

“Celebrate Success with the Baroness”

Happy Reminisces About A Special Horse

Recently, I sat and listened to Barbara and her great friend Bly Miers reminisce about the wonderful horse that brought them together.

In 1987, Barbara was training her horses out of Howitt Park, her property at Bombala. She was a relatively successful country trainer but was little known in the ‘big smoke’ of Sydney or Melbourne.

That year she nervously bid and was successful in purchasing a bay colt by Taj Rossi out of Lady Splendid for \$5,000. The colt was her first purchase at the sales and was later named **Merimbula Bay**. It was to be an inspired choice that would not only write Barbara into racing history but cement friendships with the owners who included Bly and Don Miers.

Merimbula Bay showed early promise as a 2YO and ran 6th in the 1988 Black Opal Stakes. However, his career really started to take off when he went to Sydney and won the listed Fernhill Handicap over 1600m at Randwick.

But, it was as a 3YO that he blossomed. After he won the Group 2 San Domenico Stakes over 1000m at Randwick in the Spring, Barbara realised she had something special. She decided to set him for the 1989 Group 1 Doncaster Handicap. Many of the owners thought that she had bitten of a bit much but, on 25 March 1989, **Merimbula Bay** did her proud by sneaking home by a short-half head.



Returning to scale after the Doncaster Handicap

The picture of the thrilling finish still hangs proudly in the Member’s Enclosure at Thoroughbred Park.



Presentation after the Doncaster Handicap

The Baroness of Bombala, as the legendary race caller Johnny Tapp later dubbed her, made history by being the first woman to train a Group 1 winner at Randwick and only the second woman trainer to achieve Group 1 status. Deidre Stein who trained **Rising Prince** to win the 1985 Cox Plate has the honour of being the first woman to train a Group 1 winner in Australia.

Merimbula Bay raced throughout NSW, Victoria, Queensland and Canberra until he was a 7YO. He had 56 starts for 7 wins (including the 1991 Wagga Town Plate), 9 seconds and 5 thirds and won \$576,310 in prizemoney. Not bad for a \$5,000 purchase.



1991 Wagga Town Plate

His owners, some of whom were racing a horse for the first time, traveled the countryside experiencing the thrill of racing against the best horses in Australia and winning.

To Barbara, Peter and all of the owners of **Merimbula Bay** we wish you a happy 20th anniversary of that very special day and may the memories linger for many more years.

March – Good Wins But Frustrating Run Of 2nds

The four wins for the month were all good wins but with seven 2nds it could have been a memorable March. The four winners were:

Fullafibz scored his second impressive win in a row when he won the Rating 67 Handicap over 1200m at Canberra on Black Opal Day. He has always shown ability but found it hard to translate that into winning form. He now seems to have found the right formula and we hope there are more wins in store.

After seven very consistent starts where he had never been out of the money, **The Flying Fox** broke through for his maiden win in the Maiden Plate over 1400m on the first day of the Albury Carnival. Having led from the start, he fought on well to score a narrow but convincing win.

Belong To Many triumphed in the Listed Wenona Girl Handicap over 1200m at Randwick. She led from the start and won by a comfortable $\frac{3}{4}$ length. The Hancox Syndicate owned mare has now won just over \$400,000 and given her 800 owners so much joy. During the month, she also ran 2nd

in the Group 3 Birthday Card Stakes at Rosehill. She will have her last start for the Syndicate on Easter Saturday in the Group 2 Sapphire Stakes at Randwick before being auctioned at the Inglis broodmare sale.



Cash Tin, another of the Hancox syndications, broke through for his first win in the Maiden Plate over 1175m at Albury after a good first-up 3rd at Queanbeyan in February.

Opportunity To Race Well-Bred Filly

Here is the chance to lease and race a well-bred filly with Barbara. The 2YO filly is by **Inflate** out of **Rogue Trader** and was bred by the late Bob Logan, who was Barbara's breeding advisor. The filly has been broken in and is ready to go into work immediately. There are no up-front costs and all you will pay is your share of the on-going training fees. If you are interested, please contact Barbara by mobile on **0418 427 457** or by email on josephracing1@bigpond.com

Wagga Carnival Reminder

The Wagga Cup Carnival is on Thursday 30 April and Friday 1 May this year and, as usual, Barbara will have a large contingent of horses running. On Friday 1 May the Joseph Racing Marquee will be available to owners who want to share good finger food, beer/wine and the companionship of their fellow owners. Entry to the Marquee is \$50 per person.

If you wish to join us in the Marquee, please contact Julie Jones on **(02) 6458 3207** or by email to josephracing1@bigpond.com by Friday 17 April to assist with the catering arrangements.