



# Better for Less

*Fasig-Tipton Texas sale sees gains in average and median with smaller catalogue*

BY GARY WEST

**E**ven though they saw fewer horses than in past years, buyers said they found more quality in the Fasig-Tipton Texas sale of 2-year-olds in training April 5 at Lone Star Park. And the results supported their assessment.

With 232 horses going through the sale ring, 48 fewer than a year ago, 142 sold for \$2,631,600, an average of \$18,532. The median price was \$10,000. At the same sale a year ago, 192 2-year-olds sold for \$3,507,800, an average of \$18,270 and a median of \$8,250. So while the gross declined 25%, the average increased 1.4% and the median was up 21.2%.

But the buy-backs also increased. Ninety horses, or 38.8% of those offered, didn't sell, compared to 88, or 31.4%, a year ago.

"The good ones are bringing plenty," said Keith Asmussen, whose Asmussen Horse Center was a prominent consignor. "And the bad ones aren't bringing anything—but that's the way it's supposed to be."

Jim Cullen, of Cullen Bloodstock, who has been a regular at the sale, said he was impressed with the quality he found this year. He bought a Boone's Mill colt for \$40,000.

"It seems like there's more depth here this year," Cullen said. "There are a lot more horses in the \$50,000-and-up range than I've seen here before."

Danny Shifflett, representing Will Farish's Lane's End Texas, bought the sale topper, a daughter of Valid Expectations. Consigned by Mike Mulligan's Leprechaun Racing, agent, the filly named It's Valid sold for \$110,000.

Out of the Dunham's Gift mare It Fits, the filly is a half-sister to stakes-placed Hellohel-lohello (by Secret Hello). She had worked a furlong in :10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub> during the April 3 under tack show.

"She's a striking, striking filly," Shifflett said. "She wasn't even asked for anything in her work until the last 30 yards."

Having raised the filly at Lane's End Texas, where he's the manager, Shifflett said he was quite familiar with her quality. Bred in Kentucky by Mary and R.D. Angel, the filly had been purchased by K & B Ventures for \$35,000 at the Fasig-Tipton Texas summer yearling sale.

Shifflett bought two more horses by Valid Expectations, who stands at Lane's End Texas. Explaining he was eager to support Valid Expectations, he purchased a colt named Down Home Boy, out of the Regal Classic mare A. P. Princess, for \$70,000. Down Home Boy had worked a furlong in :10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub>, the fastest clocking for the distance. And Shifflett bought a filly out of the stakes-winning

mare Dawn's Black Tie, by Black Tie Affair, for \$36,000. She had worked a furlong in :10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub>.

All three horses, Shifflett said, will go to trainer Steve Asmussen. Bill Morrison, who operates two drug stores in Camden, Ark., was the leading buyer. Twelve horses sold for \$50,000 or more, and Morrison bought three of them, plus another for \$13,500. He paid \$295,500 for the four prospects that will go to trainer Cole Norman.

He paid \$90,000 for a filly by Silver Charm, although Norman, acting as agent, signed the ticket. Out of the Robellino mare V Sign, the filly is a half-sister to stakes winner V Formation and to stakes-placed Sign of a Bird. Leprechaun Racing had purchased the Florida-bred filly last year for \$50,000 at the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July yearling sale.

For \$95,000, Morrison bought a gray son of El Corredor who had worked a furlong in :10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>5</sub> and then galloped out strongly. He's out of the Air Forbes Won mare Forbes Sparkler, whose dam, Sun and Snow, won the 1975 Kentucky Oaks (gr. II) and Ashland Stakes (gr. III). Leprechaun Racing had purchased the Kentucky-bred colt at the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky sale for \$55,000.

And before returning to Camden, Morrison spent \$97,000 for the appropriately named Cut Off Time, a Louisiana-bred colt by Gilded Time out of Handfull-ofmints, by Key to the Mint. Morrison said he regarded Cut Off Time as the "best looking" Louisiana-bred in the sale. And although he said he paid more than he had intended for the colt, he was eager to buy a Louisiana-bred.

Purses in Louisiana, fueled by slot machine revenue, are climbing faster than anywhere in the country, according to statistics from The Jockey Club. The same isn't true in Texas. Although Lone Star Park has increased purses to \$225,000 a day for its season that began April 14, purses generally

have been slipping in the state.

And that discrepancy was reflected in the buy-back rate during the sale. Of the 73 Texas-breds that went through the sale ring, 30, or 41.1% didn't sell. But only 12 of the 42 Louisiana-breds, or 28.6%, were taken back by their owners.

Tim Boyce, the sales director, said it was a "good sale," as evident by the improved median price. He said he was pleased with the quality of the horses and with the enthusiasm of the buyers, and he predicted the sale would continue to grow and improve. **Q**



**Valid Expectations—It Fits filly tops the sale at \$110,000**

JIM ARNOLD

**For complete hip-by-hip results, see page 2419.**