



NYRA

Literata's score in the Aug. 14 Saratoga Dew Stakes made for an \$18,000 breeder award for Judy and Edward Orton

Big Win for Small Farm

Literata's Saratoga Dew score lifts Meadow View Thoroughbreds

BY MARIE KIZENKO

THE TALE OF LITERATA started as a series of fortuitous twists but has developed into a story of consistent returns. Bred by Meadow View Thoroughbreds from a mare that was given away and conceived on a season won at a raffle, the chestnut mare recently reached a career high when she fended off several challengers to win Saratoga's \$100,000 Saratoga Dew Stakes for New York-bred distaffers Aug. 14. Now 6, Literata has faced the starter 33 times, winning eight and placing in an additional 13 races.

Currently campaigned by Michael Dubb and trained by Rudy Rodriguez, she took her first steps at a farm near Canajoharie, N.Y., about an hour southwest of Saratoga. Her victory in the Saratoga Dew earned Meadow View an \$18,000 breeder award through the New York-bred program, and her steady dividends have



COURTESY JUDY ORTON

Meadow View Thoroughbreds near Canajoharie

been a boon to the operation.

"She's made us a lot of money here on the farm," said Judy Orton. "She's paid for a lot of equipment—a new truck and horse trailer. It's a small breeder's

dream. That's why we do it in New York, to be one of the small ones that makes it, and she made it for me."

Judy Orton, together with her husband, Edward, established Meadow View in 2002 on a 120-acre parcel outside of Canajoharie. She competed in three-day eventing, a sport that made her appreciate the most desirable qualities possessed by Thoroughbreds.

"I only rode (them) because they really had the heart for it," she said. "They have the speed and the desire. It's nice to have a bit of an engine."

Meadow View began as a boarding operation, and one of the resident mares was a daughter of Personal Flag named Personal Wealth. After failing to get in foal one season, the dark bay mare nicknamed "Peewee" was given to the Ortons.

"Basically, my husband fell in love with the mare, so we ended up keeping her," Orton explained. "I was just going to retire her, thinking she could just live out her life here. She was in her teens and more than able to continue on as a mom. I just wasn't sure that I had the means or desire to do it for myself."

As luck would have it, the impetus to breed Personal Wealth came at the urging of Orton's friend Jan Durrschmidt, who won a season to Read the Footnotes in 2010.

"At that point she had nothing to breed to him," Orton recalled. "She said, 'Why don't you breed Peewee to him?' I thought that it wasn't a great cross and, 'What am I going to do with it?' and so on. But Jan said, 'You've got to feed the mare anyway.' Peewee was a big mare, nearly 17 hands. It ended up that we did breed her and she had Literata. When she was here, we called her Folly. She was a pretty good-sized filly, kind of gawky. She just looked like this chestnut Twiggy, long legs, and goofy looking."

Through her friend Casey Newick, Orton sold Literata as a yearling for \$18,000 at the 2012 Ocala Breeders' Sales' August yearling sale. She was then resold for \$30,000 at the Fasig-Tipton Kentucky October yearling sale and made her way back to the Empire



Literata as a foal in April 2011

State and began her racing career during the autumn of her 3-year-old season.

Literata developed into a competitive performer on the New York circuit and eventually was claimed by Roy Sedlacek. She crossed the line first in a state-bred allowance optional claiming race Oct. 18, 2015, at Belmont but was later disqualified for testing positive for the painkiller AH-7921. Sedlacek was suspended for five years.

"It was really upsetting to me," Orton said. "I had gotten a check from New York Breeders for almost \$13,000 and then had to return it because that guy messed up. So that was a little bit disheartening."

That disappointment was preceded by losing Personal Wealth in foaling, but Orton had plenty of tasks on which to focus.

"I do all of the foaling and raising them," she said. "Depending on the number of mares, we have between five to eight foals. We have weanlings and yearlings and some retirees from the show world. They make wonderful babysitters. We also raise our own organic hay."

Her husband has a different focus on the property.

"He's very good with the horses, and he helps me when he can, but

he's the maintenance man," Orton quipped. "He's a carpenter by trade. He's built every single building and fence, and re-fenced. That is his thing. He helps me with the foaling, and he's very good, but he'd much prefer to be building something."

In addition to Literata, other graduates of Meadow View include Escapefromreality, a stakes winner of \$236,534 who was campaigned (in partnership) by breeder Anthony Bonomo. Orton also foaled a pair of stakes winners for Newick, the full brothers Bustin It and Bust Another.

"We've had quite a bit of luck raising foals that have gone on to be successful for the small farm that we are," the horsewoman pointed out.

Nothing says August like Saratoga, but it also is the haying season in upstate New York, and Orton was busy at Meadow View for Literata's Saratoga Dew win.

"I haven't seen her race in person," Orton confessed. "I did write Michael Dubb a letter explaining that she was a foal from our farm and that if he ever needed a home for her when he was done, that we would be more than happy to come get her or even buy her back."

That would be quite the homecoming for Literata. 🐾