

# WINNER'S CIRCLE

## Trainer

BY MELAINA PHIPPS

Italy's leading trainer Stefano Botti has had another remarkable year so far. Through mid-July, Botti has recorded 122 wins from 564 starters and collected earnings of €2,278,110 (\$2,961,000). Though a 21.6% win ratio is certainly impressive in itself, on top of that, he's won nine of Italy's 14 graded stakes races. But the crowning glory of the season is a hat trick of trifectas Botti has accomplished, sweeping the top three spots in three of the country's most important races.

It began with the May 12 Premio Presidente della Repubblica GBI Racing (It-I), continued with the May 19 Derby Italiano Better (It-II), and wrapped up with the June 9 Gran Premio di Milano (It-I). In between he also found time to saddle Charity Line to win the Oaks d'Italia (It-II). His stable's current big horse, Biz the Nurse, by Oratorio, who won the Derby and the Gran Premio di Milano became one of only 21 horses to win both races in the same year, the last being the John Dunlop-trained Tommy Way in 1986.

"We achieved many of our objectives for this season, and I am more than happy," said Botti of his successes this year.

It's not his first victory in these races: Botti trained Cherry Collect, Charity Line's half sister, to her win in the Oaks last year and Crackerjack King picked up the Derby in 2011 and the Presidente della Repubblica in 2012.

Botti has found plenty of success since opening his stable in 2009, but he's been a frequent

## Triple Plays

Italian trainer Stefano Botti has hit a trio of trifectas in 2013

honoree in the winner's circle his entire life. It's a tradition that goes back quite a while; a family legacy three generations deep that has passed on a love for the horse and the racing life.

Edmondo Botti, Stefano's grandfather and family patriarch, traded a career as a flat and jump jockey to begin training in 1950. When he died in 1969, his two sons, Giuseppe and Alduino, left their riding careers (steeplechase and flat, respectively) to pick up where Edmondo left off. The brothers trained in partnership, giving their endeavor the name "Dioscuri."

Drawing upon a reference to the mythological twins Castor and Pollux, the Bottis said their Dioscuri represents brotherhood and horsemanship. Their collaboration and care has put them among the top trainers in Italy since the early 1970s, where they've remained ever since, and the family operation has grown. With two private training centers and two breeding farms, the Bottis have cultivated a new generation that is spreading its influence aboard.

With poetic symmetry, Giuseppe and Alduino each had two sons of their own: Edmondo ("Endo") and Alessandro; and Stefano and Marco, respectively. Like their elders, each spent time in the saddle—Stefano as an amateur jockey with more than 600 wins. But each has gone on to find his own place: Alessandro works as assistant trainer for the Dioscuri horses and as bloodstock agent for the team; Marco Botti assisted his father and uncle in training before working in Newmarket, eventually setting up a yard of his own. And well, we know what Stefano has been up to...

It is an Italian tradition to relax in summer, and with a light racing schedule until fall, Botti and his horses can take it a bit easier, but there's always work to be done. Based at their Cenaia training center near Pisa, Botti has a barn full of winners that he will ready for next season. Biz the Nurse may be looking at a trip outside Italy later this year; undefeated Charity Line will prep for another group effort in the fall. Other group stakes winners Licia, Pattaya, Orpello, Wild Wolf, and Romantic Wave are all strong contenders for the fall meets.

"We've been fortunate to be able to send out some really nice horses. I hope they continue to do well and be competitive," said the conditioner.

Will he try to emulate Crackerjack King's Derby d'Italia—Premio Presidente della Repubblica victories of 2011-12 with Biz the Nurse? It's certainly a possibility: "Depending on how he fares this fall, duplicating (those victories) could well be one of our objectives next year."

The saying goes: If you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life. It may very well have been written with Botti in mind. While it's business as usual for Botti, it doesn't sound like work.

"I've always been passionate about horses and racing—my whole family has. Honestly, I don't even want to imagine what my life would be like without them." <sup>B</sup>



Trainer Stefano Botti (center)

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