

JOHN BOX PREVAILS IN TEAM VALOR’S ANNUAL PARTNER CONTEST PRIZE IS A FREE 5 PERCENT INTEREST IN A TEAM VALOR SYNDICATE IN ‘17 LONG LIST OF CLIENTS HIT BULL’S EYE AT 35 VICTORIES ON 2016 SEASON

Team Valor finished the 2016 racing season with 35 wins and an incredibly long list of 21 partners hit the bull's eye in predicting the number of trips to the winners circle, but it was John Box of Charlotte, North Carolina, who came out on top with the earnings tiebreaker. His forecast was 35 wins and \$2,713,000 in race earnings, and the stable’s actual haul was \$2,808,678.

This was Box’s first entry in Team Valor’s annual contest, as he had bought into a TVI partnership for the first time in the summer of 2015. He was a natural for the contest though with his long-held passion for horse racing and an analytical bent that he puts to good use in commercial real estate.

Box followed closely as the contest came down to the wire, with Team Valor sitting on 35 wins with four runners scheduled over the final week.

“I couldn’t root for a Team Valor to lose but I ended up getting lucky when Arles scratched,” Box said of the filly who was withdrawn as the favorite when the Grade 3 Robert Frankel Stakes was moved from turf to dirt due to wet conditions at Santa Anita. “I thought she had the strongest chance to knock me out of the lead, and I guess my rain dance worked.”

There is nothing unusual about a family member inspiring a young person’s lifelong interest in horse racing, but Box’s back story is especially colorful, with his father as the pivotal influence.

Box said, “He was an attorney in the Chicago area and sometime in the late 1960s or early '70s, he had a client who owed legal fees and couldn't pay him and the only thing of value that he had was a racehorse. My father at that time knew nothing about horse racing but we lived fairly close to Arlington Park and that was his entry into the racing. He ended up owning a couple of claimers and fell in love with the sport. He took my brother and me along with him, and from an early age I was boxing exactas before I could reach the parimutuel window.”

Box wound up living far from a racetrack in Charlotte but he retained his interest in racing and in eventually being involved as an owner himself. It was his father’s death in 2014 that nudged him into getting started in a racing partnership.

MANY PRECISE PARTNERS

Incredibly, 21 partners with entries in the 2016 annual contest correctly predicted the final total of 35 Team Valor wins. It was the most popular guess, and 12 others were very close at 34 wins.

Scott Wisniewski	35	\$7,081,645
Matt Brannan	35	\$4,600,000
Robby Heller	35	\$3,500,051
Sanjay Srikanth	35	\$3,500,000
Allen Wong	35	\$3,267,968
Joe Fritsch	35	\$3,260,000
Michael VanLenten	35	\$3,200,000
John Box	35	\$2,713,000
Craig Cisna	35	\$2,501,000
Mike Funke	35	\$2,472,500
Harve Hnatiuk	35	\$2,307,596
Patrick McGoey	35	\$2,250,000
Pat Moore	35	\$2,200,000
Dave Hinson	35	\$2,150,000
Mark Castellano	35	\$2,028,501
Steve DeSalvo	35	\$2,000,000
Tedd Green	35	\$1,999,999
Bobbie Abendroth	35	\$1,917,000
Marty Lyman	35	\$1,900,000
Mark Polivka	35	\$1,878,404
Bill Conley	35	\$1,221,000

“Sometimes when there is a death of someone close to you it makes you realize that no day is guaranteed and it was at that time I started to think about things I still wanted to do and one of them was to own racehorses, kind of a tribute to my father and also to do something I also wanted to do, that is when I started entering into these partnerships, said Box, who currently owns interests in Kasseopia, Lady Allegra and Thora Barber. “I had always followed Dogwood Stable and I reached out to them only to find out that Eclipse Thoroughbreds had absorbed them. I looked at West Point too but I felt like with Team Valor, we shared the same vision.



John Box, right, pictured over the holidays with his wife Shari, daughter Mia and son Adam.

“I set out a three-year plan when I first went into it, with a strategy to buy into proven 2-year-olds, a colt and a filly each year for three years, and then to step back and sort of evaluate whether my strategy was working or whether I need to go for older horses or only fillies or only colts. I'm doing this for the love of the sport, not to make money, but being a business person, an entrepreneur, I wanted to give it some strategy or plan. Regardless of this contest, I look forward to continuing to be involved in Team Valor partnerships.”

Box's prize is a free 5 percent interest in any horse syndicated by Team Valor in 2017 up to a \$1-million valuation. He also goes into the New Year with a goal of getting out to see his horses race, which has so far eluded him among the three current runners.

“That was one of my New Year's resolutions in 2016 but it just didn't work out with the three that I have. The two times that Kasseopia ran in stakes, I happened to be out of the country, and then he came down with bone bruising and is on his way back now. I was very close to going up to see Thora Barber at Woodbine but again I had a travel conflict. My son is a sophomore at the University of Alabama and my daughter is a senior in high school, so my wife and I will be empty nesters very soon and that will be one less barrier to traveling at the last minute to see these horses. I definitely want

to see the horses race in 2017; that is high if not at the top of my list of resolutions again in 2017.”

Box, who joined James Leonard (2012) as the second North Carolinian to win the Team Valor annual contest, has already submitted his entry for the 2017 contest: 39 wins, \$2,965,000 in earnings.