



PREAKNESS 2013



THE INSIDE TRACK

For the storied Janney family of Butler, a horse named Orb is just the latest steed to jockey for a berth in racing history.

BY CHRISTIANNA McCAUSLAND

Portraits by Daniel Bedell

Sure, 64-year-old Stuart Janney III of Monkton is the chairman of a successful Manhattan-based wealth-management firm. And he's from one of Maryland horse racing's most important families. But he's not the boastful type. Nor is he prone to overstatement. Yet, talking to him, you get the sense that he really thinks his partnership's three-year-old colt, Orb, could win the Kentucky Derby on the first Saturday in May. And that he believes his horse has the breeding to win the Belmont Stakes five weeks later. And, of course, he would love to see Orb win in mid-May, at the 136th running of the Preakness Stakes. Like his parents and grandparents, however—and like local peers in the business that include Mike and Josh Pons at Country Life Farm in Bel Air, William Boniface's Bonita Farm in Darlington, and, more recently, Kevin Plank at Sagamore Farm in Reisterstown—Janney knows that horse racing, for all its glamor and hype, is a tough, fickle, and often heart-breaking business. Which is why this measured man agrees with his hall-of-fame trainer, Claude



PREVIOUS SPREAD: IN THE HOME THAT JANNEY SHARES WITH HIS WIFE LYNN, COUNTLESS TROPHIES ON DISPLAY INCLUDE THE SILVER HUNT CUP TANKARD WON BY HIS FATHER IN 1947. **THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:** JANNEY, SHOWN AT HIS BUTLER FARM, ENDED UP ENJOYING THE HORSE WORLD MORE THAN HE'D EXPECTED; WINTON WITH JANNEY JR. ABOARD WINNING THE MARYLAND HUNT CUP; RUFFIAN SPENT THE 1970S BREAKING TRACK RECORDS, MOST OF WHICH STILL STAND TODAY; ORB AT THE 2013 FLORIDA CUP; A YOUNG JANNEY III, THIRD FROM LEFT, AT THE GREENSPRING VALLEY HORSE SHOW IN 1959.

“Shug” McGaughey. They don’t take a horse to the Preakness or any other race; the horse, if it is to be, will take them.

Unimpeachable is how you might describe the Janney family’s pedigree in the racing world. Stuart Janney’s grandmother, Gladys Mills Phipps, owned Wheatley Stables in New York with her brother Ogden Mills. “Gladys Mills Phipps was the *grande dame* of American flat racing for over 40 years,” says Michael Finney, a Maryland racing historian, referring to a race over a level track, as opposed to steeplechase racing, which is run over hurdles. “She bred over 90 stakes winners, 11 champions, and, of course, bred Bold Ruler, one of the single great achievements in

20th-century American breeding.”

Bold Ruler won the Preakness in 1957. His progeny include such noted horses as Secretariat and Seattle Slew. Wheatley Stable also produced Seabiscuit. But despite Janney’s family ties to flat racing, his parents were more enamored of steeplechase racing and fox hunting.

“Stuart Janney [Jr.] was one of these robust Marylanders whose idea of a good time was to go out and ride in the Hunt Cup,” says Finney, paraphrasing a quote about the elder Janney published in a book by thoroughbred racing historian Edward Bowen.

The Hunt Cup is a grueling four-mile race over 22 timber fences that takes place each spring in the Worthington Valley. The elder Janney won the race four times, three on his horse Winton. In the Baltimore County home

that Janney III, 64, shares with his wife Lynn, there are countless trophies on display, including Waterford crystal Maryland Million bowls and Eclipse award bronzes. The silver Hunt Cup tankard won by his father in 1947 stands alone on a desk.

In the 1950s, Gladys Mills Phipps made a gift of several brood mares to her daughter and son-in-law that put in motion the flat-racing legacy the continues today with Orb.

“They had some success,” says Janney, “particularly when Frank Whiteley trained for them in the late 1960s through the ‘80s.”

One of those success stories was Ruffian, another out of Bold Ruler’s line. One of the greatest fillies to ever grace the track, Ruffian spent the 1970s breaking track records, most of which still stand today. She broke down during a 1975 match race against Foolish

Pleasure, that year’s Kentucky Derby winner.

“[Ruffian] is always going to be a big part of what the Janneys represented in horseracing, because she was arguably one of the greatest of all time,” says Janney. “After the match race, we had a room where all the mail was piled knee-high and covered the entire floor from people writing fan letters. . . . It continues today; I still get letters.”

DESPITE THE JANNEY LINEAGE with horses, the present Janney was more businessman than horseman. Although he always had an appreciation for the animals, he was more interested in the tennis court than the track. After getting his law degree from the University of Maryland, Janney worked for a time for the federal government before joining Niles, Barton & Wilmer in 1977 where he was a partner. He went on to become managing director of Alex. Brown & Sons in charge of asset management. In 1995, he took the post of chairman of Bessemer Trust Co. (where he works today), the wealth management company begun by his great grandfather, Henry Phipps, in 1907.

He did like to go to the races, and rode when he was younger, but Janney didn’t share his father’s passion for it. It was, in fact, the death of his parents within a year of each other in the late ‘80s that forced Janney to decide whether he wanted to keep up the horseracing tradition or allow it to fade away.

“It was something I clearly would have wanted to do 20 years down the road, but not necessarily right then,” he recalls. “But I recognized that if I let it disperse, I would probably not pick it up again. I decided that even though it wasn’t the perfect time in my life to do it, I would.”

When his parents died, Janney’s uncle, Ogden Phipps, offered to be his partner in any horses he purchased. Phipps also connected Janney with trainer McGaughey. The partnership with Kentucky-based Phipps Stable made sense as Janney’s interaction with the horse world had been mostly through his

a vocal advocate for ending race-day medication. He’s also a past chairman of the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA), a member of the TOBA executive committee, and chairman of Blood-Horse Publications.

“Stuart’s great passion and commitment has been in the areas of integrity in thoroughbred racing,” says Dan Metzger, president of TOBA in Lexington, KY, “specifically the areas of race-day medication, to bring the highest levels of drug testing and drug reform to the sport of thoroughbred racing.”

JANNEY’S APPROACH TO BREEDING and racing horses is little changed from his parents’.

“I have a group of mares of high quality and breed to race, as opposed to sell,” he explains. “If there’s been any change, it’s that I’ve made a very conscious decision to try and race only at the highest level.”

“I like watching every aspect of this game—I enjoy the breeding side just as much as I enjoy the racing,” says Janney. “I probably get more satisfaction out of breeding a horse, watching it grow up, watching it accomplish something, and then seeing it go back as either a brood mare or stallion, than I do watching it race—that whole cycle intrigues me.

“I like the fact that between Shug and me, we’ve seen the parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents of all these horses,” he continues. “Shug’s trained four generations of the horse that has now become Orb.”

“The bottom line is this horse is all Stuart’s family’s pedigree, going back years and years to his mother and father,” says McGaughey. “I think that makes it special to him, too, to have this horse he can enjoy that has come to him through the efforts of his mother and father years back.”

Orb didn’t get off to a particularly auspicious start. His mother, Lady Liberty, was a decent racehorse but hadn’t produced much in the way of winners. But Janney believed in her pedigree. In his first race, Orb started badly, but made a recovery. “He came in third,” says Janney, “but | **CONTINUED ON PAGE 157**

“I LIKE WATCHING EVERY ASPECT OF THIS GAME—I ENJOY THE BREEDING SIDE JUST AS MUCH AS I ENJOY THE RACING.”

B Online Exclusive: A Maryland redhead named Rosie Napravnik, 25, is a rising-star jockey.

The Inside Track

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 113



he had everyone talking.” Hopes were high that Orb’s next outing would see him on top, but he hit his head in the gate and ran an even race. McGaughey decided to give the horse some time off.

“At that point, he’d figured out the starting gate and he’s been on the ascendency ever since,” says Janney. Orb has now finished first in the four races he’s run, including the Florida Derby on March 30.

JANNEY IS THE KIND OF OWNER who’s in no hurry to put a horse in a Triple Crown race just so he can say he was there.

“We’ve never based what we’re doing around the Triple Crown,” says Janney, not-

ing that there are too many good races out there, like the Travers Stakes, to get caught up in Triple Crown fever. “It’s more important to us to have horses that can race for a long time.”

McGaughey, too, says his approach to training is marked by patience, bringing a horse along in its own time without forcing anything.

“A lot of people announce a schedule for their horses—usually in the winner’s circle,” says Janney. “To me, that’s very appropriate if you’re in Formula One racing and you have a car, and a backup to the car in case that car doesn’t work. But it doesn’t make sense in [horse]racing. . . . With the horse business, you have to be prepared for disappointments.”

But if Orb does make it to the Preakness, it will be a big day not only for Janney, but for another longtime Maryland racing family: Orb’s sire is Malibu Moon, who began his stud career at the Pons family’s Country Life Farm in Bel Air. The farm was founded in 1933 when Adolphe Pons sold a horse named Discovery to Alfred Vanderbilt of Sagamore Farm (now owned by Under Armour’s Plank).

These circuitous links between generations of families and horses that are still alive today are an indicator that there’s reason to be optimistic the horse industry in Maryland hasn’t been put out to pasture. The Maryland Horse Breeders Association points out that horse breeding and racing still have an economic impact on the state that’s more than triple all other sports combined, an estimated \$1.1 billion annually. The Preakness alone brings about \$40 million to the city and state.

For Janney, it’s important to keep the Triple Crown tradition thriving because it’s “the window through which the casual fan looks.”

Janney has a son and daughter. Neither lives in Maryland, but they attend the races with that same, vicarious enthusiasm their father shows.

Whether they will want to pick up the reins of the family breeding heritage remains unclear. “I look upon it the way my parents did,” says Janney. “It will be there for them and hopefully they will find it valuable and important.” **B**

CHRISTIANN McCausland is a contributing writer for *Baltimore*.