

Perfect Plan

By JO ANN GUIDRY

Sometimes plans just come together perfectly. Or in the case of Yo-Lo Racing Stables, wickedly perfect.

Y-Lo Racing Stables, comprised of partners Lolita Raquiza and Yvonne Cordova, scored its first graded stakes winner as a breeder when Florida-bred Wickedly Perfect won the Sorrento Stakes (G3) on Aug. 6 at Del Mar. The 2-year-old filly by Congrats out of the Tactical Cat mare Wickedly Wise, remained undefeated in her first two lifetime starts with the Sorrento Stakes win. She is owned by Peter Moehrke, Rafter JR Ranch and STD Racing Stable.

Consigned by Niall Brennan, as agent for Y-Lo Rac-

ing Stables, Wickedly Perfect was sold for \$70,000 at the 2010 Ocala Breeders' Sales Company's April juvenile sale. Dennis O'Neill, whose brother Doug O'Neill trains the graded stakes-winning filly, signed the ticket on behalf of her current owners.

Y-Lo Racing bought Wickedly Wise, the dam of Wickedly Perfect, for \$23,000 at the 2006 OBS October mixed sale. Wickedly Wise was in foal to Exchange Rate at the time and subsequently produced a filly who was sold for \$100,000 as a weanling at the Keeneland November sale. Resold for \$375,000 at the Fasig-Tipton July yearling sale, the filly named Ash Zee has to date two wins in four starts for earnings of \$68,080. The day after Wickedly Perfect won the Sorrento Stakes, Ash Zee finished fourth in the Test Stakes (G1) at Saratoga.

Wickedly Wise produced a 2009 Mizzen Mast filly named Wicked Mizz, who is scheduled to be sold at the Keeneland September yearling sale. She had a 2010 filly by Candy Ride (Arg) and is in foal to Street Boss.

"Of course, we are delighted with Wickedly Perfect's success and we think Ash Zee is going to go on and be a very nice racehorse too," said Raquiza, a retired nurse administrator in plastic and reconstructive surgery nurse who lives in Sherman Oaks, California. "When we founded Y-Lo Racing, our goal was to breed quality racehorses."

Raquiza, who grew up on her family's cattle ranch in New Mexico, serves as the managing partner of Y-Lo Racing Stables. Cordova, whose father Joe was a jockey's agent for 35 years, is in the entertainment insurance business.

"Growing up in the cattle business, I always thought that maybe one day I'd like to have a ranch and raise cattle or maybe horses," said Raquiza. "Then Yvonne's father introduced us to the Thoroughbred business and we decided that's what we wanted to do."

The elder Cordova introduced the partners to Ocala-based Juvenal Diaz, an ex-jockey and now trainer who with wife Yolanda owns and operates Omega Farm.

"Juvenal became my mentor," said Raquiza. "He is

Florida-bred Wickedly Perfect winning the Grade 3 \$150,000 Sorrento Stakes at Del Mar.



BENOIT & ASSOCIATES PHOTO

Y-Lo Racing Stables in spotlight thanks to Florida-bred graded stakes winner Wickedly Perfect

so knowledgeable and I was an eager student. I just kept learning and advancing to the next step.”

In 2003, the partners bought 20 acres in the newly developed Oak Ridge Equine Training Center in Morriston. They added on another 20 acres the following year and have use of a communal one-mile training track and turf gallop. This is where the Y-Lo Racing Stable horses and those of clients are broken and trained, readied for the sales ring or racetrack.

In 2009, Y-Lo Racing Stable bought 110 acres in McIntosh area to serve as its broodmare division. The farm had previously been Golden Orb Farm. Prior to purchasing the McIntosh property, the majority of the Y-Lo Racing mares were boarded at Linda Schroetlin's Fairhill Farm in nearby Fairfield, where Wickedly Perfect was foaled. Some mares were also boarded in Kentucky and in California; the latter group to support Spensive, a Florida-bred stakes winner who stands stud for Y-Lo Racing at E.A. Ranches in Ramona, CA.

“We hadn't originally planned to get into broodmares,” said Raquiza. “But I just fell in love with the mares and the babies.”

Y-Lo Racing's broodmare band currently numbers 17, with a dozen at the McIntosh farm and the rest in California. The first mare that the partners bought was Enduring Legacy, a half-sister to Florida-bred graded stakes winners Star Over the Bay and Lord of the Bay, as well as to Florida-bred stakes winners Dan's Bet, Alligator Bay and Breathtaking View. Bred and consigned by Four Horsemen's Ranch, Y-Lo Racing paid \$215,000 for Enduring Legacy at the 2005 OBS October mixed sale. By Saint Ballado out of the multiple stakes-pro-

ducing Empery mare Lituya Bay, Enduring Legacy was in foal to Speightstown at the time. She produced a 2010 Broken Vow colt and is in foal to Hard Spun.

At the 2007 OBS October mixed sale, Y-Lo Racing purchased stakes winner Makin Heat for \$70,000. By Makin out of Warmedbythesun, by Lobsang, Makin Heat was in foal to Rock Hard Ten. The subsequent colt, named Rockin Heat, was sold for \$85,000 by Y-Lo Racing at the same 2010 OBS April juvenile sale as Wickedly Perfect. Makin Heat produced a 2009 Rockport Harbor colt named Rockzig and is in foal to Petitionville.

In addition to its breeding, training and sales-prepping, Y-Lo Racing also has a small racing stable of six

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horses parceled out with a trio of trainer in three states. And at this year's OBS August yearling sale, Y-Lo Racing Stables was represented by its first yearling consignment. From a 10-horse consignment, the operation sold five yearlings for \$46,000.

“We are continuing to evolve and grow,” said Raquiza, who now also has a small herd of six Black Angus cattle at the McIntosh farm. “We love being involved in the Florida Thoroughbred industry. As far as we're concerned, Florida-breds are the best.” ■

Lolita Raquiza (above) and Yvonne Cordova own Y-Lo Racing Stables.