



Beneteau blow

Leading First Season Sire's death a huge loss for industry

By SHAYNE O'CASS

ILL-FATED former Arrowfield Stud resident Beneteau has added his name to a list no one would have ever wished he would; great sires gone too soon.

Over the last 30 years, the industry has endured some major losses in respect to young sires that died well before their time.

Chief among them was South Australia's GB import Adraan whose record of 31 per cent of stakeswinners to foals would have made him a champion in any era.

Around the same time, Bletchingly son Swift Gun, the sire of the bonny mare Swiftsynd, died at Dalama Stud, Muswellbrook, aged just six-years-old.

During the 1990s Woodlands were rocked by the passing of Star Watch and Dr Grace in their prime.

Then in 1998, Queensland stallion Brave Warrior, the runner-up Champion First Season Sire to Flying Spur, died as a result of a freak paddock accident after servicing two small books.

The most recent and arguably biggest and most detrimental stallion loss was Northern Meteor, who died on the eve of the 2013 breeding season from the effects of colic.

The true cost of Beneteau's death in January 2013 having covered just two books is only now starting to be realised.

Beneteau is currently Australia's Leading First Season Sire with a Maribyrnong Plate winner, Prompt Return, under his belt as well as last Saturday's impressive Kensington debut winner, Aegean Sea.

Should he maintain his ranking until season's end, Beneteau will join Adraan and Northern Meteor as Champion First Season Sires that were deceased at the time of their crowning.

Financially, Beneteau's passing is significant but studs are made up of people, horse lovers, who were deeply moved by the death.

"One of the issues in terms of the loss is that Beneteau was bred



Deceased Arrowfield Stud resident sire Beneteau is the nation's top ranked first season sire in 2014/15

here and foaled at the Farm," Arrowfield Bloodstock Manager Jon Freyer said.

"He was sold through our draft at the Easter Sale (for \$1m) and we kept an interest in him. Paul (Messara) trained him and then he came back to stand at the stud where he was foaled so it was that real 'womb to tomb' scenario that

we have espoused for some time.

"So to feel the horse may have been a champion sire and stood a fulfilled career at Arrowfield would have been tremendous, so it was a great loss even though he wasn't standing at a massive fee. He was a horse that was well regarded so that compounded the disappointment," says Freyer.

Beneteau was euthanized on January 9 last year after failing to recover from severe head trauma.

Beneteau has 48 yearlings remaining before the tap runs dry with seven catalogued for the Magic Millions in January and six at the Inglis Classic Yearling sale the following month.

One yearling that may not make

it to the sale because of Beneteau's feats is his close relation and potential 2015 Easter Sale topper.

"We have got an unbelievably good Snitzel colt out of Alinghi that is entered for Easter but with Beneteau looking like he may have been a champion sire, we've got to think about whether we let that horse go or not," Freyer said.

Prompt reminder of stallions success

By SHAYNE O'CASS

IF the Magic Millions 2YO Classic was held tomorrow, Beneteau would most likely provide the quinella.

Despite finishing second in last weekend's Ballarat Magic Millions Clockwise, Beneteau filly Prompt Return's Group 3 VRC Maribyrnong Plate win will stand her in good stead come January 10.

But the mail is there's a better Beneteau, perhaps even

the best one, waiting in the wings by the name of Voilier.

The Gary Nickson-trained gelding introduced himself with a slashing 5-lens trial win at Warwick Farm late last week.

"Tye Angland rode him in the trial and said he is as good as any two-year-old he has ridden this year," Nickson said. "Voilier ran a second faster than the other two-year-old winners on the day which (equates to) 6-lens and he wasn't asked to do anything.

"Tye never moved on him and he had plenty up his sleeve. I had a horse in the Golden Slipper last year (Gimcrack winner Alpha Miss) and I reckon Voilier is a better horse than her."

Voilier was bred by Steve Vardy who bred Miss Zoe, Utzon, Bosworth, Shagerz, Dillinger and

Voilier's dam Ivyrose all out of the one mare - Ivory Rose.

"Voilier was sold at the Magic Millions but the (buyer) reneged on the sale and sent him back," Vardy told *Sportsman*.

Already after one trial, it's looking like Vardy's gain.

"I've been inundated with offers for the horse," he said, "but nothing concrete as yet."

The exciting youngster will make his race debut next Saturday week.

We may have to wait a little while longer to see another of Nickson's Beneteau potential stars that goes by the name of Lauren's Magic whom the trainer tells us is "nearly as good as Voilier."

"She is a massive big filly about 17 hands that I have entered for

the Gimcrack, but about three days before the race I had to pull her out because she had a little soreness in her fetlock joint and a she had a tiny chip in there that we've had removed but she goes enormous."

Warwick Farm seems to be the home of the Beneteau's, with the Victory Lodge-housed filly Aegean Sea being touted as a potential fifth Golden Slipper winner for Clarry Conners in the wake of her all-the-way debut win at Kensington last Saturday.

"I spoke to Clarry and he said he's got a heap of two-year-olds coming through the system and Aegean Sea was by far his best and my bloke ran faster time than his filly did (in her trial) when we won our heat the other day," said Nickson.

