

# GREAT EXPECTATIONS

*Valid Expectations maintains his spot  
as the state's dominant stallion*

*By Denis Blake*



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*With total progeny earnings of more than \$22.4 million, Valid Expectations trails only Sunny's Halo and Naevus as Texas' leading stallion of all-time.*

Sometimes a superstar becomes so dominant that their greatness is eventually looked upon as commonplace. Michael Jordan is without a doubt the best NBA player of his generation, and maybe of all-time, yet he only won the league's MVP title five times despite being its superior player for more than a decade. It could be argued that **Valid Expectations** has become so dominant in Texas and even the Southwest region that his accomplishments are overlooked because he seems to excel year after year. Once again it surprised no one that the son of Valid Appeal topped the Lone State State's general and juvenile sire list in 2008 while extending his position as Texas' all-time leading active stallion.

With progeny earnings of nearly \$2.2 million last year, the Lane's End Texas stallion had more than twice the earnings of his next closest competitor, Magic Cat of Valor Farm. Valid Expectations

also doubled up on the runner-up in the juvenile sire category with \$660,131 in earnings compared to \$295,570 for Early Flyer, also of Valor Farm. And with lifetime progeny earnings of \$22.4 million, Valid Expectations is far and away the state's top active stallion, and he's approaching the \$27.3 million total of all-time leader Sunny's Halo, who died in 2003.

Although 2008 might have been business as usual for Valid Expectations, he did manage to accomplish something for the first time as the sire of both Texas juvenile champions, Valid Message as the state's top colt/gelding and Bridesmaid as the leading filly. His 130 starters, 80 winners, 140 wins and five stakes winners were also tops in Texas.

Just as many stallion farms in Kentucky and elsewhere cut their stud fees

for the 2009 season, so did Lane's End Texas, where 16-year-old Valid Expectations will command a \$10,000 fee after standing for \$17,500 last year. That still makes him the highest-priced, and most accomplished, stallion in Texas.

The race for top freshman sire went down to the wire with **Supreme Cat** just edging out Hi Teck Man by less than \$4,000 in progeny earnings. A 9-year-old son of Hennessy, Supreme Cat was represented by just a single starter last year, but his first runner, Supreme Secret, showed tremendous talent. The Texas-bred juvenile hit the board in all four starts and placed in a division of the Texas Stallion Stakes and the open company Middleground Stakes at Lone Star Park. Supreme Secret earned \$49,750 for breeder/owner Tom Durant, who also co-owns Supreme Cat with Bullard Farms. Supreme Cat has 11 registered 2-year-olds of 2009 and stands for a \$1,000 fee at Bullard Farms in Weatherford.

second-crop stallions. On the racetrack, the son of Gilded Time earned more than \$370,000 as one of the top sprinters of his generation. He retired to Texas to start his stud career in 2003, and he is off to a quick start as a stallion with three stakes winners in his first two crops. His daughter Formal Flyer became his first champion when she earned the 2008 Texas Champion 3-Year-Old Filly award. Formal Flyer, who has earned \$194,085 as Early Flyer's top runner, also proved that her sire can do more than just

throw sprinters as she romped to a 10-length score in the 1 1/16-mile Got Koko Division of the Texas Stallion Stakes in May. The 11-year-old Early Flyer stands for \$3,500 as property of Clarence Scharbauer Jr. at his Valor Farm near Pilot Point.

Valor Farm can also lay claim to the state's top third-crop stallion, although **Festival of Light** is no longer active. The son of

*LEADING TEXAS SIRES OF 2008*

*Leading Overall Sire • Leading 2-Year-Old Sire*  
*Leading Active All-Time Sire*  
*Valid Expectations • Lane's End Texas*

*Leading Third Crop Sire*  
*Festival of Light • Valor Farm*

*Leading Second Crop Sire*  
*Early Flyer • Valor Farm*

*Leading Freshman Sire*  
*Supreme Cat • Bullard Farms*



*Supreme Cat*



*Early Flyer*



*Festival of Light*

Bonnie Spraberry's Hi Teck Man took the runner-up spot as the sire of two winners and the only freshman stallion to have a stakes winner. The Claudius stallion was represented by Lady Hi Teck, who won the \$57,680 Permian Basin Stakes at Zia Park. Hi Teck Man, who won the \$500,000 WinStar Derby in 2004, stands for \$1,000 at Lone Star Farms in Desdemona.

In a repeat of 2007, **Early Flyer** finished at the top of his class and easily took the title of leading second-crop sire after earning the top spot on the freshman sire list one year prior. With progeny earnings of \$1.06 million from 23 winners, the Valor Farm resident finished well clear of all other

A.P. Indy sired just one crop before being pensioned and gelded because of behavioral problems. Even so, that crop of 44 starters has burned up the track with 30 winners and total earnings of \$1.1 million. That total beat out the late Exciting Story, who sired one full crop and a small second crop while standing at Lane's End Texas, with earnings of \$841,668. The state's leading active third-crop stallion was Captain Countdown, whose 21 winners have combined to bankroll \$662,385. The multiple stakes-winning Texas-bred son of Relaunch stands at Double S Thoroughbreds in Poynor. ★