

Crack open the bubbly

- 3yo Fillies Sires Stakes Final 2004/5

BY BEE PEARS

Last month I looked at 20 years back to the 1994 Sires Stakes 3yo Fillies Final. This time I am moving forward 10 years to the equivalent 3yo fillies race in the 2004/5 season.

The 2004/5 Sires Stakes 3yo Fillies Final was raced in December 2004 at Alexandra Park over 1700m. Winner Foreal was the favourite, but got no favours from her barrier draw of 5 and had to sit parked for the last 800m before pulling away to win in grand style. Miss Bubbles flashed home along the rail for second, and Robyn Blue stuck on for third as did Life of Luxury for fourth. Idancedallnight ran home strongly. Following in order were Dreamers Blue Jean, Attsa Nice, Elite Bell, Kamwood Cully, Whambam, Star Of The Ball, Baltic Wings and Hope To Live, who broke and appeared to check Star Of The Ball.

It was a field of lovely mares – but now they are 13yos, and it is time to see who has kicked on as a broodmare in terms of performers or financial returns to their breeders.

The three that stand out are Miss Bubbles, Star Of The Ball and Foreal, but there are several others that could make a late run for broodmare honours, including fifth-paced Idancedallnight who left 4 winners from 6 foals before dying in 2013, including the good Waltzing With Cullen (15 wins, \$136,448 and 1.51.7 in Australia) and three well-bred fillies who may carry on the line.

Seventh place-getter Attsa Nice (6 wins, \$61,338) has an excellent record so far, producing two winners from just two live foals, both fillies by Bettor's Delight bred by the Messengers. She then missed three times to American Ideal before going to Auckland Reactor last season.

Third placed Robyn Blue (8 wins, \$99,634) also has a chance to step up as a consistent broodmare for Greg and Nina Hope. The first foal Little Boy Blue has won 15 of his 61 starts to date in Australia and earned \$142,986. The next foal was a Mach Three filly that Greg liked a lot, but died as a yearling in a paddock accident. After missing to Bettor's Delight, she had a small but nice going Grinfromeartoe filly that Greg says may make a later 2yo, and now Robyn Blue is going back to Mach Three.

There is also plenty of potential for three classy mares who went on to race in North America - Life Of Luxury (12 wins, \$476,604), Elite Belle (11 wins, \$116,000), and Whambam (\$580,226).

Life Of Luxury won stakes of more than \$280,000 in America as an aged mare; to date she has only two foals, a 5yo and a Mach Three yearling for Bromac Lodge.

Elite Belle earned over \$50,000 in stakes from her 5yo campaign in Canada. Elite Belle also has just two foals to date, from five attempts. Her first foal Charleston Belle (1.56.1 and \$38,233 to date), bred by J H Abernathy and Platinum Breeding, made it into the 3yo Diamond Jewels field this year. Elite Belle is a half-sister to Five Card Draw and Ideal Belle, and that ensures high interest in any foals

she produces, including the current Rock N Roll Heaven yearling colt which Jay describes as a nice type and headed for the yearling sales. She's back in foal to the same sire.

Whambam was bought by Tony Dickinson for breeding purposes after her 18-win American campaign. She has a yearling Bettor's Delight colt named Alta Roulette whom Tony Dickinson describes as being "a good size with plenty of leg". After a failed 30-day positive to Bettor's Delight last season, she is going to Art Major this season.

Kamwood Cully, who was a top 2yo filly, retired with 4 wins and \$159,838 stakes, and has 4 foals to date for just 1 winner, but is being bred to top sires. Baltic Wings and Hope To Live are breeding in Australia, again to top sires, but nothing is really showing up yet on the track. Dreamer's Blue Jean was exported to Australia in 2005 but there is no record there of her breeding on.

Let's get to the awards!

Miss Bubbles

The gold medal judged on producing financial returns, consistency and a standout goes to Miss Bubbles (Holmes Hanover – Nemises Choices – OK Bye; breeder: Miss N E A Preece, P G Hamblett) who retired as a 5yo with \$173,384 in stakes. Since then she has been bred by the Graingers and Rankins with three fillies and two colts on the ground. They have kept the first filly by Falcon Seelster (1 win, 3 places from 8 starts) for breeding. Miss Bubbles' second foal was the consistent mare Mac Bubbles who posted 7 wins before a good offer saw her exported to race in China.

It's her third foal and first colt that really puts Miss Bubbles on the map as a broodmare. He's the highly talented 3yo Major Bubbles, owned by John and Jenny Grainger, Chrissie Dalgety, and David and Kathy Rankin. As a later maturing type, he's got huge potential to get better as a 4yo and move into the higher staked races – or be sold on at a great price.

The next foal from Miss Bubbles is a McArdle filly owned by the Graingers and Rankins, and last season's foal is a colt by Mach Three. Miss Bubbles is due this year to Auckland Reactor.

Miss Bubbles' back family is not particularly strong, but she could well take this family to another breeding level.

Foreal

Foreal (Washington VC – Krystle – El Patron) gets the silver medal. She retired as a 6yo with \$664,800 to her name for her breeders/owners Syd and Mrs S A Brown. Again, it is not an overly strong family – her dam Krystle was a nice racemare herself and has 9 foals for 4 winners, but nothing else in the league of Foreal.

Foreal's first foal was Madiba Magic selling for \$80,000 at the 2011 yearling sales and has 3 wins and 7 places to date. Foreal missed the following year but the next foal (a 2011 Art Major colt) has turned out to be the very talented Field Marshal retained by the Browns and good enough to make it to this year's Breeders Crown semi-finals.

Foreal was sent to Rocknroll Hanover for her third colt, and is due to Bettor's Delight. So although she is still in the early stages of her breeding career, Foreal has made a very solid start.

Star Of The Ball

Very close up for the bronze broodmare medal is Star Of The Ball (Presidential Ball – Star Fleet – OK Bye; breeder W R Fleet). Star Of The Ball comes from a good but not brilliant branch the Black Watch family, via the Vance Hanover mare Esprit Noir.

She was a \$22,000 purchase at the sales for Trevor and Linda Ryder and went on to win more than \$60,000. The Ryders have bred six foals from her to date, all colts.

She certainly paid her owners back early - her first foal was by Christian Cullen and sold at the 2008 yearling sales for an astonishing \$220,000 in a classic bidding mix up but the colt showed little on the track. She has had 4 winners from 6 foals, including the consistent Merv by Bettor's Delight (8 wins), and Hokuri Railrida (1 win to date) in Murray Brown's stable.

By far the best is the 2009 Mach Three colt called Macha (sold at yearling sales for \$40,000 and has earned \$115,297 so far in Australia). He was runner up in the 2013 WA Derby behind Alta Christiano, and defeated Bit Of A Legend and Ohoka Punter in the 2013 Victoria Derby heat before an injury in April this year put him on the sidelines for all his 4yo season. With 7 wins from 13 starts, his owners and the Ryders as breeders will be waiting and hoping for a full recovery.

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