



2003 Eclipse Award Winners

Older Female

Jade Hunter—Zodiac Miss, by Ahonoora

ECLIPSE VOTING	
Horse	First-place Votes
Azeri	123
Sightseek	107
Adoration	9
Others	8
Abstention	1

Azeri

BY LENNY SHULMAN

She is so much more than Queen for a Day. Actually, she is now even more than Queen for a Year. Azeri, 2002's champion older female and Horse of the Year, made a successful case for an encore presentation among older distaffers, and will keep the champion older female trophy for her work in 2003.

For much of the year she parried with perfection, building on the seven consecutive victories with which she closed out 2002. The streak soared to 11 and seemed destined to approach the magic 16 laid down by Citation and Cigar, the latter of whom ran in the same red, white, and blue colors of Allen Paulson carried by Azeri.

But this is horse racing, and that which seems likely can change in the blink of an eye. And so Azeri's shock-

ing defeat in the 2003 Lady's Secret Breeders' Cup Handicap (gr. II), and a subsequent injury that caused her to miss the Breeders' Cup World Thoroughbred Championships a month later, changed the older female division from a coronation to an intense competition.

Azeri's claim to the crown for 2003 ended up being far different from the walkover of 2002, when she captured eight of her nine starts and earned \$2,181,540. The 2003 numbers aren't as gaudy, but she needn't apologize for them, either.

Her initial outing of 2003 was undoubtedly Azeri's most memorable of the season. Unlike in 2002, when trainer Laura de Seroux had given her three starts at Santa Anita before shipping to Oaklawn Park for the Apple Blossom Handicap (gr. I), Azeri began her 2003 campaign with the Apple Blossom. And what a performance it was. Obviously not at her sharpest, Azeri ran well, but at the top of the stretch it seemed that she just wasn't going to be able to run down Take Charge Lady, a multiple grade I winner herself. Little by little, with the heart of the champion that she is, however, Azeri kept chipping into her opponent's advantage, until with a last, desperate push, she got to the wire a head in front. It was a spectacular performance.

Throughout the balance of her 2003 season, Azeri's connections, de Seroux and owner Michael Paulson, who runs his father's living trust, seemed conflicted over what direction to go. Campaigning against other fillies and mares would be the surest way to pile victories onto Azeri's win streak and assure the best chance to repeat as champion, but another Horse of the Year award would likely only come if she were to face—and defeat—the boys. Despite much thought given to the latter scenario, Azeri in fact remained in her own division for the balance of the year.

She repeated 2002 triumphs with 2003 conquerings of the Milady Breeders' Cup Handicap (gr. I), Vanity Handicap (gr. I), and the Clement L. Hirsch Handicap (gr. II), defeating the come-backing Got Koko in the latter. But things went awry for the champ in the Lady's Secret

Azeri won her second consecutive older filly or mare Eclipse Award



BENNETT & ASSOCIATES

2003:	5	4	1	0	\$817,080
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Azeri		Ch. m. 5 (May) KEESEP99 \$110,000		Life 16 14 2 0 \$3,044,820 111		D.Fst 15 13 2 0 \$2,004,820 110				
Own: Allen E. Paulson Living Trust		Sire: Jade Hunter (Mr. Prospector) \$10,000		2003 5 4 1 0 \$817,080 109		Wet(335) 1 1 0 0 \$1,040,000 111				
		Dam: Zodiac Miss'Aus (Ahonoora*GB)		2002 9 8 1 0 \$2,181,540 111		Turf(265) 0 0 0 0 \$0 -				
		Br: Allen E. Paulson (Ky)		0 0 0 0 \$0 -		Dst(0) 0 0 0 0 \$0 -				
		Tr: De Seroux Laura(0 0 0 0 .00) 2003:(109 14 .13)								
28Sep03-6SA fst 1 ¹ / ₁₆ :23 ¹ / ₁₆ :47 ¹ / ₁₆ 1:11 ¹ / ₁₆ 1:42 ⁴ / ₁₆ 3* @LdyScBCH-G2	101	5	5 ¹ / ₂	5 ³ / ₂	3 ² / ₄	Smith M E	LB128	*.20 88-16 Got Koko118 ¹ / ₂ @EIloluv116 ¹ / ₂ Azeri128 ¹ / ₂ 3wd into lane,no bid 6		
Placed second through disqualification										
10Aug03-8Dmr fst 1 ¹ / ₁₆ :23 ¹ / ₁₆ :47 1:11 1:42 3* @CLHrschH-G2	100	1	11	1 ¹ / ₂	11 ¹ / ₂	12 ¹ / ₂	13 ¹ / ₄	Smith M E	LB127	*.30 95-12 Azeri127 ³ / ₄ Got Koko118 nd Tropical Blossom108 ¹ / ₂ Bit off rail,handily 5
21Jun03-8Hol fst 1 ¹ / ₁₆ :47 1:10 ³ / ₁₆ 1:35 1:48 ² / ₁₆ 3* @VanityH-G1	109	6	2 ¹ / ₂	1 nd	2 nd	11	12	Smith M E	LB127	*.30 92-14 Azeri127 ² / ₄ Sister Girl Blues111 ¹ / ₂ Bare Necessities118 ¹ / ₄ Dueled,inched clear 7
24May03-8Hol fst 1 ¹ / ₁₆ :23 :46 ¹ / ₁₆ 1:10 1:41 ⁴ / ₁₆ 3* @MladyBCH-G1	109	4	2 nd	11	12 ¹ / ₂	12 ¹ / ₂	13	Smith M E	LB125	*.20 95-05 Azeri125 ³ / ₄ Enjoy114 ³ / ₄ Tropical Blossom111 ¹ / ₂ Speed,met bids,clear 6
5Apr03-80P fst 1 ¹ / ₁₆ :24 ¹ / ₁₆ :48 ³ / ₁₆ 1:12 1:43 4* @AplBismH-G1	105	6	3 ² / ₄	4 ² / ₄	2 ¹ / ₂	2 ¹ / ₂	1 nd	Smith M E	L123	*.40 95-11 Azeri123 rd Take ChargeLady118 ³ / ₄ Mandy'sGold116 ² / ₄ Restrained,4-w,game 7

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BARBARA D. LIVINGSTON

Azeri has won 14 of 16 lifetime starts

1971 Shuvee (age 5)	1982 Track Robbery (6)	1993 Paseana (6)
1972 Typecast (6)	1983 Ambassador of Luck (4)	1994 Sky Beauty (4)
1973 Susan's Girl (4)	1984 Princess Rooney (4)	1995 Inside Information (4)
1974 Desert Vixen (4)	1985 Life's Magic (4)	1996 Jewel Princess (4)
1975 Susan's Girl (6)	1986 Lady's Secret (4)	1997 Hidden Lake (4)
1976 Proud Delta (4)	1987 North Sider (5)	1998 Escena (5)
1977 Cascapedia (4)	1988 Personal Ensign (4)	1999 Beautiful Pleasure (4)
1978 Late Bloomer (4)	1989 Bayakoa (5)	2000 Riboletta (5)
1979 Waya (5)	1990 Bayakoa (6)	2001 Gourmet Girl (6)
1980 Glorious Song (4)	1991 Queena (5)	2002 Azeri (4)
1981 Relaxing (4)	1992 Paseana (5)	2003 Azeri (5)

Azeri's claim to the crown for 2003 ended up being far from the walkover of 2002. The 2003 numbers aren't as gaudy, but she needn't apologize for them, either.

Breeders' Cup in September. Uncharacteristically dull, she failed to make the lead from an outside post, lacked her usual lethal kick, and finished third (placed second) behind Got Koko. She bled in the race, and was found to have a high white blood cell count shortly thereafter.

Given a few weeks to recover, Azeri was training brilliantly for the Breeders' Cup when suddenly she balked at training. De Seroux found a hot spot on Azeri's front left leg a week before the Breeders' Cup, and the diagnosis was acute tendonitis. She was sent to Kentucky for rest and relaxation, and is now back in training with conditioner D. Wayne Lukas. She has already done enough to go down in history as one of the most brilliant older females we're likely to see for some time. **U**

FAMILY NOTES

JADE HUNTER, ch, 1984	Mr. Prospector, 1970 14s, SW, \$112,171 1,176 f, 179 SW, 4.05 AEI	Raise a Native, 1961 4s, SW, \$45,955 838 f, 78 SW, 2.34 AEI	Native Dancer Raise You
	Jadana, 1979 6s, SW, \$19,680 14 f, 10 r, 7 w, 1 SW	Gold Digger, 1962 35s, SW, \$127,255 12 f, 7 r, 7 w, 3 SW	Nashua Sequence
AZERI, ch m, May 6, 1998	Ahonoora, 1975 20s, SW, \$183,477 465 f, 45 SW, 2.20 AEI	Pharly, 1974 13s, SW, \$313,077 650 f, 45 SW, 1.37 AEI	Lyphard Comely
ZODIAC MISS (Aust), ch, 1989	Capricornia, 1983 Unraced 3 f, 3 r, 2 w, 1 SW	Janina, 1965 5s, wnr, 5,239 11 f, 9 r, 7 w, 4 SW	Match II Jennifer
		Lorenzaccio, 1965 24s, SW, \$213,040 391 f, 15 SW, 1.10 AEI	Klairon Phoenissa
		Helen Nichols, 1966 12s, wnr, \$13,446 3 f, 2 r, 2 w, 1 SW	Martial Quaker Girl
		Try My Best, 1975 5s, SW, \$86,025 382 f, 32 SW, 1.50 AEI	Northern Dancer Sex Appeal
		Franconia, 1976 24s, wnr, \$34,343 10 f, 7 r, 7 w	Rheingold Miss Glasso

AZERI'S RACE AND (STAKES) RECORD

Year	Age	Sts	1st	2nd	3rd	Earned
2001	at 3	2	2	0	0	\$46,200
2002	at 4	9	8(7)	1(1)	0	\$2,181,540
2003	at 5	5	4(4)	1(1)	0	\$817,080
	Lifetime	16	14(11)	2(2)	0	\$3,044,820

Sire: JADE HUNTER, ch, 1984. Raced 3 yrs in Eng and NA, 14 sts, 6 wins, \$407,260. Won Gulfstream Park H (gr. I), Donn H (gr. I); 2nd Widener H (gr. I), Seminole H (gr. II).

Lifetime: 12 crops, 702 foals, 500 mrrs (71%), 336 wnrs (48%), 45 2yo wnrs (6%), 37 sw (5%), 1.60 AEI, 1.92 CI, 202 sale yrllgs, avg \$38,383, 0.9 TNA.

1st dam: ZODIAC MISS (Aust), ch, 1989-1999. Bred by Tasman Breeding Venture No. 1 (Aust.). Raced 3 yrs in Aust and NA, 10 sts, 3 wins, \$213,381. Won Coca-Cola Classic (Aust-III), Great Western Champagne S; 2nd Magic Millions Two-Year-Old Classic, Flemington S. Dam of 2 named foals, 1 rnr, 1 wnr, 1 sw.

1996: F, by Jade Hunter. Died 1996.

1997: Simon Bray, ch c, by Blushing John. Unraced.

1998: AZERI, ch f, by Jade Hunter. (\$110,000 keesep yrllg).

At 4: Horse of the Year and champion older female. Won Breeders' Cup Distaff (gr. I), Apple Blossom H (gr. I), Santa Margarita Invitational H (gr. I), Vanity H (gr. I), Milady Breeders' Cup H (gr. I), Clement L. Hirsch H (gr. II), Lady's Secret Breeders' Cup H (gr. II); 2nd La Canada S (gr. II).

At 5: Won Apple Blossom H (gr. I), Vanity H (gr. I), Milady Breeders' Cup H (gr. I), Clement L. Hirsch H (gr. II); 2nd Lady's Secret Breeders' Cup H (gr. II).

1999: F, by Theatrical (Ire). Died 1999.

Broodmare sire: AHONOORA, ch, 1975-1989. Sire of 215 dams of 1,007 foals, 677 mrrs (67%), 380 wnrs (38%), 131 2yo wnrs (13%), 1.65 AEI, 1.42 CI; 66 sw.

2nd dam: Capricornia, b, 1983-1998. Bred by Swettenham Stud (Ire.). Unraced. Sent to NZ 1988.