

When No.1 Nash is away, Berry comes out to play

Tommy Berry understands the opportunity he has in the next months and wants to start making the most of it starting at the Wyong Magic Millions on Thursday. Nash Rawiller fractured his right ankle in a barrier-trial mishap, which leaves Berry as Gai Waterhouse's only stable jockey. "It is very disappointing what has happened to Nash but it is an opportunity for me," Berry said. "It will be a bit different not having Nash around for the next couple of weeks because he has been so helpful to me and taught me a lot. He will still be on the phone but it will be different." Berry will reunite with Driefontein in the Magic Millions three-year-old at Wyong and is also excited to be associated with Certitude in the \$200,000 feature of the afternoon. She won her only start by five lengths and Berry believes she could give him a third consecutive Magic Million Classic at the Gold Coast next month after winning on Karuta Queen and Driefontein. "She has strengthened up behind the saddle a lot since that first start," Berry said. "She is a lovely filly and I think I will ride her a lot more positive from the barrier [three] on Thursday."



weigh in, so punters could collect. Racing NSW chief steward Ray Murrirhy said it showed why his panel came down hard on salutes. "I can't comment on that case but what happened shows the folly of saluting," he said. "People think we would boo Santa because we take such hard action against jockeys who salute. However, what happened at Gosford shows it can be very dangerous." Prest was fortunate not to be hit by the following field after she punched the air a couple of times before falling over the neck of Park Heir. "The crowd loved it but when she fell they went quiet," Gosford chief executive James Heddo said. "She was very lucky that the rest of [the field] missed her."

One to watch

A year ago, Hypurr was known as Sichuan Success and ran fifth in the Hong Kong International Mile. He has since returned to Australia and joined the Joe Pride camp and will return to racing in the Razor Sharp Handicap at Warwick Farm on Saturday. Pride believes he will measure to black-type company in his second home. "It would be hard to imagine you could improve a horse from John Size, so if I can get him to recapture his best form I think he can be a group 2, group 3 horse here," Pride said. "You look at his form in Hong Kong, it shows he's a good horse. Some of the ones he raced against would be genuine top-flight gallopers over a mile nearly anywhere in the world." Pride has given Hypurr a couple of barrier trials and says there is bit left in the tank for a summer campaign. "He's a big, strong boy," he said. "I think he's a 1400-metre horse but I'm expecting him to sprint well fresh. I think he's got a fair bit of improvement in him because he's a big, burly sort of horse but I'd be disappointed if he didn't run top four or five."

Salute costly

Approved rider Rebeka Prest has appealed against the severity of a suspension for saluting then falling off Park Heir after the line at the Gosford picnics. She was suspended until January 27 after dusting herself off to



See ya later ... Baltra bolts away in an open-class sprint at Wagga Wagga this month.
Photo: Oscar Coleman

Bush bolter Baltra to lead his city cousins a merry chase

CHRIS ROOTS

GARY COLVIN looked at the draw for Wagga sensation Baltra and sighed. "Eleven of 11, he seems to attract bad draws," Colvin said. "The visitor's draw, let's just hope he can overcome it." Baltra also attracts winner's cheques as he is unbeaten in four country starts, which have taken him from a maiden to open class and had him declared the best horse to come out of the Riverina in the past 20 years. "They say that, but that's on potential, he's still got a long way to go," Colvin said. "He is the best horse I have had potentially and we thought

why not give it a crack [in Sydney]." Baltra, entered in the fourth, a benchmark 80 over 1300 metres at Warwick Farm on Saturday, has been given time to mature. He didn't walk into Colvin's stable until he was four and as a five-year-old he has won his past two starts by a combined 11 lengths. "I know the mare he is from [Pixina] had bad knees, so the owners wanted to give him some time," Colvin said. "When he got to the stable the first time we galloped him I looked at the watch and said 'shit, what do have here?'. "He was running times other horses can't, and doing it easy. "The only problem was his feet were

a bit iffy, so we were careful with him." Baltra won his maiden at Wagga before he scored his narrowest victory at Canberra in September last year, but he wasn't seen for other 15 months. "We brought him back in earlier but because of his feet we decided to give him another four months out," Colvin said. "He was just not right but the extra break seems to have worked. He has come back fully mature and has done things that only good horses can do." Baltra returned and almost broke the Wagga 1200m record, running 1:08.7 in a class-two plate, before stepping up to open company, again at Wagga, where his only real competi-

Kavanagh's mare on track to become Jewel of Emerald Isle

Atlantic Jewel, rated by many as the second best galloper in the country behind Black Caviar, is likely to finish her career in Ireland with every possibility she will be mated with the world's No. 1 stallion Galileo.

The four-year-old daughter of Fastnet Rock is unbeaten in her seven starts, including two group 1 wins – the Thousand Guineas and All Aged Stakes – to her name and earnings of \$927,925 under the guidance of trainer Mark Kavanagh.

Atlantic Jewel is part-owned by several of Coolmore Stud's management team, including Susan Magnier, who is the wife of Coolmore's senior owner John Magnier. Australian Turf Club committeeman Laurie Macri also has a 25 per cent share.

The staggering performances of Galileo, which just happens to be owned by Coolmore, in recent seasons has made the stallion the logical selection for Atlantic Jewel. Bloodlines highlighted Galileo's 2012 racing season last week spearheaded by his unbeaten son, Frankel.

Atlantic Jewel has been off the scene since bumping her off-front foreleg last August and is in the spelling paddock. Kavanagh says further X-rays are scheduled for January.

Connections sent Atlantic Jewel's initial scans to Europe to seek additional thoughts on her racing future and were advised the injury was not serious enough to warrant an early retirement.

Her last start was on April 28 when she put up a sensational performance to overhaul Rain Affair to become the first three-year-old filly in 86 years to win the All Aged Stakes at Randwick. Atlantic Jewel won her first three starts in restricted company before stepping up to the Thousand Guineas and group 2 Wakeful Stakes in Melbourne. She later won the group 2 Sapphire Stakes at Randwick.

Mating with Galileo would produce a yearling worth many millions, far more than she could achieve in the Australian sale ring and it does make sense to send her to Coolmore's Irish base.

The racing public are anxiously awaiting Black Caviar and Atlantic Jewel's return to the track and it would be a promoter's dream should the pair clash on the way through the autumn carnivals in Sydney and Melbourne. But one would have to suggest this would be an extremely long shot.

More than good

Shuttle sire More Than Ready reached a great milestone in his stallion career last weekend by siring his 1000th indi-

JOHN HOLLOWAY BLOODLINES



vidual winner thanks to successes at Rosehill, Bathurst and in Florida.

The Vinery-owned sire began his shuttling career to Australia 12 years ago and has been a resounding success, particularly with two Golden Slipper winners to his credit in Sebring and Phelan Ready.

In this year's Golden Slipper, More Than Ready was represented by six of the 16 starters – Raceway, Amorino, Faustus, Ashokan, Later Gator and Samaready. The latter started favourite and finished third to Pierro.

Last Saturday, Regimental Pride won the first at Rosehill, while the Gary Portelli-prepared Music Media was the Bathurst winner. More Than Ready's total individual winners number 1001 for 2900 races won, including 107 stakeswinners worldwide. The stallion's best performer is unquestionably the John Singleton-owned and bred More Joyous.

Century-maker

Bel Esprit won the race to become the first stallion to tally 100 progeny wins this season, edging out Lonhro by two wins after a two-state double on Tuesday.

The Eliza Park stallion, sire of the mighty Black Caviar, has been a prolific sire of winners for the past five years and although running 16th in the overall stallions' premiership has been able to get to the "ton" first in the 2012-13 term.

Bel Esprit has had 73 individual winners thus far and his progeny have won just on \$2 million, whereas Lonhro is in third place with 98 overall wins from 68 representatives and \$4.45 million.

Meanwhile, Fastnet Rock, last season's runaway premier sire, has regained his place at the top of the ladder. His progeny have amassed \$4,690,274, followed Montjeu, courtesy of Green Moon's Melbourne Cup win, in second with \$4,587,515 and Lonhro close up with \$4,450,044.

Numbers solid

Never let it be said there is a shortage of horses in training on Sydney's city and NSW's provincial racetracks. In what probably was a record seven days, a total of 333 horses have con-

tested barrier trials from last Friday to Tuesday. The trials were held at Warwick Farm last Friday, where 143 horses went around, and at Randwick and Rosehill on Monday and Tuesday respectively.

November was hardly a great month in relation to field sizes, but taking into account the 333 runners at the trials one would expect the size of the fields to increase in the new year.

Most importantly there were several two-year-olds competing and punters should start to see some Golden Slipper form materialise.

Early mail

Lonhro had three black-bookers go around at the Rosehill trials on Tuesday, two from Team Hawkes and the other prepared by Warwick Farm horseman Jarrod Austin.

The horse trained by Austin was the five-year-old Territory, formerly trained by Lee Freedman, who won races with the sprinter at Flemington and Sale in 2010.

He won under a tight hold following on from a Kembla Grange trial success a fortnight earlier. Territory is a speedy type which will be placed to advantage in the city or at the provincials.

Hawkes produced a Lonhro three-year-old filly in Springs Reward, which was a \$270,000 yearling at last year's Magic Millions. She appears a ready-made type and travelled sweetly all the way in her trial success.

His other Lonhro starter was Mecir, which is at peak fitness after three runs from a spell this campaign, the latest a second to Privately at Warwick Farm on December 1. Mecir's runner-up effort stood out and he is ready to win again.

Seven for Laxon

Melbourne Cup-winning Kiwi trainer Laurie Laxon (Empire Rose) has won his seventh Singapore trainers' title in 13 years with a win on the final day of the racing season last Sunday on a comeback from Victoria's Michael Freedman.

Both horsemen prepared 76 winners for the season but Laxon was awarded the title thanks to the greater number of second placings. His winner on the final day was Speedy Ahead – ridden by Danny Beasley – which won the last event on the 12-race card at Kranji.

Freedman's effort was also noteworthy and the two trainers will no doubt be involved in another fierce tussle for next season's title.

johnhollysenior@yahoo.com.au

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