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Time and again, history's most influential thoroughbred lines, both male and female, have developed through the efforts of an individual farm whose breeder practiced the arts of female family inbreeding.

Harry Payne Whitney, America's top breeder during this century's first quarter, forged the lines of Peter Pan and his son Pennant, in large part through inbreeding to the family of the great matriarch, Mannie Grey.

France's most famous breeder, Marcel Boussac created a mid-century turf dynasty that was often represented by individuals whose pedigrees demonstrated inbreeding patterns particularly to the family of his foundation stallion, Tourbillon.

To be able to effectively evaluate, both qualitatively and quantitatively, inbreeding in this fashion, the term “Rasmussen Factor” (or RF) has recently been introduced to identify Thoroughbreds demonstrating *inbreeding to a maternal ancestor, through different individuals within five generations of its pedigree*. It is named after my close friend and mentor, Leon Rasmussen whose former “Bloodlines” column in the *Daily Racing Form* endorsed this method of breeding racehorses for literally decades.

Here in the U.S., there isn't much question as to which sireline is the *hottest*. The Fappiano branch of Mr. Prospector is getting a lot of the headlines, and for good reason. When Real Quiet captured this year's Kentucky Derby and Preakness only to be caught on the line by Victory Gallop in the Belmont it marked only the second time this century that a stallion had ever become the grand-sire of the winner of all three races of the American Triple Crown with at least two different horses. (Fappiano's sire, Mr. Prospector was the first in 1995 when Thunder Gulch, by Gulch won the Derby and Belmont, while Timber Country, by Woodman took the Preakness).

The real story of Fappiano's surge to prominence as a progenitor involves the manner in which his line has been developed through the efforts of his breeder, John A. Nerud. The legendary trainer of Gallant Man and Dr. Fager was responsible for all of the bloodstock decisions at Tartan Farms in Florida.

Nerud's Fappiano, a bay 1977 colt from Mr. Prospector's second Florida crop was bred to run, and run fast. Both his sire and broodmare sire, Tartan's own Dr. Fager had shattered track records while sprinting.

Much less conspicuous in Fappiano's pedigree, however, were two maternal sources: Aspidistra (Dr. Fager's dam) and Cequillo (Fappiano's third dam). John Nerud would need a subsequent generation to directly demonstrate (through inbreeding) just how important their own distinct influence was. When Fappiano returned to Tartan Farms as a stallion, Nerud got his chance and over time took advantage.

Fappiano: the Racehorse

Fappiano was trained by Nerud's son, Jan. As a juvenile, he won all four of his starts including the Morven Stakes at the Meadowlands in a six furlong track record of 1:08.3. The brilliant links between this young colt and his immediate ancestry had just begun.

At age three, Fappiano was stretched out to middle distances where he proved most consistent, winning thrice from seven starts including the 9 furlong Discovery Handicap (G3). In three others, he ran good seconds including that year's Jerome Handicap (G2).

At four, Fappiano won half of his six starts highlighted by victories in the Forego Handicap (beating the year's sprint champion) and the prestigious Metropolitan "Mile" Handicap (G1) in a sizzling 1:33.4. During this final campaign, he was described by Thoroughbred Times' John P. Sparkman as "a striking, powerful blood bay with a wonderfully deep shoulder, a fiery eye, and offset knees."

At the end of 1981, Fappiano was retired with 10 wins and four placings from 17 starts with earnings of \$370,213. Syndicated for a reported \$300,000 per share, he returned home to enter stud at Tartan Farms near Ocala, Fla.

Fappiano's Career at Stud

Thanks in large part to his son Tasso, Fappiano got off to a most auspicious start. When Tasso nosed out Storm Cat in the 1985 Breeders' Cup Juvenile, it clinched a championship for himself as well as U.S. Juvenile Sire honors for Fappiano.

The following is a table listing Fappiano's group and graded stakes winners according to foal crop.

FAPPIANO'S GRADED / GROUP STAKES WINNERS BY YEAR

| | |
|--|--|
| -----entered stud at Tartan Farms, Florida in 1982----- | |
| 1st crop / foals of 1983: | Tasso (G1, juvenile champion), Funistrada (G2), With a Twist (G3), Mustin Lake (G3) |
| 2nd crop / foals of 1984 | Tappiano (G1), Cryptoclearance (G1) |
| 3rd crop / foals of 1985 | Aptostar (G1) |
| 4th crop / foals of 1986 | Quiet American (G1), Some Romance (G1), Surging (G2), Electric Flash (G3) |
| 5th crop / foals of 1987 | Unbridled (G1, 3YO champion), Rubiano (G1, sprint champion), Grand Canyon (G1), Defensive Play (G1), Fappaburst (G2) |
| 6th crop / foals of 1988 | Cahill Road (G1), Serape (G1), Jeano (G3) |
| -----moved to Lanes End, Kentucky after the 1987 season----- | |
| 7th crop / foals of 1989 | Speakerphone (G3), A.P. Jet (Japan-III), Faaz (Peru-I), Cristofori (France-III) |
| 8th crop / foals of 1990 | no graded / group stakes winners |
| 9th crop / foals of 1991 | Signal Tap (G3), Comet Shine (champion Canadian juvenile, Can.-I) |

In the summer of 1987, coinciding with Tartan Farms/Nerud dispersal at the Fasig-Tipton September yearling sale, Fappiano was moved to Lane's End Farm in

Kentucky. Tragically, in early September of 1990, he was destroyed after a chronic struggle with laminitis, the complication of a serious leg fracture. In all, he had nine crops: six in Florida, the last three in Kentucky.

After a marvelous run at Tartan, the above table illustrates a marked drop off in top quality progeny when Fappiano was moved. Having sired at least one American Grade 1 winner in each of his six seasons in Florida, he failed to sire another amongst three full crops from a bevy of well-bred Bluegrass mares.

What could have caused this? Perhaps, what Fappiano needed most in his matings was exactly the strains that Tartan Farms carried, and John Nerud was ready to supply.

To account for all of this, five generation pedigrees were computer-constructed for all of Fappiano's 417 total foals. The group was then analyzed according to the presence or absence of female family inbreeding within five generations. In other words, Fappiano's progeny that demonstrated the Rasmussen Factor (the RFs) were compared to the much larger majority that did not (the non-RFs). The results are most noticeable.

COMPARING FAPPIANO'S PROGENY: WITH AND WITHOUT THE RASMUSSEN FACTOR

| | non-RFs | RFs | total |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| foals | 400 | 17 (4.1% of total) | 417 |
| winners (% of foals) | 242 (61%) | 13 (76%) | 255 (61%) |
| stakes winners (% of foals) | 43 (11%) | 4 (24%) | 47 (11%) |
| Grade One winners (% of foals) | 9 (2%) | 3 (18%) | 12 (3%) |
| Total Earnings | \$30.88 million (83.2%) | \$6.24 million (16.8%) | \$37.12 million |

Across the board: per cent of winners to foals, stakes winners to foals, and Grade 1 winners to foals, Fappiano RFs, as a group, outperformed their majority counterparts. As the quality of criteria increased, so did the rate at which the RFs outperformed their opportunities. This select set of 17 individuals comprising just over 4% of Fappiano's total offspring collected almost 17% of his total sire earnings.

At the center of this harvest of thoroughbred riches is John Nerud and Tartan Farms. His *signature* is on most of these 17 foals including all four stakes winners.

These four, all colts have each gone on on to become one of their sire's best sons at stud.

Unbridled, Fappiano's richest offspring (\$4,489,475), was voted American three year old of 1990 when victorious in the Kentucky and Florida Derby followed up by an upset score over his elders in the Breeders' Cup Classic. Bred by Tartan Farms, the weanling Unbridled was purchased for \$70,000 by their longtime client, Mrs. Frances Genter at the farm's 1987 dispersal.

One of American racing's finest moments on television was electrified Derby trainer Carl Nafzger cradling the frail, near blind octogenarian in the stands of Churchill Downs while bellowing in his best southern drawl, "he's on the lead, Mrs. Genter...He's gonna win!"

Unbridled's pedigree demonstrates 4X4 inbreeding to Tartan Farm matriarch, Aspidistra. She appears as both the dam of Fappiano's broodmare sire, Dr. Fager and Unbridled's fourth dam.

Native Dancer
 Raise a Native
 Raise You
 Mr. Prospector
 Nashua
 Gold Digger
 Sequence
 Fappiano
 Rough'n Tumble
 Dr. Fager
Aspidistra
 Killaloe
 Correlation
 Grand Splendour
 Cequillo
UNBRIDLED AND CAHILL ROAD
 Rialto
 Wild Risk
 Wild Violet
 Le Fabuleux
 Verso II
 Anguar
 La Rochelle
 Gana Facil
 Intentionally
 In Reality
 My Dear Girl
 Charedi
 Buckpasser
 Magic
Aspidistra

Mrs. Genter was officially credited with breeding Unbridled's younger full brother, **Cahill Road** when, for \$275,000 at the same fortuitous 1987 sale of Tartan stock she bought their dam, Gana Facil, already back in foal to Fappiano. The resultant colt had the promise of his elder sibling but without all of the necessary twists of fate.

Unraced at two, Cahill Road quickly climbed the East coast class ranks and looked to have the 1991 Kentucky Derby squarely within his sights. When he won the G1 Wood Memorial by daylight crushing undefeated filly phenom, Meadow Star his future looked bright, indeed. But, alas, the 17-hand colt could only limp back to the winner's circle, having suffered a severe tear of the medial suspensory ligament of his left front ankle. The career-ending injury sent Cahill Road to stud at least a year ahead of schedule with a lot of "what ifs". (He had already handled eventual Derby winner, Strike the Gold in a previous prep race)

Prior to Unbridled and Cahill Road, Nerud sent Fappiano to their grand-dam, Charedi and got the 1984 foal, **Pentelicus**, a three-quarter brother to the later duo. As such, he was inbred 4X3 to his third dam, Aspidistra.

Never quite a graded winner, the Tartan charge grinded out a nice sprint career winning stakes at ages two, five and at six when he broke the track record for six and one-half furlongs at Arlington.



Nearco
Nearctic
Lady Angela
Quiet Charm
Princequillo
Cequillo
Boldness

Quiet American was purchased as a yearling for \$300,000 by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum's Darley Stud from the, now, serendipitous Tartan dispersal of 1987.

Slow to come around and constantly plagued by allergies, Quiet American peaked during the second half of his four year old campaign. After beating champion racemare, Bayakoa at Del Mar, he traveled East where he ran a most credible second to Dispersal in the G1 Woodward, leaving two champions in their wake. Nevertheless, amongst a deep, internationally stocked list of candidates, Quiet American was denied post in the 1990 Breeders' Cup Classic (won by Unbridled). Trainer Gary Jones called the decision a "travesty" and proved it six days later when Quiet American crushed a top-class field in the G1 N.Y.R.A. Mile in 1:32.4, just three-fifths of a second off the world record held by the great Dr. Fager, himself. Early the next season, a leg injury sent the novelly-bred horse to stud at his owner's magnificent Gainsborough Farm in Versailles, Kentucky.

Quiet American was the product of a sire and dam both descending from the same family, what we have come to call the *Formula One Pattern*. Tartan matriarch, Cequillo was the third dam of Fappiano as well as the dam of Demure. Quiet American was, therefore, inbred 4X3 to Cequillo. More specifically, he demonstrated a 2X1 cross of the three-quarter sisters, Killaloe and Demure, the dams of sire and son.

The Nerud/Tartan influence leading, first, to Fappiano and then a remarkable share of his key offspring has, very possibly, created the strongest branch of the already mighty Mr. Prospector sireline. This has been made possible, in large part, through patterns of female family inbreeding, particularly to Tartan Farm's two most influential broodmares: the foundation matriarchs, **Aspidistra** and **Cequillo**.

As we look at Fappiano's sons at stud, we continue to see the same 'familiar' patterns:

Notable Sons of Fappiano at Stud

From Fappiano's first crop, G2-placed **Roy** (out of Adlibber by Never Bend) at age four was whisked off to Chile where he quickly became that country's premiere stallion. Roy is reported to have sired at least 41 local stakes winners from his first eight crops. Now attractive to the American market, he was returned to the U.S. to stand at Darby Dan Farm in Lexington, Ky. where his first Northern Hemisphere foals will be two year olds in 1999.

Kentucky breeders would do well to consider the pedigrees of Roy's previous Chilean runners. It seems that one of his best offspring, Horse of the Year, Barrio Chino was out of a mare by the sire, Petrarque whose own sire, Hot Dust was a son of Cequillo. He was, therefore, inbred 5X4 to our aforementioned Tartan queen.

It was anticipated that Juvenile champion **Tasso** (out of Ecstacism by What a Pleasure) would be Fappiano's first successful son at stud. It wasn't to be. From eight crops, he has had 16 stakes winners, but aside from two nice group winners in Europe hasn't had one graded winner in the U.S. Most recently, Tasso has been on a trans-global voyage that has seen him move from the pastures of Kentucky, through Florida, stopping in Saudi Arabia to arrive in India where he presently stands.

Indian breeders would do well to consider Tasso's richest American offspring, his daughter, Fappitass (\$314,159, Aksarben Budweiser Breeders' Cup S., etc.). She was inbred 4X4X5 to Grey Flight, the great matriarch of Claiborne Farm. Strains of Grey Flight is exactly what he needs, where ever he is.

Fappiano's **Cryptoclearance** (out of Naval Orange by Hoist the Flag) standing at Margeaux Farm LLC in Midway, Ky. was his first successful American son at stud. From six crops, Cryptoclearance has got at least 23 stakes winners, including Grade 1 winners, Victory Gallop, Strategic Maneuver and Traitor.

Various patterns of female family inbreeding appear among a number of his stakes horses:

Cryptoclearance's top son, the classic-winning Victory Gallop is out of a stakes winning mare inbred 4X4 to Almahmoud.

Ride the Rails (\$255,096, Foolish Pleasure S.) was a good second in the 1994 Florida Derby before injury curtailed his own Derby campaign. His third dam, Alablue was also the third dam of

Cryptoclearance. He was, therefore, inbred 4X3 in Formula One fashion to Alablue.

Another stakes winner, Man the Shipp was inbred to his great-grandsire, Mr. Prospector and his full brother, Red Ryder 3X3

Finally, Crypt Too who ran a good second in the G2 Withers of 1997 but then caused an embarrassing scene while loading in the Preakness had as his third dam, Wavy Navy, she the dam of Hoist the Flag. The talented but unruly gelding was, thereby, inbred to Wavy Navy 4X3.

Tartan-bred **Pentelicus** has become a significant name amongst Florida stallions with at least ten stakes winners from his first five crops. He has become particularly proficient with two year olds (32% juvenile winners from foals). His latest young starlet, the undefeated, A Penny Saved (Desert Vixen S., etc.) might be one of his best. Her fourth dam, Raise You is also the dam of Raise a Native, Pentelicus' great grand-sire. She is, therefore, inbred 5X4 to Raise You.

One of the greatest boosts to the good fortunes of the Fappiano sireline has been the performance at stud of **Quiet American**. From four relatively small crops, he has got at least ten stakes winners including Distaff Champion, Hidden Lake, G1 winner, Cara Rafaela and, of course, dual classic winner, Real Quiet, known throughout the land as "The Fish", after his rather gaunt looks on frontal view in younger times.

Real Quiet's nose loss to Victory Gallop in the Belmont must be considered one of the more devastating losses in American sports history. The corporate-sponsored bonus alone was worth \$5 million. Had the son of Quiet American eaten even one more oat in the morning or, at least, have gotten a more savvy ride in the afternoon, his sire would have clinched a U.S. Sire Championship in early June.

Given his own close inbreeding, Quiet American has sired only two individuals of racing age demonstrating the RF. So far, one has become stakes-placed.

For our part, Leon (Rasmussen) and I have dispatched our partnership's stakes-winning mare to Quiet American and have, so far, a lovely yearling filly with another foal on the way. The mare carries a strain of Raise a Native's full sister, My Sister Kate creating a brother-sister cross with Quiet American's great grand-sire. We'll see.

Unbridled is another who has clearly demonstrated the ability to sire top-notch performers, the latest being the Nafzger-trained multiple G1 winner Banshee Breeze. His first crop stars, Unbridled's Song and Grindstone have, themselves, gone to stud and figure to initiate the third generation of the Fappiano sireline. The former shuttles between Taylor Made Farm in Kentucky and Arrowfield Stud in Australia, while the latter returns home to Overbrook Farm in Ky. Grindstone won the 1996 Kentucky Derby when up to the quarter pole, and for more than six months previous it appeared the race would belong to Unbridled's Song who already had put away the Breeders' Cup Juvenile, the Florida Derby and the Wood Memorial.

From his first four crops, Unbridled has sired seven stakes winners, including the RF, Famously Free whose second dam was Killaloe, dam of Fappiano and grand-daughter of Cequillo.

It seemed odd that both full brothers, Unbridled and **Cahill Road** would stand at Gainesway in Lexington, Ky. It certainly didn't appear to serve the book of the younger. Now that Unbridled has relocated to Claiborne Farm, Cahill Road would figure to improve.

From four crops, he has had four stakes winners. The richest of these is Puerto Rican Horse of the Year, Mi Vereda (\$322,340, G1), a champion at two and three when she won 14 of 16 starts. Mi Vereda's third dam was My Dear Girl, the dam of In Reality, sire of Cahill Road's grand-dam. She was, therefore, inbred 5x3 to My Dear Girl, Frances Genter's 1959 champion juvenile filly and one of the first prominent denizens at Tartan Farm.

Lane's End, the high profile breeding establishment of Versailles, Ky. has not been particularly lucky with *Fappianos*. After acquiring, never maximizing, and then prematurely losing the original Fappiano, the farm banished the highly touted Tasso and now has gotten off to a less than rousing start with former sprint champion, **Rubiano** (out of Ruby Slippers by Nijinsky II). From three large crops, Rubiano, so far, has four stakes winners.

One of Rubiano's offspring whose pedigree caught our eye was Gray Raider (\$115,252, 2nd G2 Saratoga Special S.), another who demonstrated a close cross (3X2) of Mr. Prospector with his full brother, Red Ryder.

It's also worth noting Rubiano's second dam, Moon Glitter is also the full sister of good sire-of-sires Relaunch. This appears to be another family cross worth experimenting with.

If there is a knock against the line of Fappiano, as well as his sire Mr. Prospector, it has been the relative lack of influence in grass events (certainly as compared with the internationally dominant influence of the lines of Northern Dancer). **Defensive Play** (out of Safe Play by Sham) may represent one of the better opportunities to try to shake this trend. He was, in fact, the only son of Fappiano to win Grade 1 stakes on both dirt and turf. Defensive Play has been shuttling between Payson Stud in Lexington, Ky. and Waikato Stud in Matamata, New Zealand. From his first three crops, he has sired the Australian Group One winner, Millward.

An interesting ancestor in Defensive Play's pedigree, particularly given his transfers to the southern hemisphere, is his fourth dam, Arietta II whose distinct strains are available in Australasia. One of prominent Aussie sire, Luskin Star's best daughters was the millionaire, Bold Promise, later the dam of Golden Slipper winner, Merlene. She was inbred 4X4 to Arietta II. Inbreeding to this matriarch would seem a worthwhile experiment with Defensive Play as well.

Several other promising sons of Fappiano, from his later Kentucky crops, are just beginning their own stud careers. **Press Card** (out of Courtly Dee by Never Bend) was multiple Grade 1 placed. Standing in Maryland at Country Life Farm, his first crop are two year olds of 1998. Out of a Never Bend mare, Press Card would do well to find alliances carrying Bold Reason blood thus creating inbreeding patterns to Lalun. **A.P. Jet** (out of Taminette by In Reality) is a full brother to Mrs. Genter's Tappiano, a three-time G1 winner as a two year old. Their dam is a full sister to Known Fact. A.P. Jet, a Japanese Group 3 winner stands at Sugar Maple Farm in New York. His first foals arrived in 1998. He offers potential inbreeding patterns to the families of Mixed Marriage (his third dam) and Two Lea. **Signal Tap** (out of South Sea Dancer by Northern Dancer) has been billed by Questroyal Stud in New York as "Fappiano's best bred son at stud". Out of Storm Bird's full sister, it's hard to argue. Signal Tap, a multiple graded stakes winner on grass appears to be one of the few Fappiano stallions with the necessities to sire good American turf runners.

His first foals arrived in 1998. Of course, we hope a couple are out of Storm Bird-line mares.

The Game Plan

It could easily be said that the Fappiano line has had a lot more going for it than just the propitious use of female family inbreeding. Fappiano was a top-class miler by a dominant sire-of-sires. His male heirs often stand at some of the finest stud farms in the world where they are bred to some of the finest broodmares available. Of course, these same advantages have been enjoyed by many a sire (line) that never did succeed.

At this point, explanation could easily get muddled in conjecture, so we'll simply go to the source:

“Guys like Leon Rasmussen had ideas”, said John Nerud in a 1996 interview with Daily Racing Form’s S. (Sid) H. Fernando. “You listen to their theories and take it to another dimension”.

You certainly did, Mr. Nerud. The third dimension.