

DECADE OF DANDIES FOR TEAM VALOR INTERNATIONAL NOW CATALOGED, STABLE'S TOP DOZEN VICTORIES OF LAST DECADE ARE COUNTED DOWN, INTERNATIONAL TRIUMPHS BY FILLIES HIGHLIGHTS STABLE'S SUCCESSES



Team Valor International enjoyed a decade of phenomenal successes between 2000 and 2009, especially with its fillies and mares around the globe. Nothing serves to highlight the success of the stable's international aspirations better than a recitation of these global triumphs.

Victories were recorded at many of the racing capitals of the world in the United States, Canada, France, China, South Africa and the Middle East. Such is the exclusivity of the list, that triumphs and exceptional performances that led to Championships and accolades in England, Ireland, Germany, Italy, Saudi Arabia and Uruguay failed to make the final cut. In the spirit of celebration at the close of this wonderful decade, the staff of Team Valor has compiled a list of the Top Dozen Achievements.

"We've always been international to a certain extent," noted Barry Irwin, owner of Team Valor International. "But since adding 'international' to the name year before last, we have made a more concerted effort to expand the reach of our stable. The list appears in descending order, as follows.



Number 12

Grade 1, \$1-million Bell Woodbine Mile
BECRUX



Becrux came with a strong finish from well back along the outside to win a race that is considered the top mile event on the North American continent outside of the Breeders' Cup Mile. Adding a large dose of excitement and mystery to the event, troubled but brilliant reinsman Patrick Valenzuela rode in her first race in months, planning in from Southern California to appear at Woodbine at the last moment, the only visible hair on his body in the form of an inch-long braided pony tail protruding from the base of his skull. He rose like a man possessed and the ex Italian Champion racehorse responded in kind.



Number 11

Grade 1 Daily News 2000
RUSSIAN SAGE



Russian Sage won one of the 3 Derbys run in South Africa when bought for syndication by Team Valor, but he was not the top-rated colt, being rated 6 pounds below the top. When he won the Grade 1 Daily News 2000 in his Team Valor debut, however, he showed he was the best of his generation and he was voted Champion Colt at 3. In 3 starts in Dubai, he ran two corks and one clunker, in the good one dead-heating for second with Group 1 hero Jay Peg in the Grade 2 Jebel Hatta. His *Timeform* rating shot from 107 to 124 and he was among the top 6 ranked horses in training in the world last March.



Number 10

Grade 1, \$1-million Delaware Park Handicap UNBRIDLED BELLE



Unbridled Belle turned in the most dominating performance in the annals of one of the most historic races for fillies and mares run in North America when she won the \$1-million Delaware Handicap by an astonishing 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ lengths. Winning time of 2:01 for a mile and a quarter was the fastest in 20 years and her winning Beyer number of 106 was second among distaffers to that point in the season to Rags to Riches, winner of the Belmont Stakes. Unbridled Belle went on to earn more than \$1.9 million and win the Grade 1 Beldame Stakes, the best wfa contest for fillies and mares run on the North American calendar.



Number 9

Grade 1 Santa Anita Oaks GOLDEN BALLET



Golden Ballet joined all-time great Serena's Song as the only winners of Santa Anita's 3 races for 3yo fillies at the winter-spring meet when taking the Grade 1 Santa Anita Oaks. The California-bred Moscow Ballet filly put away Juddmonte Farm's Flute to record a second Grade 1 win in a row. Flute went on to win the Classic Grade 1 Kentucky Oaks and Grade 1 Alabama to confirm the quality of Golden Ballet's Santa Oaks. It was a personal triumph for Barry Irwin, who had imported her sire from Ireland and syndicated him for stud.



Number 8

Grade 1 Santa Anita Derby THE DEPUTY



The Deputy and Fusaichi Pegasus started as the first and second choices for the Kentucky Derby, based on their form in Southern California, where the latter beat The Deputy in the San Felipe and The Deputy won the Santa Anita Derby at the direct expense of War Chant, who went on to win the Breeders' Cup Mile. The Deputy had never run on dirt in England, but he ran competitively against Fusaichi Pegasus in his first main-track outing in the San Felipe and he was a convincing winner over War Chant on the dirt when winning the Santa Anita Derby next time. He was unplaced in the Kentucky Derby in his final start.



Number 7
Grade 1 Spinaway Stakes
CASHIER'S DREAM



Cashier's Dream, bred off the beaten track in Michigan, won with a claiming tag in her debut for her owner-breeder-trainer. The first time she ran for Team Valor, she broke Ruffian's record clocking for 5 ½ furlongs for a 2-year-old filly, when taking the Grade 3 Debutante Stakes at Churchill Downs. Two races later, she was the easiest kind of winner, in taking the Grade 1 Spinaway Stakes at Saratoga, as race caller Tom Durkin said "And Cashier's Dream just strolls to victory in the Spinaway." After winning the Grade 3 La Troienne Stakes in her debut at 3, she developed colic and lost her life



Number 6
Grade 1 Cape Fillies Guineas
CAPTAIN'S LOVER



Captain's Lover, bought on a bid of \$27,000 by Barry Irwin at the National Yearling Sale in South Africa, fashioned a rare pillar-to-post victory in the Grade 1 Cape Fillies Guineas, South Africa's top race for 3yo fillies. She was voted Champion Filly at 3 in South Africa. She added further stakes laurels to her portfolio, beating males in the Group 3 Prix du Pin at Longchamp in France and taking this season's \$250,000 Matchmaker Stakes on sloppy dirt in North America.



Number 5
Grade 1 Goodwood Stakes
GITANO HERNANDO



Gitano Hernando confirmed his connections' belief that he was a world class performer on synthetic racing surfaces, when beating a highly accomplished field of seasoned older racehorses for the Grade 1 Goodwood Stakes at Santa Anita in the fall. He was among the top rated 3yo males in both Europe and North America by *Timeform*. The lightly raced youngster, consider the best prospect the stable has had in years, will essay the \$10-million World Cup in March in Dubai.



Number 4
Grade 1 King's Bishop Stakes
VISIONAIRE



Visionaire initially was campaigned as a Triple Crown contender by Team Valor, but the stable soon realized that one-turn races were his métier. The stretch-running colt quickly proved the notion correct when winning an allowance sprint at Saratoga. He returned shortly thereafter to come from last to first, making up 10 lengths in a furlong and going on to a daylight triumph in the Grade 1 King's Bishop Stakes, thereby earning one of the most prestigious stud credentials in North American racing and taking a few notable scalps in the process. He has been sent to stud at Crestwood Farm in Lexington, Kentucky.



Number 3

Group 1 Queen Elizabeth II Cup IRRIDESCENCE



Irridescence was second choice to win the \$5-million Duty Free in Dubai, but she was scratched in the paddock when she spooked and impaled herself on a railing. Three weeks later, she held on to beat a top-class field in Hong Kong for the Audemars Piguet Queen Elizabeth Stakes, edging Breeders' Cup heroine and English Champion Ouija Board. In her final career outing, she was beaten in the last jump for the Grade 1 Beverly D Stakes at Arlington Park. A double Grade 1 hero in South Africa, she was voted Champion Filly at 3 for the stable.



Number 2

Group 1 Prix Vermeille SWEET STREAM



Sweet Stream was more than 50 to 1 for the Prix Vermeille, a race that is considered the *piece des resistance* for fillies in France. The major trial for distaffers for the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, the 12-furlong Prix Vermeille was upset by Sweet Stream, as she scooted the rail the entire length of the stretch to win going away in a complete shocker to all but her trainer John Hammond, who told Team Valor she would win the race. Sweet Stream was voted Champion Mare in England. Sold in foal to Monsun, she realized \$2.38 million when selling at the Tattersalls December Sales in Newmarket, England following retirement.



Number 1

Group 1 Dubai Duty Free IPI TOMBE



Ipi Tombe, born in Zimbabwe and raced there and in South Africa, won 8 of 10 starts before being bought by Team Valor, for whom she won her next 4 races, led by an improbable triumph in the \$2-million Duty Free Stakes in Dubai, when she looked hopelessly beaten 200 yards from home. She made up 8 lengths in the final 1 ½ furlongs to win going away in a race Barry Irwin says was the single best performance ever turned in by a runner for the stable. Retired a winner of 12 of 14 starts, she topped the Tattersalls sale in foal to Sadler's Wells.