**A SAD FAREWELL TO SIREN’S CALL**

Siren’s Call (2011 Elusive Fort- Siren’s Cove) was the standout filly from the first crop of Elusive Fort. Bred by Peter de Beyer, she was bought back at the CTS yearling sale for just R70k. Sent to Sean Tarry, she hacked up a facile winner of her debut over 1200m under Piere Strydom, who rode her regularly thereafter. She then won a Novice Plate for F&M over 1400m, beating Smart Call. At just her third start, she ran in the Starling Stakes Gr3 1400m, and was second behind the brilliant Majmu. She then ran 4th when taking on the boys in the Gr2 Dingaans over 1600m.

A big payday came in February 2015 in the CTS incentive race for graduates of their book 2 yearling sale of 2013, where she beat stablemate Trophy Wife to bank the first prize of R1.25m. She was bred to get at least 2000m, so her brilliance as an early 3yo over 1200m and 1400m was a pleasant surprise, and her astute trainer then aimed her at the Wilgerbosdrif Triple Tiara. She beat very strong fields to land both the Gr2 Gauteng Fillies’ Guineas and the Gr1 Gauteng Fillies’ Classic.

She thus was Elusive Fort’s first graded stakes winner and first Gr1 winner, and set the scene for his subsequent long and successful career at stud.

Having landed the first two legs of the Triple Tiara, and expected to cope with the testing Oaks distance, Siren’s Call was sent out a warm favourite with Pine Princess (whom she had beaten comfortably in the first two legs, but was expected to relish the step up in trip) a clear second choice, and these two appeared to be a class above the balance of the field.

The Gauteng Oaks was run in very heavy going after a drenching thunderstorm on the Friday. It proved to be a drama filled race, as Siren’s Call pulled a shoe going down to the start, and then gave the course farrier a torrid time. When eventually re-shod she had expended considerable nervous energy, and had delayed the start by more than 10 minutes.

The out and out stayer Pine Princess led most of the way, with Siren’s Call some 8 lengths back from a wide draw coming into the long, testing Turffontein straight. She rapidly made up ground on the leader and hit the front 50m from home, and was being called a winner by the commentator. Anthony Delpech, in an inspired ride, managed to get Pine Princess to come back on the line to deny Siren’s Call the Triple Tiara by a short head,

Her next race was the Daily News Gr1 2000m against the boys at Greyville. The logic of running there instead of in the Woolavington for the fillies, was to see whether she should take her place in the Durban July for which she was 7th on the log at that point. Sadly, however, she was injured in that race. A chip was removed from her fetlock, and she missed the rest of the 3yo season.

The form of the Triple Tiara was franked in the Woolavington, where Smart Call narrowly beat Pine Princess with Trophy Wife third.

When Siren’s Call had recovered, she was aimed at the 2015/16 Cape summer season, under a new partnership, as Drakenstein Stud (nom Gaynor Rupert) had acquired a half share in her.

She had a very promising comeback run in December over 1400m, a distance short of her best. Sadly, that was to be her last race as she damaged a tendon in training a couple of weeks later.

Despite her successes, we probably never saw the best of her, as she would in all likelihood have improved with maturity at 4. She was one of the best of undoubtedly one of the strongest crops of fillies seen in SA.

Siren’s Call’s co-owners retired her to stud at Drakenstein. Her first foal, a filly by Duke of Marmalade, was a moderate one time winner. Her next foal, a filly by Trippi, named Sound of Warning, was raced by Drakenstein with significant success. She won two Gr 3 races over 1400m, and was runner up in the Gr1 Allan Robertson for 2yo Fillies, and third in the Gr1 SA Fillies Sprint, both over 1200m.

She thus gave Elusive Fort his first graded stakes winner as a broodmare sire.

The third foal was an attractive colt by Vercingetorix, named Call to Unite, and bought by leading owner Nic Johnson. He showed good promise as an early 3yo, but ran below expectations in the Politician Stakes and was then rested. As an early 4yo, he has won the 2024 renewal of the Settler’s Trophy, a listed race over 2000m.

Sadly, this was the same week that the partners had to make the difficult but necessary decision to euthanise Siren’s Call who was suffering from severe laminitis.

A very sad loss to both partners, as having thrown 2 feature race winners from her first 3 foals, and at just 13 years old, a very promising stud career has been cut short. She will be missed.

Siren’s Calls story is however, not yet over, as in addition to the promising Call to Unite still in training with 3 wins from just 9 starts, Sound of Warning has commenced her own broodmare journey at Drakenstein, and there are 3 unraced progeny.

These are a Lancaster Bomber 3yo filly, a 2yo Gimmethegreenlight colt, and a yearling What a Winter filly.

Peter de Beyer

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