

Goshen Sale Hits the Ground Running

By Bill Finley

MIDDLETOWN, NY – No one knew quite what to expect yesterday as the first horse in the first-ever Goshen Yearling Sale stepped into the auction ring. This was a new sale at a new place and it is in direct competition with the more established Morrisville Sale. But when it was over and the last yearling had been sold the people behind Goshen had proved their point, that a new, well-run, properly promoted regional sale in an ideal location would be a nice fit in the yearling sales market.

The buyers, the sellers and the sale's organizers all came away happy yesterday as 114 yearlings were sold for a gross of \$1,436,400. The average sale price was \$12,600.

"I think this was great and I really hope it catches on," said owner Gene Kurzrok, whose buys included a Chapter Seven filly he bought for \$47,000. "It's close. I like the people. I like the feel. I like everything about it."

The sale was the brainchild of a handful of prominent breeders who had issues with Morrisville, primarily its out-of-the-way location. They wanted to sell their horses that may not have been good enough to make the cut at Lexington and Harrisburg at a place that was convenient for all involved, and chose Mark Ford's Training Center, which is about 60 miles from Yonkers.

They got that part right as the sale was well-attended. As always happens at regional sales, there was virtually no market for some of the horses, who wound up selling in the \$2,000 or under range. But those with decent credentials brought decent prices.

"I thought it went great," said Winbak Farms' owner Joe Thomson, a director of the sale. "We all thought we needed a new location where we could sell New York bred and Pennsylvania bred and Mark's training center seems to be in the heart of what's going on in the sport in the area. Mark Ford has a great place. We hired Chris Tully to do promotion and run the sale and he did a great job. I think some of the horses sold really well. I was happy with the outcome and happy with the consignors we got. We appreciate all the buyers who came up. This made it a lot easier for them. Any time you can make things easier for people to buy something, where they don't have to go long distances and can get their horses home without a lot of problems you have accomplished something."

The sale topper was Hip 65, a Rock N Roll Heaven colt named Outkast Blue Chip. He was bought for \$67,000 by Joe Bellino, whose family raced Rock N Roll Heaven. He was consigned by Blue Chip Farms.

"We're supporting Rock N Roll Heaven," Bellino said. "Also, I went and saw this horse back in the winter. They were showing me a Rocknroll Hanover colt that they were really high on and I saw this one jogging around and said 'who's that?' I was taking this horse. That horse was coming home with me. I thought I would get him for less and probably should have. I've been known to over pay and I have always done well when I do."

As for the sale as a whole, Bellino gave it rave reviews.

“They did a great job, just a great job,” he said. “For a first-year sale it was put together very well. It was amazing. Blue Chip, Mark Ford, Cameo Hills, Winbak, they all did a great job. I am really impressed.”

Bellino bought another Rock N Roll Heaven colt for \$40,000. The consignor was Steuben Farms.

“I was very concerned coming into the sale because there was such a learning curve,” Ford said. “We had a lot of pressure and lot of people didn’t want to sell here because of Morrisville. I’m glad we went ahead with it. Everybody was happy and I haven’t heard any legitimate complaints. We were dealing with Blue Chip, Winbak, Steve Jones. Those guys rule the world. I had nothing at stake. I’m just glad to be part of the bunch. When you deal with people like that how can you go wrong?”

The Goshen sale has clearly created problems for Morrisville, which has only 69 horses in its catalogue. If there’s going to be a war between the two sales it’s a war Morrisville cannot win. Ford, for one, hopes the two sales can reach a compromise.

“In New York there is not room for two small sales,” He said. “I just hope we can work something out with Morrisville and come to some kind of agreement that we can all be under one roof and work for the greater good. It’s really not much of a money making thing. This is more a service to New York breeders and give-back to the business. Hopefully, in another year we’ll work out the politics and misunderstandings and all live happily ever after.”