

## REAL ESTATE FIGURE JUSTICE BREEDING SALES SUCCESS

By Molly Rollins

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*Bill Justice, a decades-long figure in farm real estate in Kentucky, stretched his influence to the Keeneland sales ring Sept. 10 when a colt he*



LISA SCOTT

**Bill Justice**

*bred dropped the hammer for \$1 million during the second session of Book 1. Justice, who entered the world of breeding to elevate his understanding of the horsemen to whom he sells, has gained a greater insight into the industry in addition to experiencing the highs and lows of raising a horse from conception to the racetrack.*

*The Justify colt, consigned as Hip 273 by Woods Edge Farm, is a son of Undercover Justice, one of five mares Justice owns. Justice spoke with BloodHorse about his venture into breeding horses, Undercover Justice and her offspring, and his future goals in the industry.*

**BloodHorse:** You sold your first seven-figure horse Sept. 10 when Hip 273, a Justify colt you bred, sold for \$1 million to China Horse Club, Maverick Racing, and Siena Racing at the Keeneland September Yearling Sale. What can you say about reflecting on that accomplishment?

**Bill Justice:** I'm the leading farm broker in Kentucky and that's my true passion, but I was so proud to have bred a seven-figure horse, the highest-priced Justify at the September Sale. And proud of the fact that WinStar, Siena, and China Horse Club bought the horse, because they raced Justify.

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**BH:** How long have you owned and bred horses?

**BJ:** I've been selling horse farms for a long time. I got my real estate license in 1978. By the mid-1980s I was the leading farm broker in Kentucky. Our knowledge of the horse farms was just unmatched in the industry but I recognized that I didn't know the horse business that well. And so my involvement in the horse business was really to help me to better understand and sell horse farms. I was lucky enough to have met people like Dr. (Naoya) Yoshida and his wife, Marie (former owners of Winchester Farm). When I sold them their first farm, I bought a horse with them. And I've had a horse with them every year until they sold their farm this year. They were very, very instrumental along with Kara McDermott, their employee, in helping me understand the business. It's really helped me to understand the business and helped me to sell farms. I can now understand what people go through—the trials and tribulations and the joy of raising and racing these horses—it's just unbelievable.

**BH:** How many mares do you own? I know you've raced some of your own horses, but do you typically aim to breed to sell or race?

**BJ:** I have five mares and I've got three yearling fillies that I'm going to race. I've been associated with Carolyn Conley, who has a tremendous eye for a racehorse and has a tremendous work ethic, so I want to race more. I'm 75 years old now and I truly enjoy raising these horses, but I want to enjoy more on the track. I want to travel around to wherever to see my horses run. I want to get more involved in the racing aspect.

**BH:** Hip 273 previously sold for \$400,000 at the Keeneland January Horses of All Ages Sale, where he was consigned by Conley's Conley Bloodstock. What do you recall about this colt as a baby? What do you think made him stand apart?

**BJ:** He was the second-highest-priced (short yearling) that sold in the January Sale. He was always a standout, very well put together, and he looks just like Justify. In fact, I brought the Coolmore people out there to look at the horse.



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

The Justify colt consigned as Hip 273 in the ring at the Keeneland September Yearling Sale

He was a May 20 foal and we were going to sell him as a weanling. But (the Justifys) sold so well at last year's September and October sales that he was as hot as anybody could be, so we made the joint decision to put him in the January Sale. We were ecstatic when Peter and Jenny O'Callaghan (of Woods Edge Farm) bought the horse (signed under P B Bloodstock). They're reported to be the best judge of horse flesh from the short yearling to yearling sales.

The Yoshidas do such a wonderful job of raising a horse. And I can't thank them enough for what they did for me.

**BH:** Do you still own the colt's dam, Undercover Justice (Lawyer Ron)? It looks like she's been quite the producer for you.

**BJ:** It's a long story and starts with Naughty Notions. Naughty Notions was sold at Keeneland as an older mare. Kara (McDermott) called me and told me I had to buy this horse. She didn't bring much money. I was able to get only one foal out of her and that was Undercover Justice.

We brought Undercover Justice to the racetrack but she didn't make it as a racehorse. Her first foal was by Uncle Mo. I've learned in the horse business your first two, three foals are very important. I took the Uncle Mo filly to the sale, bought her back for \$70,000, and told Bill Harrigan we'll sell her at the Keeneland 2-year-old sale the next year. Keeneland ended up canceling the 2-year-old sale that year, so we brought her to the Ocala sale that June and she worked in :09 4/5 and she sold for \$425,000. (Named Conquest Babayaga) she became graded stakes-placed.

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It worked out very, very well. Undercover Justice has had five horses to the track and all of them have been winners.

I actually own and raced one of her foals, a stakes-placed mare named Sorrentina Lemon (by Lemon Drop Kid) who has a beautiful Justify filly on the ground. I'm very excited about the filly. She's even better looking than the colt (Hip 273). My initial thoughts are to race her but the Justifys are doing so well and she's so gorgeous I may have Carolyn (Conley) sell her for me. And (Sorrentina Lemon) is in foal to Nyquist. He's as hot as you can get now.

**BH:** Why did you originally decide to mate Undercover Justice with Justify?

**BJ:** I have a great relationship with Coolmore/Ashford. I've sold them some property. And the mare and Justify

matched up very well. The first foal I ever bred was by Uncle Mo, a Coolmore stallion. I do research on them, I look at pedigrees and I look at numbers. Carolyn does a better job of that, though, than I do.

**BH:** What is the most fulfilling thing to you about being involved in the horse industry?

**BJ:** Raising a horse and breeding, selecting the breeding, and watching them foal is just absolutely fascinating and tremendous. The people that meet you in the horse business, from all over the world, I've established wonderful relationships because of my involvement in the horse business. And I really treasure that. **BH**

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The Justify filly out of Sorrentina Lemon

# CONGRATULATIONS





## Vitality

*Street Boss-Belissimo*

**PRINCE OF WALES STAKES AT FORT ERIE RACETRACK**

**OWNER:** Stronach Stables

**TRAINER:** Harold Ladaoucer

**JOCKEY:** Jose Luis Campos

**BREEDER:** Adena Springs

MICHAEL BURNS