

Training Offspring of Sires:

UNBRIDLED'S SONG

Unbridled—Trolley Song, by Caro

BY RON MITCHELL

In this continuing series, trainers of the top horses sired by the stallion Unbridled's Song are asked their views of the sire's offspring. A son of Unbridled bred in Kentucky by Mandysland Farm, Unbridled's Song was campaigned by Paraneck Stable, which had acquired the colt for \$200,000 from the Derry Meeting Farm consignment at the 1994 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga August yearling sale. Campaigned throughout most of his career by trainer Jim Ryerson (he made his last two starts for Nick Zito), Unbridled's Song won five of 12 starts, including the Breeders' Cup Juvenile and Florida Derby (both gr. I), and earned more than \$1.3 million. Now 18, Unbridled's Song has been among the top 15 leading sires six times in the last seven years. He stands at Taylor Made Stallions near Nicholasville, Ky., for a 2011 fee of \$100,000.

Todd Pletcher (*Octave, Mission Impazible, Magnificent Song, Value Plus, Half Ours, Awesome Ashley, Zawzooth, Lucky Copy, Affirmatif, Marylebone, Buzz Song, Dunkirk*)

He's a world-class stallion. The biggest thing he gives you is a good athlete. They are very attractive horses and, for the most part, good-minded horses. He gives you a little bit of a mix. Some are (good) grass (horses); some dirt; some of them sprint; some of them route. They are not difficult to train. He was an extremely talented 2-year-old, and a lot of his babies are the same way. Most of them are blessed with a lot of natural ability, and sometimes the tendency is to allow them to give you too much too soon. They are so gifted they may get ahead of you a bit. You have to discipline yourself to bring them along a little more slowly than they would want you to. Octave was the consummate professional who showed up every time and gave you everything she had. Half Ours was a really good horse—talented, smart. To me he's typical of what you get from Unbridled's Song—very talented with a good mind to go along with it.

Larry Jones (*Eight Belles, Old Fashioned, Honest Man*)

They are extremely talented horses. Their dispositions were different, but the physical makeup of most of them was the same. They were extremely good-sized horses, which is probably one reason (owner) Rick (Porter) buys a lot of Unbridled's Songs. He likes a big horse. All of mine were extremely scopey with nice long legs on them. Nice head and neck. Every one of them was smart, but some of them were strong-willed. The nicest one of the outfit was Honest Man. He trained exactly the way you wanted. Old Fashioned was set in his ways. You kind of learned to go with him. With Eight Belles, she only had one win in her first five starts and then reeled off four in a row. That wasn't so much her learning to do it *my way*, as it was me learning to do it *her way*. It took her awhile to get me trained.

Bob Baffert (*Midshipman, Zensational, Domestic Dispute*)

I haven't had many (Unbridled's Song runners) but I've had good ones. Midshipman was totally different. He didn't look like an Unbridled's Song. They wanted to be up close in a race. The only one who was real aggressive was Zensational. He had no "whoa" in him at all. He just had that brilliance. They were good around the barn but aggressive around the track. They were very sound horses. You can't do too much with them too soon; just let them develop. The older they get, the better you're going to be with them. So take your time



LEE P. THOMAS



SKIP DICKSTEIN

Octave



ANNE M. EBENHART

Dunkirk



RICK SAMUELS

Honest Man



ANNE M. EBENHART

Midshipman



ADAM COGLIANESE

One Caroline



JIM LISA

Gift of Song



MARYLAND JOCKEY CLUB

Forest Music



BLOOD-HORSE LIBRARY

Unbridled Elaine

with them. If you are going to have Unbridled's Song horses in your barn, you better have a patient owner. The good ones will reward you in the end.

Carl Nafzger (*Last Song, Whirl, Eurosilver*)

In physical structure they are outstanding horses. Mentally, they are a challenge. They are hot-blooded little devils. They won't relax and come along with you. They have great ability and they overdo themselves, instead of gradually coming along. They have tons of ability. They do have one thing in common: 80-90% of them are great conformation horses. They have great rear ends on them. They have long withers. They are an athletic, well-put-together horse. If you give them time, they will develop...mine tended to be better horses the older they got.

Rusty Arnold (*One Caroline*)

She was obviously the most talented one (Unbridled's Song) I've ever had, if not the most talented horse I've ever had my hands on. She was all business and a lovely horse to be around. She was not scared of anything. She was probably one of the bravest horses we've ever had. She was extremely athletic for a big horse and showed tremendous talent from day one. If she had any issue, it would be that she wanted to do more in the morning than you wanted her to do. Probably as nice an athlete as I have had in my barn in 31 years of training.

Bret Calhoun (*Silver City, Rebridled Dreams*)

They were extremely athletic-looking horses, like a lot of the Unbridled's Songs. Silver City was an incredibly fast horse, and could have been one of the top sprinters in the country. We had (Kentucky) Derby dreams and tried to make him into a Derby horse. Rebridled Dreams was just a solid, very hard-hitting filly. Temperament wise, they both were very good. Unbridled's Song is a stallion that typically stamps his foals with a lot of speed and a lot of talent. There may be soundness concerns, but there's a reason for that: The slow ones never get hurt. It's just the fast ones. I think he throws some of the most talented horses in the country.

Kiaran McLaughlin (*Muhaawara, Wild Hoots, Gift of Song*)

Muhaawara was a big, strong filly. She was very sound and ran well most of the time. She was retired at the end of her 3-year-old year because Sheikh Hamden believes fillies make better producers at an early age. They were pretty good mentally and pretty sound. There were no issues with them. They were nice conformation-wise. They are talented and fast, and when you have a horse that is talented and fast, you tend to have more issues than with a slow one that doesn't perform well. It's a fine line.

Mark Shuman (*Forest Music, Ambition Unbridled, Queen of Song*)

The ones I've had were all sizes and shapes, but all were gray. They were all a bit ambitious, a bit hot-blooded. They all wanted to be racehorses. I respected them because they were hard-headed to the degree they wanted things done their way. You had to manipulate them to make them think you were doing it their way. There were no more soundness issues than I've had with other horses. Forest Music was a freak, a real talent. She was by far the most talented horse I have ever been around.

Dale Romans (*Thorn Song*)

He was very temperamental and he could be difficult in the morning, but he was always a very sound horse with good conformation. He was a little thinner and narrower than most of them I have seen. He was difficult to train. He wanted to do things his way all the time. He had that same mental toughness in a race. I have had a couple of other Unbridled's Songs, but nothing that could compare with him. He is one of the best horses I have ever had. Period.

Dallas Stewart (*Unbridled Elaine, Even the Score*)

They were very strong, durable horses. They had good bone, excellent physiques. They were a picture to look at. They were just a touch headstrong, but they had talent from the start and breezed good early on. There was no question of whether they could run or not. They were both big horses, so we had to take our time with them. I knew that, being by Unbridled's Song, they would have stamina to go with the speed, so I just had to manage them right.

Tom Albertrani (*Stage Luck*)

She was very kind to be around and had a good attitude. Her overall attitude was always pleasant. She was just a nice horse to be around. She was a good-looking gray, very leggy. She was pretty athletic. She was more a light-boned type of filly, and I think that helped her. She was the best one out of the group I've ever had. She was a sound filly because she was light on her feet, and I think that's what helped her a lot. ☐