# Stuart Janney May Have His First Derby Starter(s)

**Story by Lucy Acton**
**Photographs by Neena Ewing**

*Marylander Stuart S. Janney Jr. has two homebred colts who are strong candidates for this year's Triple Crown races. Although not Maryland-breds, Finder's Choice and Private Terms, each undefeated as of mid-March, have launched their careers in this state under the handling of trainer Charles Hadry.*

*Finder's Choice (Buckfinder—Trial Landing by Solo Landing) won the Dancing Count Stakes at Laurel and the Hirsch Jacobs Stakes at Pimlico this winter. He holds the current track record for six and one-half furlongs at Laurel, set while winning in allowance company in January.*

*Private Terms (Private Account—Laughter by Bold Ruler) captured the mile and one-eighth General George Stakes at Laurel and Pimlico's Federico Tesio Stakes.*

*The owner of those two impeccably-bred 3-year-olds needs no introduction among racing enthusiasts. Mr. Janney and his wife, the late Barbara Phipps Janney (who died last November), have achieved numerous distinctions with the horses they have bred and raced over the past 35 years.*

*Asked to describe the breeding program that has led to Locust Hill Farm's many successes, Mr. Janney offered the following account:*

"To give you a little bit of background, I first got interested in horses through foxhunting. Then came cross country riding; I did a lot of that. And gradually, we got into breeding race horses, but we really didn't start until after the War," said Mr. Janney.

"My wife's mother, Mrs. Phipps, was a great enthusiast, and strongly encouraged us. We had the place to do it. So we started in a small way. Over the period of several years, Mrs. Phipps gave us three mares. All of the horses I have now are descended from them. Those mares were Bold Irish, Step Over and Vowed. We bought other broodmares, and did other things, but over the years all of the other (bloodlines) have fallen by the wayside. Those three mares go back 35 years or so.

"The most success has come from Bold Irish, who was the dam of Shenanigans, ancestress of the prominent ones today. But the others produced some nice horses too," Mr. Janney recounted.

Shenanigans, a foal of 1963 by Native Dancer, raised Mr. Janney's hopes from the beginning. "She was a good race mare—but not as sound as she could have been," said Mr. Janney. "Shenanigans gave a thrilling account of herself in the (1965) Maryland Futurity, finishing second by a nose to Miss Spin. Those two fillies beat all the colts by six or seven lengths. And we were satisfied that she would be a marvelous broodmare.

"The first horse I wanted to breed her to was Nearctic, because I realized the foal would have breeding just like Northern Dancer (who is by Nearctic out of a Native Dancer mare). So I went to Bryan Field, who was in charge of Nearctic at the time, and asked for a service. I outlined the mare's credentials, and he agreed," Mr. Janney continued.

From that mating, Shenanigans produced Icecapade, a major stakes winner of $256,468—and the Janneys' first truly good homebred. Icecapade has had a long and successful career at stud in Kentucky.

Although Mr. Janney has foaled a number of mares at his farm in Maryland, his most fashionable stock usually ends up in Kentucky—for obvious reasons. "We looked around for other stallions, while Shenanigans was carrying her first foal, and decided that the mare would have the best opportunities in Kentucky," Mr. Janney said. "We had a long and rewarding association with Claiborne Farm, and Bull Hancock agreed to take her there."

In 1969, Shenanigans was bred to Bold Ruler, and the result was Laughter, dam of Private Terms.

(Laughter also has to her credit four other stakes winners, the most notable being graded winner Blue Ensign, who is now at stud in Florida. Blue Ensign had two colts—Firery Ensign and Buoy—ranked among the top ten on the 1987 Experimental Handicap.)

Shenanigans' next foal, after Laughter, was a colt by Bold Lad named On to Glory, who was successful at stud in Florida. Then came Ruffian (1972) and Buckfinder (1974).

Ruffian, champion in her division at 2 and 3, was the most illustrious of all the Janney homebreds. Her death—following the famous match race against the colt Foolish Pleasure at Belmont Park in the summer of 1975—was one of racing's greatest tragedies.

Buckfinder, a graded stakes winner of $230,513, stands at Claiborne Farm, where he had already proven himself as a sire before his current 3-year-old Finder's Choice came along.

The last foal produced by Shenanigans, before her death in 1977, was a colt by Damascus named Near East. He had an undescended testicle, which had to be surgically removed and seriously compromised his racing career, according to Mr. Janney. But Near East still managed to be a respectable race horse, winning on the allowance level in New York. Today he is a pensioner at Mr. Janney's farm, where he gets ridden "every now and then."

Private Terms is descended from Shenanigans on the female side, and Finder's Choice through the male

**Shenanigans' 1975 Broodmare of the Year plaque hangs on barn wall at Locust Hill Farm, where owner Stuart S. Janney Jr. stands with his dog Billy.**

# Impressive Past Performance

Stuart S. Janney Jr. has long been one of Maryland's most prominent horsemen.

Mr. Janney rode four winners of the Maryland Hunt Cup (1935, 1942, 1946, 1947)—with three of those victories coming astride his own horse, Winton. A former Master of the Green Spring Valley Hounds, he still rides today, at the age of 80, on his farm in Glyndon.

Mr. Janney's father, Stuart S. Janney Sr., was a law partner of Albert C. Ritchie, longtime governor of the state of Maryland. And his uncle, Jervis Spencer Jr., was the first chairman of the Racing Commission and also the rider of five Maryland Hunt Cup winners.

A 1925 graduate of Gilman School, and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Princeton University, Mr. Janney holds a law degree from Harvard University, where he was editor of the Harvard Law Review. During World War II, he attained the rank of captain in the Marine Corps, participating in several major conflicts. He was a partner in the Baltimore law firm of Venable, Baetjer and Howard from 1939 to 1959.

In 1936, Mr. Janney married the former Barbara Phipps, daughter of Mrs. Henry Carnegie Phipps, of Wheatley Stable (Bold Ruler) fame, and the couple settled at Locust Hill Farm, where Mr. Janney still makes his home. Mrs. Janney died last November.

Over the years, Mr. Janney has served terms as chairman of the Maryland Racing Commission and president of the Maryland Horse Breeders Association, and he was elected a member of The Jockey Club in 1954.

The Janneys have been represented by 19 homebred stakes winners, the most famous including the great, ill-fated Ruffian, as well as Promise, Assault Landing, Icecapade and Buckfinder.

line with Buckfinder. "As you can see, they're all related," Mr. Janney pointed out. On the female side, Finder's Choice goes back to Step Over, who was the dam of Trial Landing.

Trial Landing, Finder's Choice's dam, has had two other good stakes winners for the Janneys. St. Brendan, a gelding (1978, by Halo), raced for eight seasons and earned $371,868. A Maryland-bred, St. Brendan ranks among the all-time Maryland-bred money earners. Two years after St. Brendan came Assault Landing (1980, by Buckfinder). "Assault Landing looked like a classic horse, until an injury took him out of action," Mr. Janney commented. Assault Landing won the Gotham Stakes-G2 and placed second in the Bay Shore Stakes-G3 as a 3-year-old. He stands at stud at Country Life Farm in Bel Air (Md.), and his first crop will reach the races this year. Mr. Janney has retained a number of shares in Assault Landing, and supports the horse with his own mares.

The majority of Mr. Janney's foals are Maryland-breds. But whether or not a foal is born in Maryland is not of prime importance. "I don't like to ship mares with young foals around, because of the risks—that's really the major consideration," said Mr. Janney. "Maiden mares I like to send to Florida to be bred for the first time, because they seem to get an earlier start. They invariably foal on a February cover. But I never leave them down there."

**The most famous product of Mr. Janney and his late wife's small but select breeding operation was the great, ill-fated filly Ruffian. Yearlings above are a Majestic Light colt out of Trouver (left) and a Blue Ensign colt from Bridal Party.**

This spring Mr. Janney is breeding ten mares, which is a higher number than usual. "I try to keep it down to six or seven," he said. "In the fall, after we see the results of the breeding season, we'll sell maybe two of them. I don't like to have more than seven or eight foals. Here on the farm we can really only cope with five, because that's all we have stalls for. I like the discipline of not being able to expand; having to sift through and get rid of some. It helps to keep up the quality."

Mr. Janney has five yearlings in 1988: two colts, one by Majestic Light, the other by Blue Ensign; and three fillies, by Assault Landing, Carnivalay and Private Account. The Private Account filly is out of Laughter—and is thus a full sister to Private Terms.

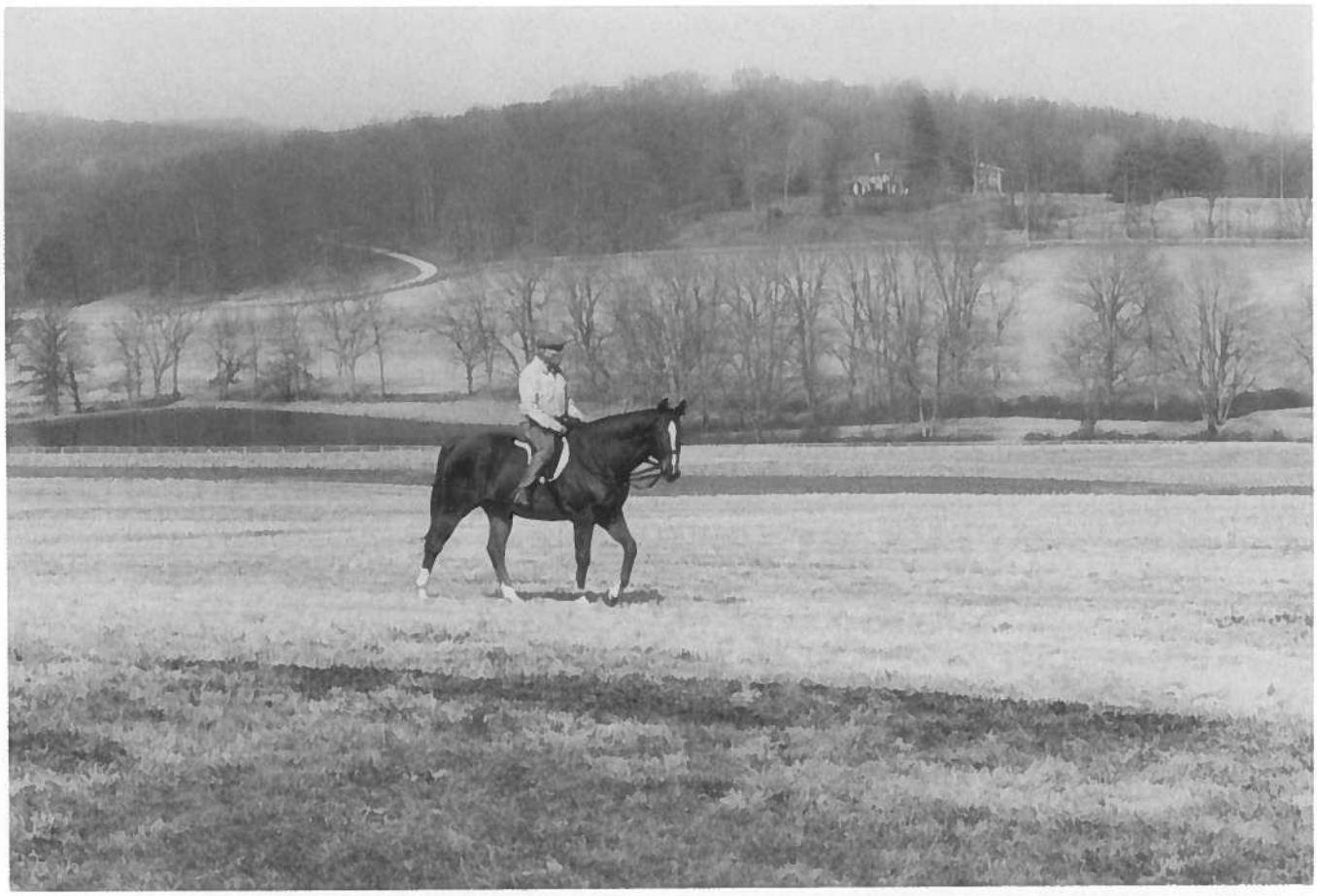
"I sell a lot of mares, but I never sell yearlings," he said. "We wait to sell them after they're finished racing; sometimes we let well-bred fillies go when they can't stand training. We never buy yearlings, either. All of what we race are homebreds. I don't like to race claimers. If I'm running a horse for a price, the horse is for sale for that price. Some people get upset when their horses are claimed, but not me. When they get to that level, I want to get rid of them."

Right now Mr. Janney has 13 horses in training. Seven are 3-year-olds, and six are 2-year-olds, down in Camden with trainer Frank Whiteley. The 2-year-olds will join Hadry's stable about May 1. "Thirteen is about the normal number for us, although we usually have some older horses," he said. "All of our older horses have fallen by the wayside at the moment."

How does Mr. Janney decide what to sell, and what to keep? "Well, I see them all the time, and I form opinions as time goes on. I have an idea of which ones are likely to produce good horses. You adapt to the situation as it develops.

"When I'm arranging matings, I look through the mares I have and try to figure out what will work best. I'm not a follower of the dosage system, or any of that. Sometimes you will find a nick; something that really seems to work. An example is Trial Landing and Buckfinder. Everything she has gotten from being bred to Buckfinder has turned out to be a nice horse," remarked Mr. Janney.

He has shares in five Maryland stallions: Assault Landing, Assert (Ire), Carnivalay, Smarten and T.V. Commercial, plus Buckfinder (in Kentucky) and Blue Ensign (in Florida). And he frequently purchases seasons to other horses. There are no secrets, when it comes to choosing stallions, in Mr. Janney's view. "I



**At 80, four-time Maryland Hunt Cup winner Stuart Janney Jr. rides retired race horse Save the King, 13, across his farm. Opposite (top), farm manager Stewart Wilhelm holds the Majestic Light mare Light of Foot, a daughter of outstanding producer Laughter. Mr. Janney's granddaughter Sheila Williams (below) shares his enthusiasm for horses.**

see a horse racing and if I really like him, when he goes to stud I'll try to breed to him. I like to see a horse that looks the part, but the types can be so various. Look at Northern Dancer, for instance. All types can do well. Performance and bloodlines are probably the best guide."

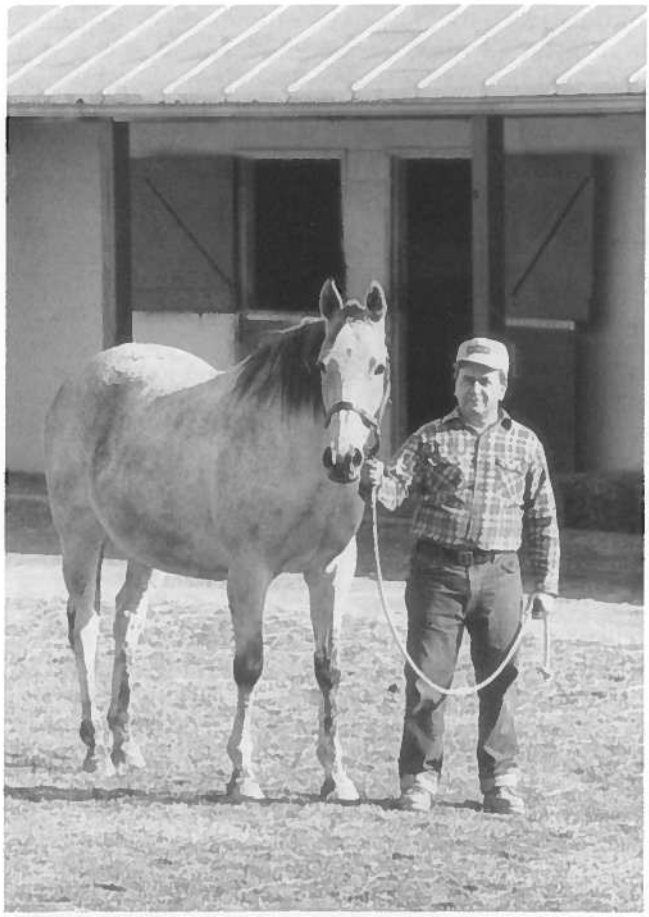
Mr. Janney did not have to search far to find one horse who was destined to have a major impact on his breeding program back in the 1960s. Bold Ruler, one of the nation's preeminent sires, was owned by Mrs. Janney's mother. Ruffian's sire, Reviewer, was a son of Bold Ruler. Today, Bold Ruler is represented among Mr. Janney's breeding stock principally as the sire of Laughter.

Like all breeders, Mr. Janney is sometimes influenced by sheer happenstance. His share in Assert (Ire) came to him in a roundabout way. "I used to breed to Halo (at Windfields)," he recounted. "We had a share in him, and bred some nice horses from him. Then (after Sunny's Halo won the Kentucky Derby), the syndicate got an offer that I guess the other members just couldn't refuse. I wasn't anxious to sell. But we finally worked out a deal where I swapped my share in Halo for a share in Assert (Ire)—plus one service to Halo for that year—and I've been breeding to Assert (Ire) ever since. The oldest of his offspring that I have is a 3-year-old filly named Positively So, who is a stakes-placed winner and a nice filly."

Never before has Mr. Janney had two such exciting prospects as Finder's Choice and Private Terms both racing at the same time. "We've never had two like this so far along in the season," he elaborated. "Although we once had two colts—Blue Ensign and Near East—who both showed a lot of promise early on. Near East would have been a top race horse, if he hadn't had his problem."

Locust Hill Farm has never even started a horse in one of the Triple Crown races, although Ruffian won the New York Filly Triple Crown. "We haven't ever been in the position of thinking about the Kentucky Derby—although we did think about the Preakness, with Blue Ensign," said Mr. Janney.

But the fact that Private Terms and Finder's Choice are both beating a path in the direction of Churchill Downs does not surprise Mr. Janney. "They're both



handsome colts, from mares who have already produced nice ones, and their sires are doing well," he remarked. Neither he nor his trainer will venture a guess as to which colt is better. And a contest between the two at this point is unthinkable.

"We really don't know which one is better. People keep asking us, and we're not evading the issue," said Mr. Janney. "All we know is they're two nice ones." □

# Blue-Ribbon Broodmares

Mr. Janney's current broodmare band:

**Dress Ship**, gr., 1976 (Hoist the Flag—Laughter): dam of three winners; aborted twins for 1988; bred to Assault Landing.

**Finder's Reward**, gr., 1982 (Buckfinder—Native Rising): graded stakes winner; retired this year and bred to Blue Ensign.

**Laughter**, gr., 1970 (Bold Ruler—Shenanigans): dam of five stakes winners—Blue Ensign, Light Spirits, Dover Ridge, Steel Maiden and current 3-year-old Private Terms; due to foal in June to Damascus; probably will not be bred back due to late foaling date.

**Light of Foot**, gr., 1979 (Majestic Light—Laughter): winner; first foal is a yearling; in foal to Assert (Ire) for 1988; booked back to Assault Landing.

**Pretty Penny**, dk.b. or br., 1980 (Buckfinder—Bridal Party): winner; first foal is a 2-year-old by Blue Ensign; in foal to Carnivalay for 1988; booked back to Smarten.

**Steel Maiden**, gr., 1983 (Damascus—Laughter): stakes winner and graded stakes-placed; first foal born this year, by Assert (Ire); returned to Polish Navy.

**Trial Landing**, b., 1972 (Solo Landing—Step Over): dam of three stakes winners—St. Brendan, Assault Landing and current 3-year-old Finder's Choice; has 1988 foal by Blue Ensign; returned to Assert (Ire).

**Trouver**, dk.b. or br., 1981 (Buckfinder—Trial Landing): first foal is a 2-year-old by Majestic Light; in foal for 1988 to Smarten; booked back to Carnivalay.

**Wedding Dress**, dk.b. or br., 1982 (Damascus—Betrothed): winner; has yearling and suckling colts by Buckfinder; returned to Buckfinder.

**Wedding Party**, dk.b. or br., 1979 (Hoist the Flag—Betrothed): graded stakes winner; in foal to Assault Landing for 1988; booked back to Deputy Minister.

All ten broodmares are Janney homebreds.