



# SALES UPDATE

KEENELAND JUNE ONLINE HRA

## KEENELAND USHERS IN NEW ERA WITH ONLINE AUCTION

By Ron Mitchell

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A new era in North American Thoroughbred auctions will be ushered in June 23 when Keeneland launches its Digital Sales Ring platform with the online June Select Horses of Racing Age Sale.

"The Keeneland Digital Sales Ring marks a significant milestone in our rich sales history and expands the realm of high-quality sales options Keeneland can deliver," Keeneland president and CEO Bill Thomason said at the time the online platform was announced. "This tool does not

replace Keeneland's traditional live sales format but rather provides us the flexibility to host small, select auctions throughout the year."

The virtual platform was developed by Ample Development for Horseco, a Kentucky-based technology company that has supplied the virtual auction capability used by Australia's Magic Millions sales company.

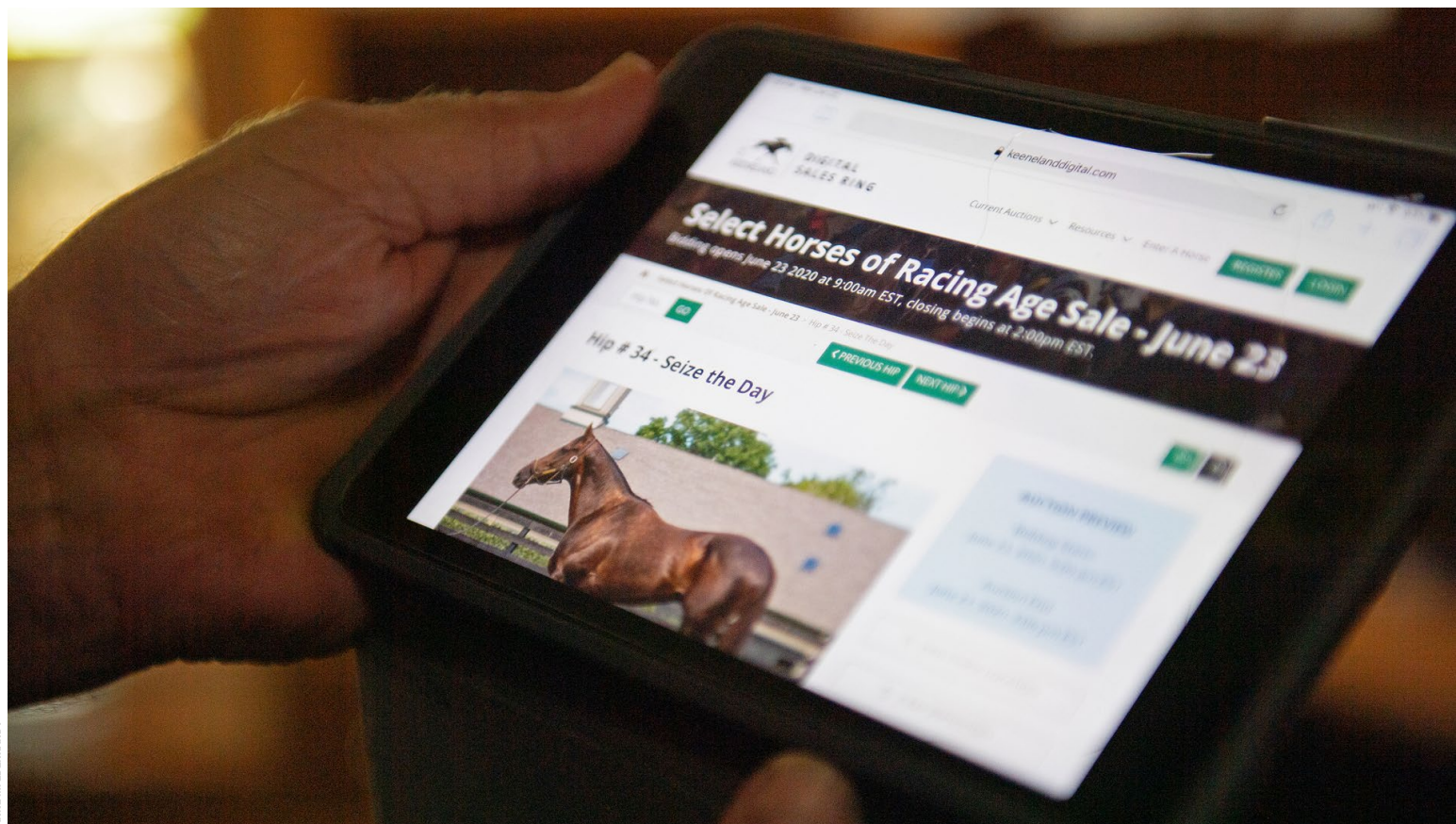
Among the most accomplished of the horses entered in Tuesday's sale is Tempers Rising, a 3-year-old filly by Bayern who finished second in the March 21 TwinSpires.com Fair Grounds Oaks (G2). The filly is ranked 12th with 47 qualifying points toward the Sept. 4 Longines Kentucky Oaks (G1) at Churchill Downs. She

ran seventh in a Churchill Downs allowance race May 29.

The auction format is similar to online auction platforms in other industries, according to Keeneland. Reserves may be set and the auction will be conducted under the Conditions of Sale.

Buyers may browse the offerings and digitally inspect each horse via photos and video. Veterinary reports held in the repository are available digitally for registered users. The catalog page lists the location of each horse so potential buyers can arrange for inspection prior to the sale. Ragozin and Thorograph sheets are among the other tools provided potential buyers.

*(continued on page 4)*



ANNE M. EBERHARDT

The catalog for the Keeneland June Horses of Racing Age Sale can be accessed via the new Digital Sales Ring platform



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*(continued from page 3)*

Buyers can develop short lists to receive email or text message updates on bids placed on horses in which they are interested or on which they have placed a bid. There is also a direct bid option that allows the bidder to place a bid directly to the amount entered regardless of the current minimum bid. For example, if the current bid is \$5,000, a direct bid of \$20,000 would take the current bid to \$20,000 rather than \$5,500.


Bidding opens at 9 a.m. ET and starts closing with Hip 1 at 2 p.m. and then at increments of approximately every two minutes on subsequent hips. Once a new bid is made during this window, the clock resets so no last-minute bid can be made to deprive another buyer of the opportunity to bid and to help maximize the seller's potential revenue.

Also, the catalog page being displayed on a bidder's device will show a green lighted bar indicating when they are the high bidder at any point in the bidding process.

The concept had been in the development stages for some 1 1/2 years, with implementation sped up due to disruptions within the traditional auction market as a result of the global coronavirus pandemic, according to Keeneland officials.

"We've been working to make the Keeneland Digital Sales Ring a reality for a while, but expedited the offering in light of the current COVID-19 crisis as a service to our clients who have experienced a disrupted sales year," Keeneland vice president of racing and sales Bob Elliston said. "We received positive and constructive feedback after presenting the platform to a focus group of buyers and consignors in early May. Their input informed the final product that we are making available to the public."

*(continued on page 5)*



# JUNE ONLINE

SELECT HORSES OF RACING AGE SALE

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**SALE BEGINS TODAY**


Bidding opens at 9 a.m. ET and closes on Hip 1 at 2 p.m., and then at increments of approximately every two minutes on subsequent hips.

Buyers have two options for bidding:

**DIRECT BID** allows you to bid manually as you go.

**MAX BID** establishes a top price that you are willing to pay for a hip. As the bidding progresses, the software will automatically bid on your behalf as you are outbid up to your maximum.

[VIEW THE CATALOG](#)







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(continued from page 4)

Tom Ludt, the former Breeders' Cup chairman and Santa Anita Park president who is chairman and a shareholder in Horsecos, said the technology for the digital auctions at Keeneland and Magic Millions has been developed to mimic the live bidding process as closely as possible.

"We developed this partnership with Keeneland and Magic Millions over 18 months ago, building what we consider to be as live as possible but you're physically not there," Ludt said. "Everything else has replicated that environment. The biggest thing to me is the trust and ability for people to list horses and then be able to buy horses and understand the transaction will be done professionally, because it is Keeneland."

Ludt noted that with more entities entering the online and digital auction arena, one advantage for Keeneland, Magic Millions, and Horsecos is the time devoted to developing the platform.

"A lot of them are diving into this space because of the pandemic and it's a lot more complicated than people realize," Ludt said. "You have to deal with the

paperwork, you have to make sure you're taking care of the horse, the seller, and the buyer."

Other notable horses cataloged for Tuesday's auction include:

- Surf and Turf, a 4-year-old grade 3-placed son of Kitten's Joy ;
- Ballagh Rocks, a grade 3-winning son of Stormy Atlantic
- Juror, a Juddmonte Farms homebred 3-year-old

colt by Tapit who was second in his June 1 debut at Tampa Bay Downs

• Frills, a 4-year-old Candy Ride filly who won her most recent start in March at Turfway Park

• Wondrwherecraigis, an undefeated 3-year-old son of Munnings

• Queen Arella, a 2-year-old Speightster filly who won her debut by four lengths at Gulfstream Park in late May

• Eloquent Speaker, a New York-bred 3-year-old filly by Flatter who won her June 12 maiden at Belmont Park.

As an added incentive, Del Mar will offer an additional \$2,000 to their Ship & Win program for horses who sell in the Keeneland Digital Sales Ring Tuesday and run during the Del Mar summer meet. **BH**

“

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—TOM LUDT

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