



Horses of the Year and Champions at Fair Grounds

[updated April 2014]

Horse of the Year Winners at Fair Grounds

Three reigning Horse of the Year winners have raced at Fair Grounds.

Havre de Grace easily won the 2012 New Orleans Ladies against four overmatched rivals in her first start as a 5-year-old.

Rachel Alexandra finished second as a heavy favorite in the 2010 New Orleans Ladies, a race created with her participation in mind, losing to Southern California invader Zardana. It was Rachel Alexandra's 4-year-old debut. The year before, during her championship 3-year-old season, Rachel Alexandra was an easy winner of the Grade II Fair Grounds Oaks.

Whirlaway won the 1942 Louisiana Handicap, a race created as a spot for the 1941 Triple Crown winner.

Two Horse of the Year winners ran at Fair Grounds prior to their championship honors. The great gelding **John Henry** raced in Louisiana many years before he evolved into a two-time Horse of the Year (1981 and 1984) and **Mineshaft** won two races at Fair Grounds en route to being named Horse of the Year in 2003.

Champions at Fair Grounds

Thirty Thoroughbred Racing Champions and/or Hall of Fame inductees (the awarding of year-end championships began in 1936) have raced at Fair Grounds.

*Enshrined in Thoroughbred Racing's Hall of Fame

Horse (Owner, Breeder, Trainer)—Listing is chronological

Pan Zareta* (J. Marrone, J.F. Newman, J.C. Kirkpatrick)—Hall of Fame filly won 76 times in 151 starts, including five wins carrying 140 pounds or more. Won four races at Fair Grounds in 1916.

Mar-Kell (Calumet Farm, Calumet Farm, Ben Jones)—Champion Handicap Mare in 1943 won three races at Fair Grounds in 1943, including the Washington's Birthday Handicap.

Mioland (C.S. Howard, H.W. Ray, J.H. Stotler)—Champion Handicap Male of 1941 won once in four starts at Fair Grounds in 1943.

Miss Request (Mrs. B.F. Whitaker, Ben F. Whitaker, J.P. Conway)—Champion Three-Year-Old Filly of 1948 won two allowance races at Fair Grounds that year and started at Fair Grounds three more times in 1949.

Whirlaway* (Calumet Farm, Calumet Farm, Ben Jones)—Horse of the Year in 1941 and 1942, Triple Crown winner and Champion Three-Year-Old Male of 1941 and Champion Handicap Horse of 1942 won the 1942 Louisiana Handicap at Fair Grounds.

Grecian Queen (Mrs. B.F. Whitaker, Ben F. Whitaker, J.P. Conway)—Champion Three-Year-Old Filly of 1953 made her debut in 1952 as a 2-year-old at Fair Grounds, finishing fourth in a maiden special weight.

King Commander (Mrs. L.R. Troiano, Mrs. Joe W. Brown, E.E. Weymouth)—Champion Steeplechaser of 1954 won once in seven starts at Fair Grounds during the 1951-52 season.

Fast Attack (Har-Bar Ranch, Elcee-H Breeding Farms, Harry Wells)—Champion Two-Year-Old Filly of 1969 began her career with four starts at Fair Grounds, including a debut maiden special weight win, in 1969.

Furl Sail (Mrs. E.K. Thomas, Mrs. E.K. Thomas, J. Winans)—Champion 3-Year-Old Filly of 1967 began her career with three starts at Fair Grounds, including a debut maiden special weight win, in 1966. Won three straight at Fair Grounds in 1967, including the Thelma Stakes and the Fair Grounds Oaks.

Chou Croute (Folsom Farms and Jones Jr., E.V. Benjamin III & William G. Clark, B. Dunham)—Champion Sprinter of 1972 won 13 of her first 14 races, including her first two at Fair Grounds in 1970 and another at Fair Grounds in 1971.

Davona Dale* (Calumet Farm, Calumet Farm, John Veitch)—Champion Three-Year-Old Filly of 1979 won her only start at Fair Grounds, the 1979 Debutante, by seven lengths.

Smart Angle (Ryehill Farm, Ryeholl Farm, Woody Stephens)—Champion Two-Year-Old Filly of 1979 finished second by a head in her only start at Fair Grounds, the 1980 Fair Grounds Oaks.

Top Bid (Mrs. Ogden Phipps, Wheatley Stable, D.M. Smithwick)—Champion Steeplechaser of 1970 finished sixth in the 1967 Louisiana Derby.

Before Dawn (Calumet Farm, Calumet Farm, John Veitch)—Champion Two-Year-Old Filly of 1981 won the 1982 Fair Grounds Oaks by 2 1/2 lengths.

John Henry* (Dotsam Stable, Golden Chance Farm, Ron McAnally)—Two-time Horse of the Year (1981 and 1984, long after competing in Louisiana), racing's most accomplished gelding started his career at Jefferson Downs and Evangeline Downs before coming to Fair Grounds, where he was winless in nine starts during the 1977-78 season.

Risen Star (Louie Roussel III & Lamarque Stable, Arthur Hancock III & Leone J. Peters, Louie Roussel III)—Champion Three-Year-Old of 1988, winner of that year's Preakness Stakes and Belmont Stakes, started his career at Louisiana Downs before making five starts at Fair Grounds during the 1987-88 season, including four wins: two allowance races, the Derby Trial and the Louisiana Derby.

Tiffany Lass (Aaron Jones, Aaron Jones, Laz Barrera)—Champion Three-Year-Old Filly of 1986 won the first eight starts of her career, including four at Fair Grounds in her championship year: an allowance, the Thelma Stakes, the Davona Dale Stakes and the Fair Grounds Oaks.

Answer Lively (John Franks, John Franks, Bobby Barnett)—Champion Two-Year-Old Male of 1998 raced three times at Fair Grounds as a 3-year-old, finishing second in both the Risen Star Stakes and Louisiana Derby.

Flat Top (Mrs. Henry Gerry, Landon Knight, Janet Elliot)—Champion Steeplechaser of 1998 and 2002 started his career in flat races, finishing eighth in his debut in a 1996 Fair Grounds maiden special weight.

Real Quiet (Mike Pegram, Little Hill Farm, Bob Baffert)—Champion Three-Year-Old Male of 1998 started his 4-year-old campaign with a second-place finish in the 1999 New Orleans Handicap.

Silverbuletday* (Mike Pegram, Little Hill Farm, Bob Baffert)—Champion Three-Year-Old Filly of 1999 won that year's Fair Grounds Oaks by three lengths before going on to win the Kentucky Oaks and four Grade I races overall.

Smoke Glacken (Kerkenny & Levy & Roberts, Perry Rosebrock, Henry Carroll)—Champion Sprinter of 1997 started his 3-year-old season in 1997 with a win in the Black Gold Handicap before finishing third in the Louisiana Derby.

War Emblem (The Thoroughbred Corporation, Charles Nuckols Jr. & Sons, Bob Baffert)—Champion Three-Year-Old Male of 2002 won an allowance race at Fair Grounds in 2001 and raced in the Lecomte Stakes and Risen Star Stakes before capturing the first two legs of the Triple Crown.

Mineshaft (Owners and breeders Will Farish, James Elkins Jr, & Temple Webber Jr., trainer Neil Howard)—Horse of the Year and Champion Older Male in 2003 won three of four starts at Fair Grounds during the 2002-2003 season, including the Diplomat Way Handicap and the New Orleans Handicap.

Ashado (Starlight Stable, Paul Saylor and Martin Johns; Aaron U. Jones and Marie D. Jones; Todd Pletcher)—Champion Three-Year-Old Filly of 2004 and Champion Older Female of 2005 won the 2004 Fair Grounds Oaks by 3 ¾ lengths.

Indian Blessing (Hal and Patti Earnhardt, Hal and Patti Earnhardt, Bob Baffert)—Champion Two-Year-Old Filly of 2007 and Champion Female Sprinter of 2008 won the 2008 Silverbulletday Stakes at Fair Grounds before finishing second to Proud Spell in the Fair Grounds Oaks.

Proud Spell (Brereton Jones, Brereton Jones, Larry Jones)—Champion Three-Year-Old Filly of 2008 finished second to Indian Blessing in the 2008 Silverbulletday Stakes at Fair Grounds before winning the Fair Grounds Oaks.

Rachel Alexandra (Dolphus Morrison pre-Kentucky Oaks and Stonestreet Stables & Harold McCormick, Dolphus Morrison, Hal Wiggins pre-Kentucky Oaks and Steve Asmussen)—Horse of the Year and Champion Three-Year-Old Filly of 2009 won that year's Fair Grounds Oaks en route to a historic campaign in which she won the Kentucky Oaks, the Preakness and five other stakes races. Made 4-year-old debut at Fair Grounds, finishing second to Zardana in the New Orleans Ladies before a record crowd.

Dubai Majesty (Martin Racing Stable LLC & Dan Morgan, Harold J. Plumley, Bret Calhoun)—Champion Female Sprinter of 2010 raced three times at Fair Grounds, including a 2009 allowance win. She also finished second in the 2010 Pan Zareta Stakes and fifth in the 2008 Esplanade Stakes.

Havre de Grace (Fox Hill Farms, Nancy S. Dillman, Larry Jones)—Horse of the Year and Champion Older Female of 2011 made her 5-year-old debut at Fair Grounds in the 2012 New Orleans Ladies, easily defeating four overmatched rivals.