



## FROM THE DESK OF -- Kathleen Irwin

### FEMALE FAMILIES

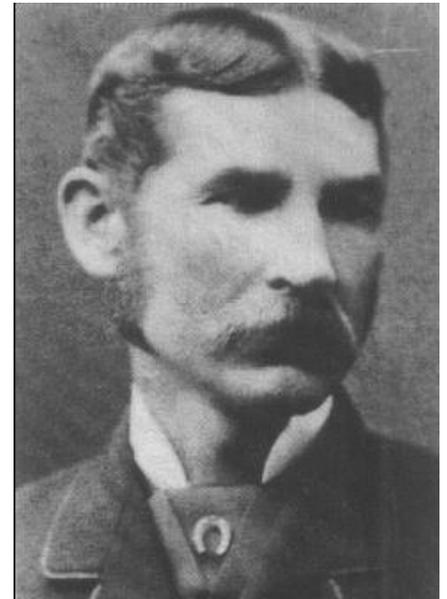
What, exactly, do breeders mean when using the term “female families?” What may seem like a simple question has a rather complex answer.

The term “Female Family” is actually redundant when discussing horses, because “family” refers only to the tail-female line and the offspring of the mares therein.

The names you see on a sales catalogue page are the important horses in the immediate female family.

Because stallions can produce so many more offspring than mares, they are left out of the equation when determining the horses in a “family.” On the other hand, because stallions *do* produce more offspring, it is easier to analyze statistics of a male horse’s get, which is why only stallions are considered in such systems as Dosage. But that’s a subject for another day. Back to the female side.

In the late 1800’s an Australian named Bruce Lowe published a work called *Breeding Racehorses by the Figure System* in which he assigned a Family Number to every known thoroughbred family. The figures were based upon his statistical compilation of the winners of the three English Classics; The Derby, The Oaks and the St. Leger. In the bottom line, the family which appeared most among the winners was assigned the family number 1, the next being assigned number 2 and so forth on down to 43.



Bruce Lowe

Most modern Thoroughbreds trace tail-female to an English broodmare, but some do not.

So, in the 1950s Polish Captain Kazimierz Bobinski and Count Stefan Zamoyski undertook the monumental work *Family Tables of Racehorses*, which today are known as the *Bobinski Tables*. This work built upon Bruce Lowe’s numbering system, adding several more English family numbers and additional families from non-English origins.

For instance, those who traced to mares found only in the American Stud Book were assigned family numbers A1 through A37. Australian and New Zealand taproot mares were assigned C1-C33, reflecting the term “Colonial” families. Argentine taproot mares were assigned Ar1 and Ar2, while the Polish taproot mares were given P1 and P2.

Bobinski also split Lowe’s family numbers into subcategories such as 1a, 1b, 1c, and so forth to further define the quality lines within a specific family. You may occasionally see these numbers in use in sales catalogues and race results websites around the world. They are used like a numerical surname and are beneficial in checking the accuracy of pedigrees, or if you do as I like to do – quickly determine which recent stakes winners are related to our own stock.

Let’s take a look at the Female Number in action. You may be familiar with the equine pedigree website [Pedigreequery.com](http://Pedigreequery.com). This is a free database, but a few of their services require a paid membership. If you are a logged-in member, you will be able to see the Female Family numbers on the pedigree graphs, such as in this example: (males are shown in blue, females in pink)

**SOUTHERN LAW** (USA) gr. M, 1997 DP = 1-4-16-0-5 (26) DI = 1.00 CD = -0.15 - GSV = 48.58 Career Earnings: Unraced

<b>RED RANSOM</b> (USA) ⓘ b. 1987 (55.29) 3-2-1-0 \$34,400 94 SW	<b>ROBERTO</b> (USA) ⓘ b. 1969 [C] (90.61) 14-7-3-0 \$339,902 507 f, 452 r, 334 w, 85 SW AEI 3.12	<b>HAIL TO REASON</b> (USA) ⓘ br. 1958 [C] (82.03)	<b>TURN-TO</b> (USA) b. 1951 [BI] 1-w	
	<b>ARABIA</b> (USA) ⓘ b. 1977 13-3-2-4 \$54,880	<b>BRAMALEA</b> (USA) ⓘ* b. 1959	<b>NASHUA</b> (USA) b. 1952 [IC] 3-m <b>RARELEA</b> (USA) b. 1949 12-c	<b>NOTHIRDCHANCE</b> (USA) b. 1948 4-n <b>SWORD DANCER</b> (USA) ch. 1956 1-o <b>KERALA</b> (USA) b. 1958 8-h
	<b>PROVIDENTIAL</b> (IRE) ⓘ b. 1977 (26) 17-6-3-2 \$729,579	<b>DAMASCUS</b> (USA) ⓘ b. 1964 [IC] (75.35) <b>CHRISTMAS WIND</b> (CAN) b. 1967	<b>NEARCTIC</b> (CAN) br. 1954 14-c <b>BALLY FREE</b> (GB) b. 1960 6-b	<b>TOM ROLFE</b> (USA) b. 1962 [CP] 9-h <b>FIRST FEATHER</b> (USA) ch. 1963 5-g <b>PRIMERA</b> (IRE) b. 1954 4-c
<b>ELEGANCE</b> (USA) gr. 1987 49-7-13-7 \$310,198	<b>CARILLON SPECIAL</b> (USA) gr. 1982 7-1-1-2 \$8,629	<b>RUN THE GANTLET</b> (USA) ⓘ b. 1968 [P] (61.47) <b>PRUDENT GIRL</b> (GB) b. 1968 <b>HAWKIN'S SPECIAL</b> (USA) gr. 1975 (26) <b>DUNDEE BELLE</b> (USA) ⓘ b. 1961	<b>BRIDE ELECT</b> (GB) b. 1952 21-a <b>GREAT SUN</b> (USA) b. 1967 23-b <b>SUN LOVER</b> (USA) gr. 1967 10-d <b>BEAU MAX</b> (USA) b. 1947 20 <b>MISS DUNDEE</b> 1953 A1	

Team Valor's broodmare, **Southern Law**, dam of Champion Eyjur and 2-year-old Terwilliger, traces in tail-female ascendancy to the unnamed American broodmare who began the A1 female line, as determined by Captain Bobinski. At this website, you can follow this line all the way back to its known beginning.

If you look tail-male to the fourth generation, you will see the stallion **Turn-to**. The pedigree shows that he comes from the female line 1w, indicating that he hails from that all-important female family that produced the largest number of English Classic winners at the time of Bruce Lowe's analysis.

When there is a new stakes winner, one can easily view its pedigree and see his family number, and determine if it is related to a Team Valor horse, and if so, how close the connection lies.



Team Valor has several runners that trace back to the Family 1 taproot mare. Among these are: Animal Kingdom, former runner Daveron, Pluck, Lucky Chappy, Toboggan Slide, Psaltery, Syncopate, Visionaria, Ribbons for Thee, and some unraced youngsters Home Tree, Valor Red, Oil Grey, Yellow Brick Road, the Somers Isles filly by Fairbanks, and the Junia Tepzia colt by Giant's Causeway.

While these horses may come from different lines within family 1, ultimately they all trace to the same

Number 1 taproot mare (Tregonwell's Barb mare). Let me show you a few of these runners plotted onto a Bobinski-like table.

**FAMILY 1**

Tregonwell's Barb Mare [1]  
 White Turl Mare [1]  
 Taffolet Barb Mare [1]  
 Byerley Turk Mare [1]  
 Darley Arabian Mare [1]  
 Bonny Lass (Gb) 1723 [1]  
 Partner Mare (Gb) 1735 [1]  
 Julia (Gb) 1756 [1]  
 Promise (Gb) 1768 [1-d]  
 Prunella (Gb) 1788 [1-e]  
 Pawn (Gb) 1808 [1-f]  
 | Pawn Junior (Gb) 1817 [1-f]  
 | Delhi (Gb) 1838 [1-f]  
 | Ellen Horne (Gb) 1844 [1-j]  
 | Paradigm (Gb) 1852 [1-j]  
 | Paraffin (Gb) 1870 [1-L]  
 | Illuminata (Gb) 1877 [1-L]  
 | | Gas (Gb) 1892 [1-L]  
 | | | Valve (Gb) 1900 [1-L]  
 | | | Verve (Gb) 1909 [1-L]  
 | | | Cradle Song (Gb) 1922 [1-L]  
 | | | Saracens Song (Gb) 1928 [1-L]  
 | | | Fishermans Prayer (Gb) 1936 [1-L]  
 | | | Rising Trout (Saf) 1949 [1-L]  
 | | | Capriole (Saf) 1964 [1-L]  
 | | | Prancing (Saf) 1972 [1-L]  
 | | | Rootin Tootin (Saf) 1985 [1-L]  
 | | | Tango in the Forum (Saf) 1997 [1-L]  
 | | | SYNCOPATE (Saf) [1-L]  
 | | L Chelandry (Gb) 1894 [1-n]  
 | | | Samphire (Gb) 1902 [1-n]  
 | | | Juniata (Gb) 1916 [1-n]  
 | | | Jiffy (Gb) 1931 [1-n]  
 | | | Iona (Gb) 1943 [1-n]  
 | | | Skye (Gb) 1950 [1-n]  
 | | | Secret Recipe (Usa) 1955 [1-n]  
 | | | Smart Secret (Usa) 1961 [1-n]  
 | | | Secret Landing (Usa) 1966 [1-n]  
 | | | Soho Secret (Saf) 1972 [1-n]  
 | | | Secret Pact (Saf) 1990 [1-n]  
 | | L Popinjay (Gb) 1905 [1-n] Secret Heart (Saf) 1999 [1-n]  
 | | | Gay Bird (Gb) 1923 [1-n] PLUCK [1-n]  
 | | | Dancing Deb (Usa) 1944 [1-n]  
 | | | Magic Melody (Usa) 1949 [1-n]  
 | | | Laurel Mae (Usa) 1959 [1-n]  
 | L Problem (Gb) 1823 [1-g] Opec (Usa) 1971 [1-n]  
 | | Io (Gb) 1836 [1-g] Turn Down The Heat (Usa) 1977 [1-n]  
 | | | Sunflower (Gb) 1847 [1-g] Flying Heat (Usa) 1982 [1-n]  
 | | | Sunbeam (Gb) 1855 [1-g] Heir d'Mint (Usa) 1990 [1-n]  
 | | | Sunshine (Gb) 1867 [1-h] Chasseresse (Usa) 1995 [1-n]  
 | | | | Golden Light (Gb) 1882 [1-h] Forest Huntress (Usa) 2004 [1-n]  
 | | | | Firelight (Gb) 1892 [1-h] CLASSY BROAD [1-n]  
 | | | | Nirvanah (Gb) 1902 [1-h]  
 | | | | Nedda (Gb) 1909 [1-h]  
 | | | | Nutkin (Gb) 1914 [1-h]  
 | | | | Nutius (Saf) 1927 [1-h]  
 | | | | Nut Brown (Saf) 1941 [1-h]  
 | | | | Dusky Lass (Saf) 1948 [1-h]  
 | | | | Dark Maid (Saf) 1955 [1-h]  
 | | | | Tertia (Saf) 1964 [1-h]  
 | | | | Poet Princess (Saf) 1971 [1-h]  
 | | | | Arddyn (Saf) 1978 [1-h]  
 | | L Helioscene (Gb) 1895 [1-h] Didgeridoo (Saf) 1988 [1-h]  
 | | | View (Gb) 1899 [1-h] Tambura (Saf) [1-h]  
 | | | | Ardentrive (Gb) 1905 [1-h] PSALTERY [1-h]  
 | | | | Az a Hired (Hun) 1924 [1-h]  
 | | | | Abeba (Hun) 1931 [1-h]  
 | | | | Dubiosa (Hun) 1941 [1-h]  
 | | | | Duzzogo (Hun) 1948 [1-h]  
 | | | | Didergo (Hun) 1962 [1-h]  
 | | | | Diu (Ger) 1969 [1-h]  
 | | | | Dorle (Ger) 1974 [1-h]  
 | | | | Diasprina (Ger) 1986 [1-h]  
 | | | | Dynamis (Ire) 1991 [1-h]  
 | | | | | Darwinia (Ger) 1999 [1-h]  
 | | | | | DAVERON (Ger) [1-h]  
 | | | | | L Dalica (Ger) 2001 [1-h]  
 | | | | | ANIMAL KINGDOM [1-h]

Only six of Team Valor's Family 1 horses are plotted in the table above, and the data fills a page, with indented generations numbering up to 29. Even though in Captain Bobinski's time the maximum number of generations might not have exceeded 25, he plotted every stakes winner in every family number. It boggles the mind that he could have achieved what he did without the use of a computer.

If one looked at the pedigree of the previously mentioned stallion **Turn-to**, who is from the 1-w line, you'd see that you have to go all the way back to **Prunella** (Gb) 1788 to make a connection to the Team Valor horses on the table. He descends from Prunella's daughter **Penelope**. Although all are from the same family number, that's quite a *distant* connection.



Penelope, one of the daughters of the highly influential broodmare, Prunella

When I report in my article *It's All In The Family* on stakes winners that are related to our current stock, I never look beyond 4 or 5 generations. Generally, only relations as close as three generations will have any effect on a sales catalogue page, which is the second-best determining factor for increasing value of Thoroughbred horses. The best factor, of course, is an improvement made by the subject animal itself.

If there is interest, I may begin including Family Numbers in these reports. Some Team Valor runners from other family numbers include:

2-d	Valiant Passion	4-j	Liberty Bond	9-f	Summer Soiree
2-h	Agra	5-j	Lelaps	10-c	Gold and White
2-n	Speechify	6-b	Comtesse Dubois	12	Solid Sister
2-s	Went the Day Well	7	Lord Tarzan	14-d	Asunder
3-h	Ebony Flyer	7-a	Table Three Ten	16-h	Crimson China
3-n	Harmonia	7-f	Howe Great	20-a	Violeth
3-n	Hasay	8-c	Changingoftheguard	20-c	Delovely
4-i	Brigantin	9-f	State of Play	A1	Southern Law

Have I not yet mentioned your horse? Feel free to drop me an email at [Kathleen@teamvalor.com](mailto:Kathleen@teamvalor.com) and I'd be happy to tell you more about your horse's family number and show you the number of generations required to trace back to its taproot mare.

