

Niello – Taste of Success

By Karl Patterson

Trainer John Croucher has unearthed another Niello with above average ability in Adelaide. Croucher won three races with Tasteofenergy in the last month and has plans to bring the gelding to Melbourne in the near future. Croucher knows what it takes to beat the Victorians in their own backyard. He won two on the trot with Atlantic Air at Morphettville last December and then took him to Flemington where he scored a barrier-to-box victory in the Listed Bagot Handicap on New Year's Day.

Tasteofenergy (3g Niello - Sardana by Zeditave) broke through at Morphettville over 1250m on April 28 and he continued to improve with further wins at Balaklava (1400m) on May 19 and Morphettville (1600m) on May 29. "He's really turned the corner this time in," Croucher said. "He's always been a lovely mover and just need time to mature."

Tasteforenergy is out of Chatswood mare Sardana, who has been a wonderful producer at the Seymour based nursery for many years. Sardana won the G3 Coca-Cola Classic at the Gold Coast and at stud she has produced winners by Regal Classic, Geiger Counter, Genuine and Invincible Spirit. She has been pensioned by Chatswood studmaster Greg Willis after foaling a Rakti filly last year.

"Tasteofenergy is the only Niello in my stable and I wouldn't mind more like him," Croucher revealed. "He's been tipped out for a couple of weeks because there was nothing coming up that suited him in Adelaide. I thought of taking him over to Melbourne right now but he's already had six starts this prep and I didn't want to bottom him out on the heavy tracks over there."

Croucher will get a guide of how his gelding might stack up across the border shortly. He beat Seeyatomoro last time out and Gary Kennewell is sending that one to Melbourne in the next couple of weeks. Croucher specialises in buying tried horses and turning them over if they don't make the grade. "But there's no chance we will let this bloke go," he said this week. "He has a lovely attitude and is a pleasure to train."

Tasteofenergy was Niello's flag-bearer during May and he also sired the promising winners Gothic Paris (Pakenham) and Isabelle Lass (Sunshine Coast). They increased the individual winner tally from his first crop to 18.

Gothic Paris (3f Niello - Gothic Darkness by Comrade) motored home to win over 1300m on debut for Cranbourne trainer Nikki Bourke. The filly has been nominated for a 1500m event at Bendigo this Sunday, June 6.

Isabelle Lass (3f Niello - Verify by Grand Lodge) also looks a filly with a future. She is trained by Mike Moroney for leading New Zealand owner-breeder Kevin Algie and crossed the Tasman to win second-up over a mile at the Sunshine Coast.

Moroney rates her very highly. She was nominated for the G1 Queensland Oaks this Saturday but didn't make the field. As a precaution, Moroney nominated her for the Sunshine Coast on Sunday and she will take beating despite stepping up from a maiden to race in a 3YO open company event.

Niello is beginning to make an impact for owners and trainers like John Croucher who were patient with his first crop. "When Tasteofenergy won his first race, Paul Gatt jumped off and said the penny still hadn't dropped," Croucher recalled. "I'm glad we looked after him - he could be a serious horse."

Niello stands at \$7,700 for the 2010 breeding season

Rakti on a Roll in Europe

By Karl Patterson

Chatswood Stud shuttler Rakti enjoyed another winning month in Europe during May. When Interakt scored at Brighton last Thursday (May 27), it increased his northern-hemisphere first-crop winner tally to 12.

Interakt (3f Rakti - Amelie Pouliche by Desert Prince) recovered from a slow start to win by a half-length over 1400m at Brighton. The Mick Channon trained filly started a short-priced favourite after connections decided to try her over a sprint trip third time out this year. She had been tried over 2000m without success in April.

Two days earlier, Rakti gelding Law To Himself lived up to his name with a narrow victory over 1600m at Ripon. The lightly raced galloper unseated his rider and ran loose before being rounded up by the clerk of the course. He chased the leaders and stayed on strongly to edge out Kathlatino (Danbird) on the line.

Law To Himself (3g Rakti — Samhat Mtoto by Mtoto) is a half-brother to two winners by champion sire Cape Cross. They are from a half-sister to the dam of G1 winner Ameerat (English 1000 Guineas).

Earlier in the month, Rakti's promising filly Tuiga staked her claimed for the G1 Preis der Diana (German Oaks) with a very impressive victory over 2000m at Dortmund. She spaced the placegetters by seven lengths!

Tuiga (3f Rakti - Tocopilla by Medaaly) is from a Listed Longchamp winner and is prepared by leading trainer Peter Schiergen. He won the German Oaks as a jockey in 1994 (Risen Raven) and as a trainer with Iota (2005) and Rosenreihe (2008). This year's G1 Preis der Diana will be run at Dusseldorf on August 1.

Another Rakti filly aiming for more black-type is Newmarket based Carioca. She was a Listed winner of the Premio Seregno in Milan in April and earned more black-type when runner-up in the Listed Michael Seely Memorial during York's Dante meeting on May 14.

Carioca (3f Rakti - Cidaris by Persian Bold) has been nominated for the G3 Brownstown Stakes at Fairyhouse on June 30.

Rakti is a Danzig-line sire and he was a Group 1 winner of the Champion Stakes at Newmarket, Lockinge Stakes at Newbury plus the Prince of Wales Stakes and Queen Elizabeth II Stakes at Ascot before shuttling between the Irish National Stud and Chatswood Stud. He has been very popular at the Seymour based nursery covering a total of 270 mares in 2008 and 2009.

Rakti stands at \$11,000 for the 2010 breeding season.

