



CTBA Member
PROFILE

CALIFORNIA DREAMING

ERIC YOHAN

BY EMILY SHIELDS

Eric Yohan is a man with big ideas and the determination to implement them. A scientist by trade, Yohan is now embracing the Thoroughbred industry, both with his equine health products and with his EF1 Farm, where 300 broodmares and two new stallions reside.

Yohan, who hails from an Austrian family but who grew up in Ireland, had been around horses since childhood. He completed two PhDs before developing Flo-X, a product designed to destroy mold and pests, in 1998. The product took off, especially in Hawaii, where mold problems can be espe-

cially aggravating. Yohan took Flo-X off the market during a redevelopment and testing phase and continually heard from one man who wished for the product to return.

“He told me that his animals needed them,” said Yohan. “His animals?”

This revelation led to the development of Equine Formula 1 and 2, topical products for horses that help with fungus and a variety of other ailments.

“It took me a long time to develop those,” Yohan said. “I tested them for humans first before I even thought about horses. But it is not toxic, and I have always wanted to help animals. I started putting money into developing, doing

research at the universities, sent the product to U.C. Davis, and worked with a lot of vets. We started using it on warts, and they were gone in 14 days completely with just one spray.”

Yohan decided to do research and testing at his own facility by purchasing the former Brazeau Thoroughbred Farms in Diamond Valley.

“Instead of spending a fortune on medication, I can use these treatments to get rid of things like cracked heels or viruses,” he said. “The only thing I want now is to make it cheaper so that everyone who has a backyard horse can afford it. I’m working on that.”

During the time of the devastating San Luis Rey Downs fires, the new EF1 Farm gave sanctuary to horses in need and donated the product for free to help with healing. The 100-acre property has plenty of space, with the development of a unique one-mile turf track underway.

Yohan became close with the Stronach family, partnering with Frank Stronach’s son, Andy, to acquire two stallions new to California, North Light and City Wolf.

The classy North Light won the Vodafone Epsom Derby (G1) in 2004 and was Great Britain’s highweighted 3-year-old (11-14 furlongs). The son of Danehill—Sought Out, by Rainbow Quest, is the sire of champion filly Battleglight and five-time California stakes winner Chips All In. North Light has 144 winners from nine crops (3-year-olds and up) to race.

The royally bred City Wolf is by Giant’s Causeway and



COURTESY OF ERIC YOHAN

Eric Yohan is parlaying his successful business acumen into a horse racing venture with the Stronach Group, all for the betterment of the horse and Thoroughbred racing in California

out of the Kentucky Broodmare of the Year Baby Zip. This makes him a half brother to the likes of leading stallions City Zip and Ghostzapper. The Canadian graded stakes winner has sired a winner in his first four starters.

“These stallions bring stamina, speed, and longevity,” Yohan said. “North Light produces such elegant horses—just watch them.”

His partnership with the Stronachs means that Yohan will bring more than 90 foals into the state this spring, with sires ranging from Breeders’ Cup Classic (G1) winner Awesome Again to multiple grade 1 hero Einstein.

“They’re all amazingly bred,” Yohan said. “I want to make a big impact into the California-bred horses.”

To do that, he plans to combine exceptional feed and loving care with the success of his products.

“The most important thing is good feed,” Yohan said. “Don’t be using cheap alfalfa that could have mold; young horses and stallions need a good diet for bones to develop properly. You need a pound and a half of oats and minerals, along with good alfalfa. If you feed the horses right, you can really raise some good ones.”

He also believes in a gentler touch during training, saying, “You have to train the horse as if they want to win. They need to love to be ridden and love to win. I want to do it a little differently.”

A meticulous breed-



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

A handsome son of Danehill, Epsom Derby winner North Light produces “such elegant horses”

“My thinking is always for the betterment of horse racing. This is just the start, but I want to do more. That’s the key to California horse racing.”

— Eric Yohan



MICHAEL BURNS

EF1 Farm stallion City Wolf is not only a grade 3 winner in Canada but a half brother to successful sires City Zip and Ghostzapper

ing shed is something else he wants to operate.

“I brought in a great breeding team,” he said. “I have made the decision to videotape and photograph every breeding that we do so that there can be no controversy.”

Beyond his own farm, Yohan has a plethora of grand plans.

“I am looking at some other farms to purchase right now, and I’d love to do something with San Luis Rey Downs in conjunction with the Stronach Group,” he said. “We need to reopen that place and restore it to its glory for the betterment of horse racing in California. Our state is prone to fires, and places like that are tinderboxes, dangerous for horses and personnel. We need to be building with fire-resistant materials.”

Despite all this in a relatively short amount of time, Yohan has bigger dreams still.

“I have done a lot, but I want to do a lot more,” he said. “I want to donate my products to help retired horses. I want my horses to be drug free, which is very important to me. I want to

acquire more expensive, top-rated studs, then make those studs less expensive so that younger people can be encouraged into breeding.”

Yohan says he is in California to stay.

“This has started off as a hobby, and now it has gotten so big that it takes a lot of my time,” he said. “My thinking is always for the betterment of horse racing. This is just the start, but I want to do more. That’s the key to California horse racing.” **CTB**