

Near Record 185 Colts Eligible To \$650,000 Little Brown Jug

By Tom White

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Delaware, Ohio--Starting with the Woodrow Wilson eliminations in mid July and continuing through the Breeders Crown Final in late November, I Am A Fool and Modern Art battled for supremacy in last season's two-year-old colt pacing division. At year's end, I Am A Fool was voted best over his arch rival in the U.S. Harness Writers poll. These two pacers are among a near record 185 colts who are eligible to the \$650,000-estimated Little Brown Jug, final jewel in Pacing's Triple Crown. The 59th Jug will be raced Thursday afternoon, September 23 at the Delaware, Ohio County Fair.

"We've got the two year old champion and runnerup, the Breeders Crown winner and nine of the ten colts who started in the Breeders Crown Final," said Delaware Racing Secretary Tom Wright. "Also, 25 of the 30 colts and fillies listed by Stan Bergstein in his annual Experimental Ratings are eligible to either the Jug or Jugette," said Wright. "We are extremely happy with the talent and depth in this year's Little Brown Jug eligibility pool."

Given the quality of I Am A Fool and Modern Art as juveniles, Bergstein felt it reasonable to rank them as the best. "The real issue is to separate the two," he said. That call, by a tick of the stop watch, went to I Am A Fool, with Modern Art rated second.

I Am A Fool has shown the iron toughness of his sire, Life Sign, and the speed and success produced by his Tyler B. dam, I Am No Fool, who produced one \$300,000 winner, two \$200,000 winners and four performers with records of 1:53 or faster. I Am A Fool is his dam's 10th foal. The juvenile champion is owned by Perfect World Enterprises.

Modern Art also demonstrated the brilliance of his classic pedigree, being by Artsplace and out of the No Nukes mare Wendy M Hanover, a full sister to Western Hanover. Modern Art started 13 times, finishing back of second only once, winning six including the \$640,000 Woodrow Wilson Final and finishing second to I Am A Fool in the Breeders Crown Final. He earned \$719,041 with a record of 1:51.3. Joe Holloway trains Modern Art and 2003 Jug winner David Miller drives the colt. Modern Art is owned by Val D' Or Farms, Milton and Martha Frank and Theodore Gewertz.

So, what separates them? The fact in six meetings, I Am A Fool won four times, including a half-length victory in a Breeders Crown elimination and length-and-three-quarters in the \$650,000 Final. He also took a better record (1:51.2) and won more money (\$1,159,062). Brett Pelling trains I Am A Fool and Ron Pierce is his driver. Pelling trained Jug winners Armbro Operative, Shady Character and Blissfull Hall and Pierce drove Shady Character and Blissfull Hall.

Other top Jug challengers are \$1,122,700 Metro Stake winner Camelot Hall; Breeder's Crown elim winner Driven To Win; and multiple stakes or stakes elimination winners Brandon's Cowboy (third in Breeders Crown Final), Droppin'thehammer, Harry Hornet, Timesarechanging and Western Affluence.