

A Gem of a Broodmare

Star Gem, dam of millionaire Star of Cozzene and California-bred stakes winner J. F. Williams, has been voted California's Broodmare of the Year.

by DEBRA GINSBURG

"A lot of the positive things that happened to us in this business are due to this mare," said Jack Goodwin. "She's been very lucky for us and deserves all the credit."

Goodwin was speaking of his 16-year-old broodmare Star Gem. Although she is now living in Kentucky and was bred earlier this year to Storm Cat, she is a California-bred and has earned the vote as the state's Broodmare of the Year for 1994.

Defeating a strong group of candidates that included the likes of Luck's Fancy and Cheyenne Birdsong, both of whom produced four stakes winners, Star Gem won the title for the achievements of two outstanding West Coast performers. Multimillionaire Star of Cozzene gave Kotashaan (Fr) and Lure a run for an Eclipse Award in 1993, and Cal-bred J. F. Williams was a dual stakes winner this past spring at Hollywood Park.

Nine years ago, in 1985, Star Gem first entered the lives of Jack and Joan Goodwin of Napa, Calif., and rekindled their interest in Thoroughbred racing.

"None of the horses were doing anything at the track," Goodwin recalled. "We were losing our shirts and sinking fast. I told my wife that I wanted out of the horse business."

They sold their Double J Farm, along with most of their young horses and broodmares. Joan did persuade her husband to hold onto a few horses, just to keep his interest alive in the sport.

"We went from being large breeders with dozens of horses to being very small breeders with only a handful of horses," Goodwin said. "But I think that's where our good luck began. We were able to concentrate more on what we had."

One horse they decided to keep was Star Gem. John Coffee and Dr. George Spelman bred the daughter of Pia Star—Soonerland, by Fleet Nasrullah, in California. She made 82 starts over



Photo by Milton C. Tobey

Star Gem at Winter Quarter Farm in Kentucky.

five seasons and had won or placed in 38 of them for earnings of \$152,941. She even ran third in one stakes, the 1984 Children's Hospital Handicap at Bay Meadows.

Goodwin followed Star Gem's exploits for some time. He admired her durability and gritty will to win, qualities he felt would make a good broodmare. When she showed up for a \$25,000 tag at Golden Gate Fields on Feb. 18, 1985, Goodwin put in a claim for her, only to lose the shake to Barton Heller. Heller had claimed Star Gem with the intention of racing her, but when she came out of that race with an ankle injury, he offered her to Goodwin.

"She is a rangy mare," said Goodwin of Star Gem, "and not very pretty to look at. But underneath that rough exterior lurks the heart of a lion. It's one attribute she has passed on to her foals. They're all fighters, like her."

Star Gem was shipped to Kentucky and put in the care of Don Robinson, manager of Winter Quarter Farm. A longtime friend of the Goodwins, Robinson evaluated the mare's injury and advised holding off breeding Star Gem until the ankle healed. She was booked

to Mt. Livermore the following year and produced the filly Livermore Lil in 1987.

A tiny delicate filly, Livermore Lil began racing for the Goodwins, winning a \$12,500 maiden claiming race at Bay Meadows in the fall of her three-year-old season. She concluded her career by running for \$3,500 tags in Minnesota and Nebraska, winning three of 30 starts for earnings of \$18,058.

Star Gem hit pay dirt with her next foal, a handsome son of Cozzene named Star of Cozzene.

Agents Monty and Pat Roberts consigned Star of Cozzene to the 1990 California Thoroughbred Sales March two-year-old sale, and Jean-Laurent Andreani's Lonimar Stable bought him for \$35,000. Then, when Andreani started experiencing financial difficulties, Team Valor bought the colt for \$125,000 and turned him over to trainer D. Wayne Lukas.

Star of Cozzene became a stakes winner at three in 1991, capturing the graded Choice and Kelso Handicaps on the turf. He also ran third in the Breeders' Cup Mile that year. After an unsuccessful campaign in France at four, he returned to this country and was placed

in the care of Mark Hennig, a former assistant to Lukas.

Star of Cozzene emerged as a near champion in 1993, winning six of 12 starts last year for earnings of \$1,755,589. He defeated 1993 Horse of the Year Kotashaan in the San Gabriel and San Marcos Handicaps and two-time Breeders' Cup Mile winner Lure in the Early Times Manhattan and Caesars Interna-

"J. F. Williams has a breathing problem," Goodwin explained. "That's what accounts for some of the bad performances he throws in every now and then. He had surgery for an entrapped epiglottis. That's the same operation performed on Alysheba before he won the 1987 Kentucky Derby, but somehow it did not work on J. F. Williams."

Yet the now five-year-old's breathing

dam, the Goodwins' current Thoroughbred holdings also include Star Gem's four-year-old Hoist the Silver filly Portuguese Starlet. The Cal-bred filly was retired with a cracked cannon bone earlier this year after earning \$53,425 in allowance company. The couple recently purchased Gin Rummy Judy, a Cal-bred stakes winner of \$190,000. Goodwin was attracted to her because she is out of a half-sister to Star Gem.

Because of her advancing age, Star Gem will most likely remain in Kentucky. Goodwin hopes to bring the other two mares home from time to time to foal in California.

"That's what the plan is anyway," he said. "As Star Gem gets older, I will keep more of her foals to race and breed. What I'm hoping for is a classic filly to carry on Star Gem's line."

Meanwhile, California's newest Broodmare of the Year has an unraced three-year-old Apalachee colt named Diamond Club and a yearling colt by Capote. Earlier this year she dropped another colt by Dixieland Band in Ken-



J. F. Williams winning this year's Snow Chief Handicap at Hollywood Park.

tional Handicaps. For good measure, Star of Cozzene also threw in victories in the grade I Arlington Million and Man o' War Stakes and placed in four other turf stakes.

This year at six, he has already recorded two third-place finishes for new owner Tomaeato Farm, including a third behind Lure in this year's Caesar International. With lifetime earnings of \$2,280,021, Star of Cozzene is aiming for the Breeders' Cup and Japan Cup in this, his final season of competition.

J. F. Williams, a son of 1987 Santa Anita Handicap winner Broad Brush, was Star Gem's third foal, born at Old Bridge Farm in Buellton, Calif., on March 24, 1989. The Goodwins named him for their grandson, John Francis Williams, and sold a half-interest in him to longtime business associate John Carr. J. F. Williams races for Carr and Double J Farm (the Goodwins' stable name) and is trained by Ron McAnally.

Unraced at two, J. F. Williams won his first three races as a three-year-old at Hollywood Park and then ran second in the Real Good Deal Stakes at Del Mar. Entered next in the California Cup Sprint, he drew the outside post and broke badly, but still got up to finish fourth. He bounced right back from that effort to win another allowance race at Hollywood.



Star Gem has a 1994 colt by Dixieland Band.

problem has not stopped him from winning seven of 21 starts and compiling \$318,100 in earnings. He is also practically unbeatable at Hollywood Park, where he has won six of 10 starts lifetime and scored back-to-back stakes victories in the Los Angeles and Snow Chief Handicaps this spring.

"Ron has really gotten the horse to relax and rate this season," Goodwin said. "But I think the key to his success is the fact that he likes Hollywood Park. The cooler air helps his breathing."

In addition to J. F. Williams and his

tucky and is in foal to Storm Cat, sire of 1994 classic winners Tabasco Cat and Sardula.

"There's been talk of people trying to push the small breeder out of business," Goodwin said. "But what a great boost it is for a small breeder to produce foals like Star of Cozzene and J. F. Williams. Joan and I are in our sixties. Our biggest thrill is to follow the accomplishments of Star Gem's 'children.'"