

# Training Offspring of Sires:

## MONTBROOK



Buckaroo—Secret Papers,  
by Jet Diplomacy

BY RON MITCHELL

In this continuing series, trainers of the top horses sired by the stallion Montbrook are asked their views of the sire's offspring. A son of Buckaroo produced from the Jet Diplomacy mare Secret Papers, Montbrook was bred in Florida by Ocala Stud. He was purchased by Louise McLean, agent, for \$260,000 at the 1992 Ocala Breeders' Sales Co.'s February 2-year-olds in training sale. Trained by Dean Gaudet for Israel Cohen, Montbrook won five of eight starts and earned \$373,728. Among his four stakes wins were the Frank J. De Francis Memorial Dash Stakes (gr. III) and the Riva Ridge Stakes (gr. III). Retired to stand at Michael O'Farrell's Ocala Stud Farm in 1996, Montbrook has been a major influence within Florida breeding and has been the leading sire in that state four times. The sire of more than 45 stakes winners, Montbrook has been represented by the earners of more than \$40 million. He has sired two champions—Big Drama, the 2010 champion sprinter in North America, and Monteration, the 2001 champion imported 3-year-old in Puerto Rico. Montbrook stood for a 2011 fee of \$7,500.

### David Fawkes (champion Big Drama):

Big Drama is really nice to deal with. No problems. Sound. Very smart. He's the kind of horse you wouldn't even know he's there. For the most part, he is a quiet horse; gentle. He's not a real big horse, about 15.3 hands. I had one Montbrook in New York who was a very big horse. I think they come in all sizes and shapes. They tend to sprint; more of them have been sprinters. He consistently throws runners, year after year. He has had some great horses in Florida, but he has the kind of horses that show up everywhere.

### Todd Pletcher (Chapel Royal):

Chapel Royal was a very advanced 2-year-old and a physically mature horse. He came to hand very quickly. He was one of those who was at his best in June, July, and August at 2. He was a physically imposing 2-year-old, very big. His main weapon was his speed. He had the potential to stretch out had he physically held up to it all. He was probably capable of a mile and a sixteenth. He had some physical issues as a 3-year-old that probably kept him from running to his full ability. He was a very intelligent colt. They (Montbrook foals) tend to lean toward sprinting, but you will see some stretch out. I think he is a good, solid stallion, a working man's sire.

### Rick Dutrow Jr. (Amen Hallelujah):

She is a very nice filly. She has the potential to win a grade I on the dirt, on the Polytrack, and on turf. She's just barely gotten beat in grade Is on all three of those surfaces. She's sprinted on the Polytrack, she's run long on the grass, and she's gone to California and won. She's had physical issues, and she's been fighting her issues. I believe 95% of a horse's physical issues come from racing and training. She has been ready to do everything we have asked her to do. She just has so much heart and determination. She's run some big races for us. She's in the top 10 fillies we've ever had.

### Steve Asmussen (Snuck In, Jardin):

They were very straightforward horses. Snuck In was a great horse to be around. He had a ton of ability. Snuck In was a bigger, taller horse. Jardin was a very fast little filly. Both were very smart horses and very competitive. We have



Big Drama



Chapel Royal



Amen Hallelujah



Jardin





ADAM COGLIANESE

Shake You Down



JACK COADY

Shadowbdancing



EQUUS PHOTO

Max Forever (inside)



SARAH ANDREW/EQUUS PHOTO

Fleet Valid

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been fortunate enough to have a few Montbrooks, and I think they were all very honest racehorses. They ran to their ability. They always ran their race.

#### **Mark Casse** (*Howaboutrightnow*):

She was definitely unique for a Montbrook. She won a stakes going a mile and a quarter. She was tall and lean; a pretty good size. She had a lot of heart. The day she won the Maple Leaf, it looked like she was beaten and she came back and won by a nose. She showed a lot of gameness that day. She was very sound. The only reason I had her is because she was a homebred of my father's (Norman Casse). Montbrook is a hard-knocking sire and has meant a lot to Florida. I like the Montbrooks. Most of them do have a desire to win.

#### **Scott Lake** (*Shake You Down, Thunderello*):

They were built similarly, with blocky chests. They had huge gaskins on them. Those two were really a lot alike as far as looks. As far as attitude goes, they were great. Shake You Down was a very intelligent horse. He loved to take his time going to the racetrack. He had a great personality and was great to be around. Thunderello was much the same way, except as a baby he was scared of everything. He didn't like to be around other horses. In the mornings, he would just run off. One day he got loose at Saratoga, went over the rail, and fell back onto the racetrack. After that, it was like the light came on with him. He wasn't scared of other horses anymore and was just an absolute joy to be around. Shake You Down was about a 90% sound horse. Thunderello pulled a suspensory, but it wasn't a physical deformity. When he broke down, he just took a bad step and fractured a sesamoid. They liked to play but weren't nasty. They had the attitudes of good horses. I love him (Montbrook) as a sire. As a sire, he can throw you any kind of horse.

#### **Ben Perkins Jr.** (*Max Forever*):

Max Forever was a nice, athletic, well-balanced horse. He kind of looked like the stallion. We (Perkins and a client) actually bid on him (Montbrook) at a 2-year-old sale. We liked him. He was a real fast horse. Max Forever was a pretty solid horse. He was like a middle-distance horse; not lightning fast. He had speed going long. He was a nice, honest horse.

#### **Terrel Gore** (*Shadowbdancing*):

He's still in training. He's been the horse of a lifetime for me. He's 6-years-old now and has stayed sound. He's won over \$700,000. He's been very kind, never studish. He has a very good mind and has been a good racehorse. He's tall—16.1 or 16.2 hands. I had one Montbrook filly that I trained. They both had a lot of speed. He can carry his speed. He's won up to a mile and an eighth, and he's won at six furlongs.

#### **Bernie Flint** (*Outofthebox*):

He was very sound and had an excellent mind. Overall, he was a pleasure to be around. He was just a real nice horse. He was a different looking Montbrook than you normally find. He was about 16.1, maybe 16.2 hands, tall. He had more of a Thoroughbred build than being a blocky type. Most of the time the Montbrooks are kind of built along the Quarter Horse line, with a lot of leg underneath them. They are very attractive horses.

#### **William Kaplan** (*Castlebrook*):

She was a sweetheart to train; a dream. An outstanding filly. She was really huge, 17 hands tall. I've had two or three Montbrooks in my barn, and I've had pretty good success with them. Some of the Montbrooks I've had were heavier-boned, but she was a tall, lighter-boned filly. She had a lot of body on her. She could run all day long. She was sound through her whole career. You hardly knew she was there. She was real quiet and relaxed. She was easy to gallop and just loved racing.

#### **Scott Volk** (*Fleet Valid*):

He had a lot of heart and was a dream horse to train. He was 100% perfect. We retired him after he fractured a sesamoid (while finishing third) in the 2009 De Francis Memorial Dash (gr. I). It was obvious he wasn't going to make it back to the races. He was the real deal. It was a great adventure to train him. He was a piece of cake. Montbrook is probably the best deal in America. If I were in the breeding business, I would breed to him in a heartbeat. 🐾