

Sunday 24 April 2016

SOUND PROPOSITION SCORES ANOTHER OFF-THE-BALLOT EASTER FOR WEXFORD



In a thrilling finish typical of Ellerslie's iconic Easter, Sound Proposition (#19) gets up in the last stride to snatch victory from Trojan Warrior. To their inside, the totally obscured Rasa Lila ran third, nosing out Sakhee's Soldier, who manages to poke his head into the picture out wide.

History repeated itself for Wexford Stables when **Sound Proposition (NZ)** (Savabeel) came off the ballot to win the Group One Manco Easter Stakes at Ellerslie yesterday.

The win came 31 years after Eastern Joy (NZ) (Three Legs), trained by Dave and Paul O'Sullivan and ridden by Lance O'Sullivan, also got a late call-up into the Easter field and came up trumps.

"Eastern Joy got in at 7.20 on race morning – Dad (Dave)

reminded me of that this morning," said Lance O'Sullivan, who trains Sound Proposition in partnership with Andrew Scott.

"It was a great win and I'm thrilled for all the staff at home. Andrew and all the team have done a great job with this horse and Darren Weatherley rides him in work every morning.

"We were going into it today thinking he's well out of it

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S

SAVABEEL Zabeel - Savannah Success
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SF

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CONTACT

Mark Chittick
m +64 21 433 252
e mark@waikatostud.co.nz

Gareth Downey
m +64 21 433 073
e gareth@waikatostud.co.nz

www.waikatostud.com



Waikato Stud





SOUND PROPOSITION SCORES ANOTHER OFF-THE-BALLOT EASTER FOR WEXFORD

(Continued from page 1)

in the handicaps, but Mickey [rider Michael Coleman] was a bit bullish about his chances. He said he likes Ellerslie and it's good to have Mickey back on again."

Sound Proposition lost a Group One placing, his third in last year's New Zealand Derby behind Mongolian Khan (Holy Roman Emperor) and Volkstok'n'barrell (NZ) (Tavistock), when disqualified for having elevated levels of cobalt in his system.

O'Sullivan and Scott were subsequently charged with presenting three horses to race with a prohibited substance, however the Racing Integrity Unit found they did not purposely administer cobalt in what was a highly publicised and protracted case.

"It's a very satisfying win," said O'Sullivan. "It has been a tough twelve months but we've all come through it and out the other side and as far as Wexford Stables goes it's onwards and upwards."

Sound Proposition has started just five times since his Derby performance and he showed he was back on the right track when winning a Rating 85 1600 at Ellerslie earlier this month.

"He came into the race through the back way – he wasn't in any of the big races coming in," said O'Sullivan. "He had to

earn his spot in the race."

Settled back by Coleman, Sound Proposition unleashed his winning run wide out and nabbed outsider Trojan Warrior (NZ) (Postponed) in the last stride to score by a head.

It was the fifth win in the Easter for Wexford Stables following on from Shivaree (NZ) (Sharivari) (1981), Our Shah (NZ) (Shahram) (1982), Eastern Joy (1985) and Calveen (NZ) (Canny Lad) (2005).

Trojan Warrior produced a huge effort for second as he was unsuited by the set weights and penalties conditions of the Easter.

Rasa Lila (NZ) (Darci Brahma) charged home late for third, a short neck from the runner-up, while Sakhee's Soldier (NZ) (Sakhee's Secret) was right in line in fourth position, just under a length clear of Mabeel (NZ) (Savabeel).

Race	ARC Easter S. Gr.1 1600m
Winner	Sound Proposition (NZ) 2011
Owners	C & J Tobin, T & S Tobin and R & I Trayling
Trainer	Lance O'Sullivan & Andrew Scott (Matamata)
Breeding	by Savabeel (Aus) out of Ebony Babe by Ebony Grosve
Breeder	Mrs S E & T G Tobin and R Trayling

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DRAMA APLENTY **BEFORE HASSLER WINS**

It was no surprise that Roger James had to watch a replay of the Group Two Valachi Downs Championship Stakes at Ellerslie yesterday to appreciate the winning performance of **The Hassler (NZ)** (Shocking).

The Cambridge trainer had the two favourites in the three-year-old event, but watched in horror as his filly Romantic Maid (High Chaparral) dropped rider Danielle Johnson after appearing to clip heels when vying for the lead leaving the home straight the first time.

James, like almost everyone on course, was more concerned about Johnson lying on the track than the race and wasn't able to fully concentrate on The Hassler.

"To be honest I didn't watch a lot of the race," said James. "I was watching Danielle and I learnt more (of The Hassler's win) when I saw it for the first time in the winner's circle.

"Being on course, it was sickening watching them come down the straight as the jockeys weren't aware Danielle was still lying on the track and they were all but on her.

"Vinnie (Colgan) had to haul The Hassler to the side after the post that hard he all but came off. If he hadn't he would have ended up right beside Danielle."

A group, including medical staff and officials, were at Johnson's side as she lay on the track and fortunately the other jockeys were able to steer their mounts away from the fallen rider upon crossing the finishing line.

After losing Johnson, who was later taken to hospital with a suspected shoulder injury, the riderless Romantic Maid raced around the field to head off the reefing pacemaker Ronchi (NZ) (Stravinsky), while The Hassler raced comfortably behind the duo.

The Hassler worked to the lead inside the 800 metres and kept up a strong gallop to win by a length and a quarter from Zambezi Warrior (NZ) (Pentire), who ran on strongly ahead of Sonorous (NZ) (Rip Van Winkle).

"I am delighted for the owners of The Hassler but gutted for the owner of Romantic Maid," said James.

"In effect it has cost her getting to Brisbane. I do rate her and the big reason she was running in this race was to get enough prizemoney to get over there and also prove she is up to it."

James was planning to contest the Doomben Roses and Queensland Oaks with Romantic Maid.

On the other hand, The Hassler has continued to step up to the mark. The gelding has now won four of his eleven starts and almost \$100,000 in prize money.

"Since January he's won four races and not many do that as a three-year-old," said James.

Race	ARC Championship S. Gr.2 2100m
Winner	The Hassler (NZ) 2012
Owners	B J & Mrs R J Honeyfield and R & C M Hassall Family Trust
Trainer	Roger James (Cambridge)
Breeding	by Shocking (Aus) out of Zaquabeel by Zabeel
Breeder	Mrs A J & R T Bishop
Sales	2014 National Yearling Sale, Festival Session; V: Lyndhurst Farm, P: The Robt Dawe Agency Ltd; \$56,000

The Hassler outstays his fellow three-year-olds with a clear-cut win in yesterday's Championship Stakes.



IFFRAAJ

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PADDY'S CANTERBURY GOLD CUP WIN GIVES LISA A REASON TO SMILE AGAIN

Authentic Paddy (NZ) (Howbaddouwantit) lifted the spirits of trainer Lisa Latta when gaining a deserved black type win at Riccarton yesterday.

"It's been a pretty ordinary day for us today so it was great to see him win," said Latta, who was at Ellerslie and watched the Trackside coverage of Authentic Paddy's win in the Group Three Coca-Cola Canterbury Gold Cup.

"He deserved it and I thought he'd be hard to beat.

"This is the first time I've got him a hundred per cent again since I put him out after the Zabeel Classic.

"I gave him three weeks in the paddock, thinking I was doing the right thing with him, but he just got too fat. I have

been struggling to get the weight back off him."

Despite being overweight, Authentic Paddy finished fourth in the Haunui Farm Group One WFA at Otaki and fifth in the Group Two Awapuni Gold Cup in the most recent of his three starts since his third to Kawi (NZ) (Savabeel) in the Group One Zabeel Classic.

Authentic Paddy has raced in top company since his previous win at Awapuni last November, including a second in the Group One Captain Cook Stakes and the Group Three Counties Cup to go with his Zabeel Classic and Otaki Group One efforts, and in all bar a couple of those outings regular rider Robert Hannam has been in the saddle.

Hannam was again aboard yesterday and had Authentic Paddy travelling nicely in front with the 2015 Wellington Cup winner Maygrove (Authorized) tracking him most of the way.

Authentic Paddy kicked strongly on straightening and maintained his lead to score by a half neck and hold out a strong late bid by Benzini (Tale of the Cat), while Scapolo (NZ) (Bachelor Duke) ran on solidly along the fence for third,

shading Maygrove.

Authentic Paddy took his record to ten wins from 54 starts and boosted his stake earnings beyond \$360,000, but Latta now has a problem with the six-year-old.

"There's not much more around for him but I'll have to find something," said Latta. "I can't afford to put him out for too long as it will be too hard to get the weight off him. I've learnt that."

Robert Hannam keeps Authentic Paddy up to his work as the Benzini challenge gets serious close to home in the Canterbury Gold Cup.

Race	CJC Canterbury Gold Cup Gr.3 2000m
Winner	Authentic Paddy (NZ) 2009
Owners	Mrs J E Berry, C, P J & T Gray and M Tepaa
Trainer	Lisa Latta (Awapuni)
Breeding	by Howbaddouwantit (USA) out of Authentic Cross by Cape Cross (Ire)
Breeder	D H Robinson





SUCCESSFUL OWNER HAS ANOTHER POTENTIAL TOP-LINER ON HIS HANDS



She led, stacked 'em then ran away . . . Sam Collett and Astara well clear at the finish of the Champagne Stakes.

Perth owner Neven Botica has raced his share of good horses in both codes and he looks to have another potential star in **Astara (NZ)** (Dalghar).

Botica's initial success with horses came in harness racing and included racing Sundons Gift, the New Zealand-bred trotter who is in the Inter Dominion Hall Of Fame, Take A Moment and Mister DG, while on the thoroughbred front he has enjoyed highlights with such smart gallopers as Moatize (Danehill Dancer), who gave him a crack at the Melbourne Cup (sixth behind Viewed (Scenic)), and Leading Bid (Commands).

Now it's smart two-year-old filly Astara who is providing him with the latest highlights.

Botica not only bred and races Astara, he also owns her sire, who stands at Brighthill Farm at Tauwhare (on the

outskirts of Hamilton) and it has been a case of thrill upon thrill for the Perth businessman with the talented youngster.

Astara became the first winner for Dalghar in New Zealand, joining a successful list which consists of four winners in Europe during his sole season standing in France. And, even more importantly, Astara is now the first stakes winner for his sire.

Astara started favourite in the Listed Auckland Co-op Taxis Champagne Stakes at Ellerslie yesterday and after being taken to the front by rider Sam Collett she was far too strong for her rivals, scoring by a length and three-quarters from Eleonora (NZ) (Makfi).

"I'm expecting Neven to ring any moment," said Astara's co-trainer Donna Logan when being interviewed after the decisive win.

Continued on page 9



M

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"Atlante is an outstanding looking individual with a great temperament. He was a quality colt, lovely mover with immense ability. He had electric turn of foot and all the attributes required to compete at the highest level."

- Murray Baker



SUCCESSFUL OWNER HAS ANOTHER POTENTIAL TOP-LINER ON HIS HANDS

(Continued from page 7)

Logan wasn't surprised to see Astara win as she did and was full of praise for the ride of jockey Sam Collett.

"I told Sam beforehand the winning of the race was to jump out, get the lead, stack them up and go as slow as you can then try and get a split on the turn and make them chase you," said Logan. "She rode her perfectly."

When Astara slipped clear early in the run home it was obvious she had the race in safe keeping. Eleonora ran on strongly for second, a length ahead of Family Secret (NZ) (Sakhee's Secret), who had been third most of the way, while Quantum (NZ) (Keeper) made ground for fourth.

Logan is confident Botica is in store for many more highlights with Astara.

"She has stepped up and stepped up and I think she's

going to be a better three-year-old than a two-year-old," she said. "She's very tough."

Collett has been Astara's regular rider and she was impressed with the filly.

"She's got the will to win," said Collett. "She's got the ringcraft on her side and she's so tough."

Race	ARC Champagne S. L 1600m
Winner	Astara (NZ) 2013
Owners	Mr Neven Botica
Trainer	Donna Logan & Chris Gibbs (Ruakaka)
Breeding	by Dalghar (Fr) out of Svita (Aus) by Success Express (USA)
Breeder	Botsky Pty Ltd

NEWS IN BRIEF

Now that he knows how to win . . .

The John Moore-trained Victory Magic (NZ) (Savabeel), a head second to Werther (NZ) (Tavistock) in last month's HK-Group One Hong Kong Derby over 2000 metres and a winner since, shapes as one of the better prospects on today's Sha Tin card.

That last-start victory, an impressive Class 2 win at 2200 metres, was the four-year-old's first at his fifteenth attempt – not counting a race subsequently awarded to him by Australian stewards – and puts him in line for a follow-up win in today's HK-Group Three Queen Mother Memorial Cup, over 2400 metres.

A career return of eight second-place finishes prior to the win had many judges questioning Victory Magic's fortitude, though not his ability.

"He's a horse that has always shown a lot of ability and the race last time went well for him and he put them away," said jockey Zac Purton.

"In some respects that win has been good for him but in other respects he's still quite an immature horse, physically and mentally. I definitely think we're going to see a better horse in twelve months' time."

Today's contest is one of only three races at a mile and a half staged in Hong Kong. Victory Magic has ventured over a similar distance once before, the 2500 metres of the 2014 Group One Victoria Derby, where his tenth place finish, when racing as Atmosphere from the Trent Busuttin stable, was his final start before he was shipped to Hong Kong.

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BJORN BUSY WITH HORSEY McHORSEFACE BUT IMPOSING LASS LOOKS THE REAL DEAL

In the past week, trainer Bjorn Baker has spent much of his time talking to international media about an unraced two-year-old called Horsey McHorseface, named by one of his owners, Joe Rosetti, in homage to the public vote to call a polar research ship Boaty McBoatface.

In the coming weeks, though, he hopes to be giving more serious interviews as a Group One-winning trainer of the Queensland Oaks with **Imposing Lass (NZ)** (Makfi).

The filly took a major step towards the expat-Kiwi's goal yesterday when she led all the way to win over 1500 metres at Rosehill.

"She is bred to get an Oaks distance and they are only three once so we want to go to Queensland," Baker said.

"The plan is the Gold Coast Bracelet followed by the Doomben Roses and the Oaks."

Baker's New Zealand-based trainer-father Murray has a younger full-sister to Imposing Lass called Bonneval, who won on debut at Hastings a week ago.

"They are by Makfi from a Zabeel mare and they are valuable fillies," Baker said. "The Makfis seem to get better as they get over ground."

Imposing Lass takes an important step toward Oaks success with a win at yesterday's Rosehill meeting.

Baker has experienced Group One success as foreman for his father and is hoping it won't be long before he gets his name on a top-level trophy.

Yesterday proved successful for Baker with a win at Queensland's feature meeting on the Sunshine Coast and a two-from-two result at Kembla Grange which included Hendrix (NZ) (O'Reilly) – a \$110,000 purchase from the Waikato Stud draft at the 2014 Karaka sales – taking his record to three wins from four starts.

"It's been a pretty good day," Baker said.

– AAP TURF

Race	ATC Schweppes H. 1500m
Winner	Imposing Lass (NZ) 2012
Owners	S A Aspinall, C P Goodall, D B Carey and Mrs C A Aspinall
Trainer	Bjorn Baker (Warwick Farm)
Breeding	by Makfi (GB) out of Imposingly (Aus) by Zabeel
Breeder	City Bloodstock Ltd
Sales	2014 National Yearling Sale, Premier Session; V: Westbury Stud, P: Paul Willetts Bloodstock; \$120,000

