

TDN Q & A

VENTA Copa Bullrich June 6, 7, 8, 10, 15

A total of 341 yearlings have been catalogued for this year's Copa Bullrich Sales. Originally scheduled for its traditional May dates, it was postponed due to an EVA outbreak in the area, and now will take place at San Isidro June 6-8, 10 and 15. The *TDN* spoke with Antonio Bullrich, the company's director general, ahead of the upcoming auction.

When was the sale established?

The Copa Bullrich Sales were established in 2006. The idea came about after a suggestion from Elaine "Legs" Lawlor. The Copa Bullrich follows the basis of the Goffs Millions Sale.

May was the month we set aside for the Copa



Antonio Bullrich at Work

Bullrich, and all of the yearlings sold automatically qualify for the Copa Bullrich race series. We have three qualifying races, split between fillies and colts, and the first four in each go through to the final in April. The

Copa Bullrich race series offers the richest two-year-old race in South America.

Who are some of the better horses to have sold at this sale in the past?

We have been lucky enough to sell some great horses over the last four years. The Group 1 winners listed below are just some of the graduates of the Copa Bullrich:

- Anaerobio (Arg) (Catcher in the Rye {Ire})
- City Thunder (Arg) (Thunder Gulch)
- Evocado (Arg) (Southern Halo)
- Interaction (Arg) (Easing Along)
- Ishitaki (Arg) (Interprete {Arg})
- Kryisia (Arg) (Matty G)
- Lingote de Oro (Arg) (Orpen)
- Peristaltica (Arg) (Interprete {Arg})
- Phone Time (Arg) (Gilded Time)
- Sembra Fe (Arg) (Manipulator)

How has the sale changed/grown since it was started?

It has grown at a remarkable rate. We sold 126 yearlings the first year. This figure had doubled by 2007, and last year we had over 600 catalogued, forcing us to create separate Copa Bullrich sales within the year. We have also had to add extra days to the Copa Bullrich May sale, which runs over five days in order to accommodate all of the yearlings. There is a definite increase in the number of international buyers, from all parts of the world.

How many yearling sales are there in Argentina?

We have five yearling sales, the main one being the Copa Bullrich. The five also include two specific sales for Haras Vacacion (held May 6 this year) and Haras La Quebrada (set for Sept. 7).

South Africa and Dubai have had a lot of success with Argentine horses. Has there been a concerted marketing effort to attract buyers from those regions?

I think this year we have made a more concerted effort to grab the attention of buyers worldwide, not specifically from one country or one type of buyer. The new markets such as India and Turkey have come to the fore, and we will always retain interest in Dubai and South Africa, as the Argentine horses have been successful there.



Do you run the sale in conjunction with any other international auction companies, such as Tattersalls, Keeneland or Fasig-Tipton?

We don't run anything in conjunction with any other international auction companies. This year, however, we did have Tom Thornbury, director of Keeneland Sales, as the selector for the Copa Bullrich. Tom is a respected man who holds a wealth of knowledge and experience. It was fantastic to have him here in Argentina.

How is the Argentine economy progressing in comparison to the international community, and what sort of impact do you think it will have on this year's sale?

In this current downfall, buyers are looking to enter new markets, and I do think that there has been a notable increase in interest this year.

Argentina is still operating an affordable market. We have top stallions standing here at a reduced stud fee, therefore enabling buyers to enter the top of the market far easier than many countries. Argentina also has one of the most rewarding training costs to prize-money ratios.

Bullrich Q & A cont.

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Bullrich Q & A cont.

The U.S. breeding industry has a huge commercial component. The perception here of the Argentine industry is that is centered on breeding to race, rather than selling young stock. Is that accurate?

I think that's just a perception--we sell the young stock. The top breeders here may retain some of their young stock to keep a particular family's line, but most of the top stock will be sold at auction.

What is the average foal crop in Argentina, and what percentage is offered at public auction?

The foal crop has increased almost twofold in the last eight or nine years. In 2008, there were 8,154 foals born, with around 25 percent going to the sales.

The growth is due to the introduction of the slots in 2001, brought in by Palermo Racetrack. Palermo has supported this industry so much over the last eight years. There has been a significant increase in prizemoney, which has led to yearlings selling for more.

What sort of sales preparation do the yearlings go through?

The yearling preparations will start from February for the May Sale. Breeders here usually allow around 12 weeks to prepare the horse. They are brought in from the fields, and by March they are walking in hand and being groomed.

Ponying then starts in April up until the time of sale. The stud managers and the breeders make a huge effort and take great pride in ensuring their yearlings are ready for the sale and look in peak condition.

What are your expectations for this year's sale?

We, like every sales company, expect to progress each year with a better quality of horse, increased international interest and a more competitive market.



To add to that, interest in Argentine horses has been phenomenal over the last few years and continues to rise. The commerciality of the stallions standing here gives reason for this. Within our sale this year we have yearlings by

some great stallions: Distorted Humor, Tiznow, Southern Halo, Malibu Moon, Successful Appeal, Orpen, Bluegrass Cat, King's Best, Mutakddim, Not For Sale (Arg) and Pure Prize, amongst many others.

The only thing that we can safely say at the moment is that we have never had so many horses of the quality found in the two selected days of this year's Copa Bullrich. That will open the doors to the future.

For more information, visit www.abullrichsa.com.