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RES eases back into post-pandemic market with small but very successful sale

(Shelbyville, Ky.) “We weren’t sure what to expect, but these things we knew: the show horse industry needs a regular public sale, we wanted to help normalize the sales market, buyers are looking for quality, and consignors are looking for bona fide sales for which they get paid.

“We’re very pleased that we were able to answer all four,” said RES President Jimmy Robertson. At 55 consignments and quite a few withdrawn entries, there were some ‘iffy’ moments for the RES team, who has been staging two sales per year since 2012. “It was gut-check time, for sure, but Helen and I were confident it was the right thing to do,” Robertson said of conducting the sale, despite the lightest entries of any of RES’s sales to date. “We don’t like to hold a sale during horse shows,” he said, “but in this case, we were out of choices and we tried to find the spot that would step as lightly on any active horse show as possible.”

The indoor sale — a rainy weather-necessitated change from the planned outdoor arena sale — ran smoothly all day. The online/phone bidding channel was active, resulting in some of the highest-dollar purchases of the sale. “I want to thank you for a delightful experience [in buying my first horse],” Frank Balkum, of Tampa, Fla., told an RES clerk. By phone and watching online, Balkum purchased the charismatic and talented I’m Charming, a five-gaited entry from T.J. Santaferra and Joan Hamilton/Kalarama Farm LLC, for \$25,000, with his trainer and agent Krystle Lee, Suncoast Stables, Odessa, Fla., present at the sale; Lee selected five Saddlebreds and a Hackney roadster pony to add to her show string. Kentucky trainer Wendy Winstead, of Aloha Stables, said, “I was nervous at being the first horse in the sales session, but it went great!” Joan Hamilton, of Kalarama Farm LLC, a multi-time World’s Grand Champion breeder and consignor of multiple entries in Springfield, Ky., finished her day by saying, “I’m ecstatic!”

“When times are challenging, the folks who step up to pitch in are the ones who make this show horse community the wonderful place it is,” Helen Robertson said. “Announcer Peter Fenton, R.H. Bennett and the Richfield Video Productions team, auctioneers Jimmy Price and Walt Robertson, and our RES office team and grounds crew – we’re so grateful to them all for providing the professional, hospitable, and efficient experience that our buyers and consignors expect from us.”

Auctions — what do consumers want?

RES is launching a comprehensive research project to gather data from consignors, buyers, agents, trainers, and breeders about their preferences and experiences in both platforms. “Our mission is to bring as much value as possible to the consignor and buyer – and that’s prior to, during, and after the sale,” the Robertsons said. “We invite every show horse enthusiast to respond to our online survey, and we look forward to sharing this research with the show horse

community in a few weeks.” The survey link will be published at RobertsonEquineSales.com and via social media.

RES’s Autumn ’21 sale portends to be one of the biggest yet for the auction house. “We’ve received lots of interest from breeders as well as consignors with general entries,” Robertson said. Entries close on Oct. 11 for the event, which will be held Friday and Saturday, Nov. 19 – 20, at the Shelby County Fairgrounds, in Shelbyville, Ky. Consignments will be posted at RobertsonEquineSales.com.

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