

by DEBRA GINSBURG

The seeds that would one day create both a multiple graded stakes winner of \$2.8 million and California's first Horse of the Year in 44 years, actually sprouted roots at the Keeneland September yearling sale. Michael Cooper, the manager of Cecilia Straub-Rubens' family trust and a partner in her racing stable, paid \$50,000 in 1987 for a dark bay filly by Seattle Song. This was Cee's Song, California's Broodmare of the Year for 2001.

A member of Seattle Slew's second crop, Seattle Song captured the group I Prix de la Salamandre in France as a juvenile and the Washington, D. C., International in this country at three. More

Cee's Tizzy, he ran third behind Home At Last and Unbridled in the 1990 Super Derby, but came out of the race with a fractured knee. He entered stud at Lakeview Thoroughbred Farm in 1991 and later relocated to Harris Farms.

Cee's Song was one the mares booked to Cee's Tizzy during his freshman season at stud. The result of that first mating was the 1992 gray gelding, Ceebett, who failed to find the winner's circle in six trips to the post. From this rather inauspicious beginning, the mixture of Cee's Tizzy's Man o' War lines and Cee's Song's influence of Seattle Slew and Northern Dancer would become a gold mine for their connections and the entire Califor-

defeated eventual Kentucky Derby winner Grindstone in a Santa Anita allowance race on Feb. 16, 1996. He also ran second in the Golden State Derby at Golden Gate Fields, but eventually found himself back in the claiming ranks and changing barns with great regularity.

In February of 1998, Budroyale was claimed by Ted West and Jeffrey Sengara for \$50,000. Two months later, he won the grade II San Bernardino Handicap for his new connections and concluded the year with a victory in the Cal Cup Classic.

The next year, this blue-collar hero became one of the leading handicap horses in the country by virtue of wins in the graded Mervyn LeRoy, Lon-

# An Instrumental Influence

## CALIFORNIA BROODMARE OF THE YEAR

important, though, he sported strong California roots through his dam, Incantation.

Long before she dropped Seattle Song in Kentucky, Incantation resided in this state and produced, as her first foal, Lucky Spell, a top California-bred filly during the seventies as a graded stakes winner of \$253,655. Lucky Spell was herself the dam of stakes winners Merlins Charm and Goldspell. Another daughter, Trolley Song, produced Unbridled's Song, while a half-sister, Celebration Song, became the second dam of Cal-bred stakes winners Guillermo and Rio Oro.

Bred in Kentucky and produced from Lonely Dancer, a granddaughter of Northern Dancer, Cee's Song campaigned three years for the partnership of Mrs. Rubens, Cooper, and Buddy and Betty Curvant. Her only win from 18 starts came as a 4-year-old in a \$40,000 claiming race at Hollywood Park on April 26, 1990, but she ran second eight times and third on three occasions for earnings of \$82,225. Then, it was off to the breeding shed to establish her own Thoroughbred dynasty.

The second half of the equation was set in place when Mrs. Rubens purchased a handsome Relaunch colt, a direct descendent of Man o' War, for \$72,000 at the 1988 September sale. Named

nia Thoroughbred industry. Eight of Cee's Song's nine foals were sired by Cee's Tizzy, including her champions Tiznow and Budroyale.

Cee's Song's second foal was a robust bay colt with a name that had been concocted from a combination of Mrs. Rubens' husbands—Arthur (Bud) Straub and Roy Rubens. Gelded before he was two, Budroyale debuted in a \$32,000 claiming race at Hollywood Park on Dec. 5, 1995, and was claimed first time out of the gate.

"We do that with most of our first time starters," explained Cee Rubens in an earlier interview. "We enter them for \$32,000 and see how they measure up against the competition. There was nothing about him back then that indicated to us to do otherwise. Jay Robbins wanted to claim him back the next time he raced, but I said, 'I don't do that. Just let him go.'"

Budroyale showed flashes of brilliance during those early years, like the time he

gacres Mile and Goodwood Breeders' Cup Handicaps. He pushed his earnings over the \$1 million mark when he ran second to Real Quiet in the Hollywood Gold Cup and climaxed his 1999 campaign by finishing second in the \$4 million Breeders' Cup Classic at Gulfstream Park. His earnings that year totaled \$1,735,640—tops among older horses in 1999.

Budroyale earned well-deserved laurels as California's Horse of the Year in 1999 and he launched his 2000 campaign in much the same style, with a victory in the San Antonio Handicap and a second to General Challenge in the grade I Santa Anita Handicap. Little did anyone know at the time that his breeder had something even better back at the farm.

Cee's Song had had three fillies in the interim that failed to excite anybody. Balboa Betty, her 1994 Cee's Tizzy filly, won one race in 15 starts, and her lone Moscow Ballet filly, Ceebett's Dancer, won once in 20 starts. Her 1995 Cee's Tizzy filly, Tizso, failed to win at all. All was forgiven, though, with the colt she dropped at Harris Farms on March 12, 1997. That colt was Tiznow, who weighed in at a hefty 144 pounds.

A stress fracture prevented him from

### Final Standings in the Voting (Top 5)

1. ....Cee's Song
2. ....Theresa's Pleasure
3. ....Maui Lyphear J. (Jpn)
4. ....Image of Super  
.....Shy Pirate



racing at two. He did not make his first start until April 22, 2000, finishing sixth of 10 starters in a Santa Anita maiden allowance contest at six furlongs. It would be the only time he would finish worse than second. Tiznow broke his maiden in his third try, going 1 1/16 miles on May 31 for an 8 1/2-length victory. By this time, the 2000 Triple Crown was divided three ways and Budroyale was sidelined with a shoulder injury.

In just five months, Tiznow jumped from the ranks of an unknown to become the toast of the racing world. The strapping 17-hand colt defeated grade I winner Dixie Union to score his first stakes victory in the grade III Affirmed Handi-

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Just the year before, the Straub-Rubens team had to sit back and applaud Budroyale's gutsy runner-up effort to Cat Thief. In 2000, they got a reason to celebrate as Tiznow held off Giant's Causeway to become the first Cal-bred to win a Breeders' Cup race and the first since Swaps to earn Horse of the Year honors. Tiznow and Budroyale now have the unique distinction of banking the largest single day paychecks ever earned by Cal-breds. They also became the first full brothers to finish first and second in the

same Breeders' Cup race. For Mrs. Rubens, who passed away three days after last year's Breeders' Cup, it was a culmination of many years of hard work and dedication. She owned only eight broodmares and Cee's Tizzy.

"It's very tough to do something like this when you have a small operation," said Cooper upon accepting Tiznow's Horse of the Year trophy. "But she never gave up and never let any of us give up. And it also shows the greatness of this sport. You don't have to be huge, you just have to be dedicated and never quit, and maybe luck will pass your way."

Budroyale has come back from a fractured shoulder and trainer Ted H. West is looking to start him during the Del Mar meeting. It will be the gelding's first race since he ran unplaced in last year's Pimlico Special.

Recently, time also seemed to be running out for Tiznow. Plagued by a nagging back injury since April, he has not raced since he won the grade I Santa Anita Handicap in March. But on July 13, he completed his first full workout in almost three months, going three furlongs in :36 2/5, and hopefully

this is a sign that he will be able to defend his Breeders' Cup Classic title at Belmont Park on October 27.

Cee's Song has three more Cee's Tizzy offspring and she is back in foal to that stallion. Her 1998 filly, Tizsweet, was retired after placing third in her only start and is in foal to Awesome Again. Her 2-year-old colt, Tizbud, has gone to Robbins, and she gave birth to a filly in January. Her daughter Balboa Betty has two High Brite foals and is in foal to Memo (Chi).

A contender for this honor in prior seasons, Cee's Song was runner-up to Excellent Lady last year. Now, as the dam of California's first Breeders' Cup champion, she joins this exclusive roster that began with Swaps' dam, Iron Reward, in 1955.

## Previous Winners

Year	Winner
1955	Iron Reward
1956	Feather Time
1957	Flying Choice
1958	Paradise
1959	Honeymoon
1960	War Whisk
1961	Dama II
1962	Miss Larksfly
1963	Candy Dish
1964	Djenne
1965	Fleet Diver
1966	Mrs. Rabbit
1967	In Regards
1968	Mother Wit
1969	Red Curtain
1970	Bell's Lark
1971	Our Cricket
1972	Mama Mouse
1973	Fleet Judy
1974	Solidity
1975	Seems a Queen
1976	Cool Snooze
1977	Soft Snow
1978	Fluffy Thought
1979	Procne
1980	Golden Shore
1981	O'L Clementine
1982	Good Thought
1983	Available Miss
1984	First Time Out
1985	Iza Valentine
1986	Melrose Nugget
1987	Miss Snowflake
1988	Variety Queen
1989	Careless Notion
1990	Chickadee
1991	General Store
1992	Ubetshedid
1993	Fagers Charm
1994	Star Gem
1995	Cheyenne Birdsong
1996	Symbolically
1997	Fountain Lake
1998	Forumstar
1999	Rare Lady
2000	Excellent Lady

Deanna Sparks photo



*Cee's Song*

*2001 California Broodmare of the Year*