

## WEEKEND PEDIGREE PERSPECTIVES

*by Alan Porter*

### Saturday, Churchill Downs

**STEPHEN FOSTER H.-GI**, \$844,500, CDX, 6-17, 3yo/up, 1 1/8m, 1:49 1/5, ft.

1--**@#SEEK GOLD, 116, g, 6**, by [Touch Gold](#)

1st Dam: **Aly's Adita (SW, \$150,212)**, by **Alydar**

2nd Dam: **Royal Entrance**, by **Tim Tam**

3rd Dam: **Prince's Gate**, by **Sun Again**

O-Bowman Couch Racing LLC; B-Highfield Farm (KY);

T-Ron Moquett; J-C H Borel; \$502,647. Lifetime

Record: 28-5-7-2, \$887,636.

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For the 1999 breeding season, Adena Springs Kentucky retired two top-class sons of Deputy Minister, Awesome Again and Touch Gold. Awesome Again was unraced at two, and took the GII Jim Dandy S. and Queens Plate at three. His peak came at four, however, when he was undefeated in six starts, including the GI Whitney H. and GI Breeders' Cup Classic. Touch Gold was earlier to come to hand, winning a six-furlong maiden at two, and finishing second in the Swynford S., and third in the GII Grey Breeders' Cup S., at the same age. He really flourished at three, scoring his first stakes win with an 8 1/2-length tally over subsequent champion sprinter Smoke Glacken in the GII Lexington S. Pointed next for the GI Preakness S., Touch Gold stumbled at the start, but came flying at the finish to take fourth behind Silver Charm. In the GI Belmont S., Touch Gold showed what might have been in the Preakness, running down Silver Charm close home to end that horse's Triple Crown bid by a half-length. When that victory was followed up by a win in the GI Haskell Invitational, Touch Gold stood at the head of three-year-old class, but all was not well. When he stumbled in the Preakness, Touch Gold grabbed a quarter, and although he was successful on a patched foot in the Belmont and Haskell, the problem was to hamper his career from then on. This was evident when he ended the three-year-old season with a fourth in the GII Pegasus H. and an off-the-board finish in the GI Breeders' Cup Classic.

Away from the races for more than sixth months, Touch Gold came back at four to take a one mile Churchill Downs allowance in a time just 1/5 off the track record. Unfortunately, following this sparkling effort, Touch Gold, was to start only three more times. Unplaced in the GI Pacific Classic, he went down by a neck to Arch, as the pair set a new track record in Keeneland's GIII Fayette S. Touch Gold ended his career finishing eighth in the GI Breeders' Cup Classic, as Awesome Again grabbed the glory.

With Awesome Again ending his career on a higher note, he retired to stand at \$50,000, with Touch Gold starting at \$30,000. When their runners hit the track, both were out of the gates fast with Grade I-winning first season two-year-olds: Toccet, for Awesome Again, and Composure, for Touch Gold. Of course, two years later, Awesome Again's career soared into the stratosphere, when on Breeders' Cup Day Wilko captured the GI Juvenile, and eventual Horse of the Year Ghostzapper annexed the GI Breeders' Cup Classic. Awesome Again has built on that momentum, and for the 2006 recent breeding season, his fee was at \$125,000, while Touch Gold stood at \$50,000. The most recent weekend, however, belonged to Touch Gold. For, while Awesome Again's Spun Sugar started favorite for the GI Ogden Phipps H., but produced an uncharacteristically flat effort to finish fourth, Touch Gold's son, Seek Gold took the GI Stephen Foster H. at odds of 91.70-1.

### SEEK GOLD, g, 2000

<b>Touch Gold</b>	Deputy Minister	Vice Regent	<b>Northern Dancer</b>
		Mint Copy	Victoria Regina
	Passing Mood	Buckpasser	Bunty's Flight
		Cool Mood	Shakney
<b>Aly's Adita</b> SW 9Fls, 1GSW, 1SP	Alydar	Raise a Native	<b>Tom Fool</b>
		Sweet Tooth	Busanda
	Royal Entrance Wnr 15Fls, 1Ch, 1GSW, 1SW	Tim Tam	<b>Northern Dancer</b>
		Prince's Gate	Happy Mood
		8Fls, OSW	Native Dancer
		8Fls, OSW	Raise You
8Fls, OSW	On-And-On	Native Dancer	
8Fls, OSW	8Fls, OSW	Plum Cake	
8Fls, OSW	8Fls, OSW	<b>Tom Fool</b>	
8Fls, OSW	8Fls, OSW	Two Lea	
8Fls, OSW	8Fls, OSW	Sun Again	
8Fls, OSW	8Fls, OSW	Siena Way	

A six-year-old gelding, Seek Gold is one of five stakes winners from Touch Gold's first crop, the others including the previously mentioned dual Grade I winner Composure; Midas Eyes, who earned a Grade I win in the Forego H.; and GIII Tampa Bay Derby victor Region of Merit. His second crop yielded five stakes winners, headed by GI Forego H. winner, Mass Media, and the extremely rapid three-time graded winner Medallist. There were three stakes winners in Touch Gold's third crop, and his fourth crop, currently three-year-olds, includes Sugar Swirl, successful in the Princess Elizabeth S., the top race for Canadian-bred two-year-old fillies.

Although Seek Gold's Stephen Foster win was a tremendous upset, it's worth recalling that after successive wins in maiden and allowance races at he backend of his two-year-old season, he was ranked among then-trainer Nick Zito's Derby prospects.

Porter cont.

Even though those hopes were never realized, Seek Gold did give occasional glimpses of the ability which caused him to have been held in such high regard, most notably in the 2004 GII Clark H.--over the Stephen Foster course and distance--where he finished well to take second 1 1/4 lengths behind Saint Liam. As an augury to the future, we can note that in third that day, a nose behind Seek Gold, was Perfect Drift, who was beaten precisely the same margin by Seek Gold in the Stephen Foster.

On the distaff side of his pedigree, Seek Gold comes from an historic Calumet family. His dam, Aly's Adita--winner of the listed Pippin S. at Oaklawn Park--is by Alydar, and is half-sister to Calumet's champion three-year-old Davona Dale. Davona Dale and Aly's Adita were the only stakes winners produced by their dam, Royal Entrance, but that mare is also ancestress of several other major winners around the world, including the GI Futurity S. victor, Agincourt; Jamelao, who took the GI Gran Premio de La Americas-International in Argentina; and Flying Snowdrop, heroine of the GI Stuttaford Fillies Guineas in South Africa. Royal Entrance also owns a pretty fancy pedigree, as she is by champion Tim Tam, winner of the Kentucky Derby and Preakness S., out of the Bed o' Roses H. winner, Prince's Gate; also granddam of the GI Preakness victor, Gate Dancer. For good measure, her second dam (Seek Gold's fourth dam), Siena Way, is a sister to Citation, generally regarded as one of the top four of five U.S. runners of the last century.

Seek Gold--bred on the same Deputy Minister/Alydar cross as earlier Grade I winners Victory Speech and Ten Most Wanted--is the product of a mating where both parents have quite close inbreeding of their own, but their offspring is more of an outcross. Touch Gold is inbred 4x4 to Northern Dancer. Aly's Adita has Calumet's great mare, Two Lea 4x3; Two Lea's sire, Bull Lea 5x5x4x4; and Bull Lea's sire, Bull Dog 6x6x5x5 x5.

It's notable that Northern Dancer himself did very well with mares carrying Bull Dog's sire, Teddy (seven times in Aly's Adita), a horse who had a genetic relationship to Gainsborough (doubled in Northern Dancer's pedigree).

Seek Gold does have one fairly close duplication of his own, that of Tom Fool, who is 4x4. Tom Fool sits between the close inbreeding in Touch Gold's pedigree, and it can often pay to duplicate a strain which is thus situated. With regard to Touch Gold and Tom Fool, we can note that Tom Fool appears in the dams of seven of his 14 stakes winners; four of his six graded winners; and three of his four Grade I winners. For good measure, Touch Gold Grade I winner Composure doesn't have Tom Fool, but does have Tom Fool's three-quarters relative Spring Run.

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