.

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Over 15 Million Reasons to Participate!

Indiana's Standardbred Breed Development Program is one that is on the rise. In 2010, horsemen participating in the program will compete for more money than ever before. Our slots-enhanced program offers a budget in excess of **\$15 million** this season, 40% more than the money available in 2009.

Indiana Sires Stakes

The most significant increases in 2009 came in the Indiana Sires Stakes Program. ISS-eligible horses raced for considerably more money than ever before.

The two-year-old program for 2009 included:

- Six legs guaranteed at **\$25,000** per leg (three per series)
- **\$250,000** in finals purses (**\$125,000** per series final)
- **\$25,000** consolations for each series
- **66 percent** purse increases from 2008 program

The three-year-old program for 2009 included:

- Eight legs guaranteed at **\$25,000** per leg (four per series)
- **\$300,000** in finals purses (**\$150,000** per series final)
- **\$30,000** consolations for each series
- **108 percent** purse increases from 2008 program

The aged program for 2009 included:

- **\$20,000** eliminations (if necessary)
- **\$80,000** finals purses

Indiana Sired Fair Circuit

The Indiana Sires Fair Circuit offered an expanded racing program in 2009 with the addition of another fair series following the Indiana State Fair. This lucrative program will continue for 2010.

In 2009 the Indiana Sired Fair Circuit offered:

- Purses guaranteed at **\$3,000** per division, regardless of the number of entries
- **\$15,000 Final** and **\$6,000 Consolation** held at the Indiana State Fair
- Another **\$15,000 Final** held after the completion of the Indiana State Fair

If you have any questions regarding the Indiana Standardbred Breed Development Program or would like to receive additional information, please contact the offices of the Indiana Horse Racing Commission at (317) 233-3119 or visit our website at www.in.gov/hrc.



More than \$6.1 million in Indiana Sires Stakes purses were distributed during the 2009 season, nearly double the \$3.27 million paid out one year earlier.

Indiana Sired Late Closers

The late closing series program also offered enhanced purses including:

- Increased purses for Indiana Sired Late Closers at Hoosier Park and Indiana Downs

Bonus and Breeder's Awards

- Bonus for Indiana-sired Horses winning in Open Company
- Breeder's award for any Indiana-sired two or three year old which wins any race at Hoosier Park or Indiana Downs





one can indulge themselves regardless of cost. I have to admit I got carried away. Had I known the size of the investment prior to starting this project I am sure I would not have started."

Dancingonmoonlight Farm has a price tag that Famularo chooses not to disclose but several million dollars would not be an exaggeration. He admits to being a perfectionist.

There is stabling for 27 horses with a 1,000 metre training track and 700 metre jogging surface. The entire property was fenced from scratch and there are even plans for a nine hole, par three golf course at some juncture.

The name came from Famularo's first horse back in 1997. Famularo was part of a group of five who invested in a daughter of Holmes Hanover whose name was spelled Dancinonmoonlite. As a three-year-old she ranked as the second best filly of her class, would eventually find her way to Canada for a period, and retired with earnings of \$402,000.

"My father was a very keen punter and my brother and I came to love the racing as well. We watched both

Monkey King became the dominant pacer downunder in the later part of 2009, winning more than a million dollars in just 19 days.

gallopers and trotters enough to realize that the value would lie with the Standard-breds," he recalls.

"I hate to admit it but the more I got involved, the more I got involved. The racing game has so much appeal to me on many levels. I suppose I love the challenge of it all and it has become a lifestyle thing."

From that first partnership Famularo discovered that he preferred to be a solo act making the decisions on his own. Steven Reid, an accomplished New Zealand trainer was his technician.

"I then decided to dabble in a few broodmares which led me to come up with the idea to get our own farm. The Christchurch area is the centre for trotting in our country and while I'm anything but a farmer the idea of having the farm appealed to me."

As the farm developed Famularo

reached the conclusion that for many reasons it would make more sense to have the horses developed there rather than with Reid who is based near Auckland.

Brendan Hill was an assistant to Reid and Famularo made him an offer he could not refuse.

"When I made this decision it was very disappointing for Steven but it was no reflection on him as a trainer or person. This was a natural evolution for what I wanted to do with our horses. Actually Steven has moved on and formed an association with probably the biggest single owner in New Zealand racing so it worked out for everyone."

Before the split Monkey King had already established himself as a horse of some note. A \$20,000 yearling, the son of Sands A Flying did not race at two but at three was as good a sophomore as there was in the country.

“What Monkey King has done this year is wonderful and I’m very proud to own him. If he wins all the remainder of his races or none of them it won’t matter. He’s done us all proud.”

“His selection to buy as a yearling was all Steven. I don’t get involved other than to give him a limit of \$20,000 on each horse and I think that year we may have bought six or eight. My first recollection of the horse was in October of his three-year-old season when he began to look a bit special.”

Special he was winning \$178,000 that year more than justifying his purchase price. The next season he improved with \$312,000 to his credit followed the next year by \$346,000 in winnings and then \$340,560 in 2008/2009.

Along the way he snared the \$600,000 Auckland Cup, two Easter Cups, the \$200,000 Harness Jewels, the \$150,000 Messenger Stakes and was second in the 2007 New Zealand Cup.

“His career has been a steady progression. I’m not convinced that he’s a different horse this year from past years. So many things have fallen his way but under Brendan’s care he may be just a little bit better because of the attention he has received,” suggests Famularo.

“As I say he is not a glamour horse. In the past he won his share and maybe a bit more. But now he has come out from under the radar.”

With \$2 million in earnings that would be an understatement.

Along the way Famularo became intrigued with Monkey King’s sire Sands A Flyin p,4,1:50 (\$481,436). Three years ago in a private transaction he bought the now 17 year-old son of Beach Towel who had been imported to New Zealand in 1996 by the now defunct National Bloodstock.

“He was priced right and I always wanted to be involved with a stallion. He has not been commercial here for some time but if one examines the

quality of the mares he bred, he did remarkably well so we are breeding him.”

In fact, of the 32 mares Famularo owns 15 to 20 are being bred to the horse. With the band he has acquired he has elected to bypass yearling sales for the foreseeable future.

Clearly, Famularo steps to his own drummer. It was he who commissioned sulky manufacturer Tom Harmer to come up with a new race bike which Monkey King wore in his New Zealand Cup victory.

“I think Tom is an innovative guy. He’s developed wheels as well and already is at work on another bike which we hope to see here early in the New Year. I also have two horses in Tom’s stable in Florida.”

In New Zealand racing the horses race in the colours of the owner not the trainer. What makes Famularo’s horses notable is that his drivers don colours made of tight fitting Lycra.

“It’s the same concept cyclists have in an effort to reduce drag. There are many close races where inches made the difference. I believe oversized suits create some

drag so we try to eliminate that.”

Not one to shy away from a challenge, Famularo was supportive of Steven Reid in 2005 when he wanted to bring a small team to North America. Among them was the two-year-old Presidential Ball colt Bartolomeo who was bred to North American time.

The youngster won a memorable \$174,950 division of the Nassegaweya Stake at Mohawk Racetrack over Mister Big and Armbro Deuce before being sold to Jerry Snyder for a significant sum.

In late 2008 Montecito, an Armbro Operative gelding that he was racing in New Zealand developed respiratory bleeding issues. Unable to use Lasix in the southern hemisphere he sold the horse to North American interests where he has been more than useful winning over \$400,000 in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

It’s not just Famularo who has the bug for the horses. His 22 year-old daughter Sara gave up educational pursuits to be involved on a full time basis with the farm. He declares that this wife Kerry and other daughter Michelle, while not as keen as he and Sara, love the involvement with the horse operation.

“This is not about ego; I legitimately love what I’m doing here with the horses. It’s also not about the money although I hate to think about the cost of things. I’m in the background for the most part just because I like my privacy,” he offers.

“What Monkey King has done this year is wonderful and I’m very proud to own him. If he wins all the remainder of his races or none of them it won’t matter. He’s done us all proud.”

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STALLION NOMINATION FEE: Due and payable January 15, 2010, in the amount of the advertised stud fee for the 2010 breeding season (\$500 U.S. funds minimum) -- plus an additional surcharge as indicated below -- provided, however, that for first-year stallions placed in commercial service (which would not include test breedings) after January 15, the nomination must be paid within 60 days after the stallion first breeds a mare. In no event will any first-year stallion nomination fee be accepted after December 31, 2010. The Hambletonian Society reserves the right to determine the stallion nomination fee of those stallions whose 2010 service is advertised as private treaty, or if the amount of the fee is not advertised. This payment covers 2010 matings (foals of 2011).

In addition to the 2010 service fee, the amount of the stallion nomination fee must include a surcharge as follows:

a) For stallions that stand for a fee from US\$3,000 to \$5,999 (or 3,131 CAD (Canadian Dollars) to 6,261 CAD), an additional amount equal to 40% of 2010 service fee must be paid;

b) For stallions that stand for a fee from US\$6,000 to \$9,999 (or 6,262 CAD (Canadian Dollars) to 10,436 CAD), an additional amount equal to 75% of 2010 service fee must be paid;

c) For stallions that stand for a fee over US\$9,999 (or 10,436 CAD), an additional amount equal to 100% of 2010 service fee must be paid.

For stallions that stand for a service fee of less than US\$3,000 (or 3,131 CAD), no additional surcharge is necessary for nomination.

Note: For the purpose of determining the surcharge in other than U.S. funds, the December 1, 2009 exchange rate is used; a rate of 1.0438 CAD per US\$.

Stallion nominations for other than first-year stallions that are postmarked after January 16, 2010, but on or before December 31, 2010, will be accepted upon payment of an additional penalty amount equal to 50% of the above stallion nomination fee (including the above surcharge). Likewise, stallion nominations for first-year stallions that are postmarked after the above sixty-day deadline, but on or before December 31, 2010, will be accepted upon payment of an additional amount equal to 50% of the above stallion nomination fee (including the above surcharge).

Any payment on a stallion that does not commercially conceive a foal or breed a mare by any means during the entire 2010 breeding season may be refunded, provided, however, that it shall be the obligation of the stallion nominator to notify the Society in writing of any request for refund by December 31, 2010.

Moreover, if a nominated stallion does not breed more than twenty (20) mares in 2010 or produce more than fifteen (15) registered foals in 2011, up to 50% of the stallion nomination fee may be refunded, provided, however, that it shall be the obligation of the stallion nominator to notify the Society in writing of any request for adjustment by December 31, 2011. No stallion nomination fee will be reduced to less than \$500.00 U.S. funds.

Any payment on a North American stallion that has been nominated by January 15, 2010, and is subsequently exported prior to February 15, 2010 and that does not commercially breed a mare in North America by any means during the entire 2010 breeding season, may be refunded, provided, however, that it shall be the obligation of the stallion nominator to notify the Society in writing of any request for refund by December 31, 2010. With the exception of supplemental nominations or declarations as provided in the conditions, foals of 2011 by a stallion for which the above nomination fee has been refunded will be ineligible to the Breeders Crown unless an additional amount equal to the amount of the refund is paid.

Except as provided above, stallion nomination fees shall not be refunded.

Stallion payments may be made in the local currency of the nation in which the stallion stands, or in equivalent U.S. funds (\$500 U.S. funds minimum).

Conditions for nominating yearlings will be published in the U.S.T.A. Stakes & Futurities Nomination Book. Specific conditions for the races for which these foals are eligible will be published in the U.S.T.A. Stakes Guide in the year of the races. The Hambletonian Society reserves the right to add to, amend or delete the conditions of all or any part of the Breeders Crown program, without liability.

In 2010, 2-year-old 3-year-old and open Breeders Crown events will be conducted under the conditions of Breeders Crown 2010. All of these races are closed with sustaining payments due in 2010, with the exception of supplemental nominations.

For more information contact: The Hambletonian Society/Breeders Crown at (609) 371-2211 or www.hambletonian.org

BREEDERS CROWN STALLION NO. 27 NOMINATION BLANK

Name of Stallion _____ Age/Foal of: _____ 2010 Service Fee _____

Sire _____ Dam _____ Sire of Dam _____

Farm: _____ State/Province _____

Owner(s) _____

Please check : In-production stallion (by Jan. 15, 2010) With penalty (additional 50% after Jan. 15, 2010)

First-season stallion (within 60 days of 1st cover) First-season with penalty (additional 50% after 60 days)

The Stallion Nomination Fee is the amount of the 2010 Service Fee plus the above surcharge for fees over \$2,999 (3,130 CAD)

2010 Service Fee _____ + Surcharge (%) _____ = Nomination Fee enclosed: _____

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