



**De Meric & Rice Spring the Double...**

Alexandra de Meric and Brandon Rice made their maiden voyage as a consigning team last year at OBS Spring, and enjoyed immediate success. From a draft comprised of just two prospects, they sold Humble and Hungry (Limehouse) for \$200,000. That, after spending just \$7,000 on him as a FTKOCT yearling. Humble and Hungry went on to break his maiden in a grassy maiden special weight at Belmont before finishing a solid eighth (beaten just over three lengths) in last November's GI Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf at Churchill.



**De Meric & Rice**

Spreading the scope of their operation a bit in 2011, de Meric and Rice entered the season with a slightly bigger group of five of their own horses, and took on a few outside clients, as well. One of their clients was New Mission Bloodstock--made up of Jim McCartan, Willie Browne and partners--who asked the couple to ready a filly by War Front for the juvenile sales. On Monday, that filly topped the opening session of OBS April on Buzz Chace's \$275,000 bid. Chace was buying on behalf of Richard Santulli's Jayeff B Stable.

"War Front happened to be a hot sire this spring, and we knew anything could happen in the ring," Rice said of the sire of graded winners The Factor, Soldat and Summer Soiree.

Catalogued as [hip 261](#), the filly is a daughter of the stakes-winning Tappin for Gold (Pleasant Tap) and was purchased by New Mission for \$80,000 as a Keeneland September yearling.

"We got her shortly after the September sale, and she's been an easy keeper all along," added Rice. "She's a very clean-legged, very strong filly. When it came time to sell her, she was perfectly in bloom. She was all dappled out and had reached the time in her maturity where she was really ready to perform."

At the initial under-tack show, the filly breezed an eighth in [:10 1/5](#).

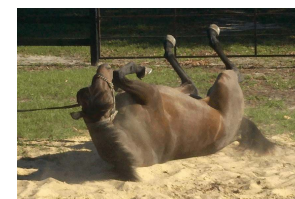
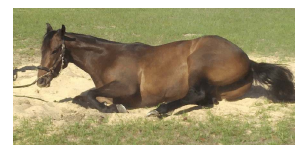
"We thought for sure she'd get a time like that, if not faster," said Rice. "She goes out 100% everyday and gives it her best effort. She breezed during the first day, which was actually a little bit of a difficult day with the weather. She breezed immediately after a thunderstorm, on the wet SafeTrack, and it was pretty humid. I think the buyers were pretty well aware that horses who performed well during the first breeze show definitely needed to be looked at, because they had to fight the conditions a little bit."

De Meric said that while Humble and Hungry established a high bar--\$200,000 high--she and Rice didn't come into 2011 trying to outdo themselves...at least as far as the sales board goes.

"By no means did we set a goal to surpass our financial success last year," she explained. "But it's exciting to get here and realize that the horses are stacking up against the competition nicely, and that they're turning into the horses you hoped they would. But we're just trying to sell a good product and have our clients excited and enjoy the process."

New Mission was the only client for whom de Meric and Rice were preparing sales horses; the rest are end users whose juveniles will be heading straight to the track.

Cont. p4



**Hip 261, by War Front, going to work... and then play**



photo by Matt Goins

**ZANJERO**

*Cherokee Run – Checkered Flag, by A.P. Indy*

- Model of consistency; On board 16 of 18 starts — 13 graded stakes
- Highest selling yearling by Cherokee Run (\$700k). A.P. Indy dam is multiple stakes producer.

**\$7,500 LIVE FOAL {STAND AND NURSE}**



MILLENNIUM FARMS | (859) 294-5439 | [www.millenniumfarms.com](http://www.millenniumfarms.com)



"We're open to work with all kinds of clients, whether they want to go to the sales, or whether they'd rather race," said Rice.

Both de Meric and Rice grew up in the business; de Meric is the daughter of successful juvenile consignors Nick and Jacqui de Meric, while Rice's parents are Bryan and Holley Rice, who operate a similarly successful operation in Woodside Ranch. A lifetime of learning, both at home and during trips abroad, have left the 20-somethings with a particular philosophy on how to go about their business. Attention to the horses' mental health is at or near the top of the list.

"We pride ourselves in our horse-management plan of having our horses turned out eating, grazing, playing, and sun bathing when we aren't riding and training them," said Rice. "We've grown up in two different horse families, and we've studied around the world on how to grow these babies into good, solid racehorses, and into good products for our customers to buy."

Rice went on to explain, "We lease our current facilities, and one thing we looked for was a good, open, turn-out space. As the year progresses, we bring them in more, because it's important that they learn to adapt to being in a stall for both the sales and their racing careers, but when they're with us in the fall and early stages of the spring, we love to have them outside as much as possible, where they're not developing ulcers and all kinds of bad habits."

"They're out grazing, building good bone, tendon and ligaments, and keeping a good stomach on them, all of which will soon be valuable as they start their racing careers," Rice continued. "Most of our horses also remain barefoot during the fall, winter and spring in an effort to grow a healthy, balanced foot."



[www.ricehorse.com](http://www.ricehorse.com)

The success of Humble and Hungry has been a nice boost for de Meric and Rice, but it's clear that, more than anything, they are intent on living up to his name. Asked, for example, if they made the trip up to Churchill to watch the colt in the Breeders' Cup, Rice shook his head.

"As much fun as it would have been to go up there and socialize and see him run--we were really proud of him--we were keeping our noses to the grindstone and working on training these horses," he said. -LM

OBS - 2011 SALES

JUNE 2YOs/HRA	June 21-22/Under Tack: June 18-19
SELECTED YEARLINGS	Aug. 23
OPEN YEARLINGS	Aug. 24-25
FALL MIXED	Oct. 18-20

[www.obssales.com](http://www.obssales.com)

**SOLD**

**Eaton Sales has SOLD MORE Graded SWs in 2011 than ANY OTHER consignor. 5 GSWs in less than 30 days!**



4-16-11 REGALLY READY  
G3 San Simeon H.



4-10-11 JOYFUL VICTORY  
G2 Fantasy S.



4-9-11 WIN WILLY  
G2 Oaklawn H.



4-2-11 GILDED GEM  
G3 Las Flores S.



3-26-11 DAISY DEVINE  
G2 Fair Ground Oaks

**Keeneland September Yearlings Close May 2nd**

**EATONsales**

Contact: Reiley McDonald | 859.233.4021 | [www.eatonsales.com](http://www.eatonsales.com)