

GOLDEN RESULT: Estijaab (Blake Shinn) wins the Golden Slipper at Rosehill.
PHOTO COLIN BULL

The Slipper fits for Estijaab's family

Just like She Will Reign last year, the 2018 Group 1 Golden Slipper winner Estijaab comes from a famous Australian family founded in the 1800s. DANNY POWER reports.

It's encouraging that once-revered old Australian families, despite the flood of international blood washing through our breed in modern times, can remain relevant after nearly 150 years.

Estijaab and She Will Reign trace to imported broodmares who had a profound influence on the thoroughbred breed in this part of the world.

She Will Reign's pedigree—as I wrote this time last year—goes back to the imported mare Juliet (GB), whose descendants dominated Australian and New Zealand races, including the Melbourne Cup, between 1870 and 1900.

Estijaab's imported foundation mare, Chand Beebee (GB), didn't have the same impact as Juliet, but she was regarded in the early 1900s as one of the “great broodmares” of her time.

In fact, when She Will Reign won the Golden Slipper, none of her direct female ancestors going back 130 years had left a Stakes winner.

In contrast, there has hardly been a decade since Chand Beebee's arrival from England in August 1882 aboard the steamer Port Albert as an unraced two-year-old that she didn't appear in a pedigree of an outstanding galloper, including at least two of Australia's great racehorses—the prolific, enduring champion of the 1920s, Amounis (10 Group 1 wins, including a Cox Plate, Caulfield Cup and two Epsom Handicaps), and the flashy darling of the Australian turf of the early 1960s, Wenona Girl (11 Group 1 wins in 22 Group wins).

Chand Beebee is the third dam of Amounis (br g 1922, by Maggie (GB)) and the sixth dam of Wenona Girl (ch m 1957, by Wilkes (FR)). She also is the 12th dam of Estijaab (b f 2015,

Snitzel-Response, by Charge Forward).

Chand Beebee (br m 1890, Royal Hampton (GB)-Missy Baba (GB), by Springfield (GB))—bred by Queen Victoria at the royal stud at Hampton Park, on the Thames at Middlesex—was bought at auction in England for 50 guineas by Newcastle coalmine entrepreneurs, brothers John and William Brown. She travelled to Australia with four broodmares, who found their way to the Browns' newly formed stud and training farm, Motto Farm Stud, at Hexham, on the northern outskirts of Newcastle.

The Brown brothers were an intriguing pair. John was the older, more dominant and wealthier. However, he was reclusive and eccentric. He raced his horses under the nom-de-plume of Mr. J Baron (or sometimes Mr. J Baronet—“Baronet” was his nickname) and he shunned the limelight despite

owning and breeding some of the best horses of the time.

While he was a tough old coot and a rugged uncompromising businessman, Brown was revered by his coal-mining workers as he often gave handouts to those suffering in troubled times on the proviso they told nobody that he had helped them. He also was a prolific breeder of prized poultry and dogs, many imported from the best breeders in England.

In racing, he was regarded as a grumpy old fellow, who refused interviews and made baffling decisions. He often spent up big at the auction houses—locally and overseas—to buy the best bloodstock, but, inexplicitly in some cases, banished the bluebloods to the back paddocks at Motto and his other farms never to be broken in or bred.

John Brown bred and raced the champion colt Prince Foote, winner of the 1909 Melbourne Cup and Victoria and AJC

Derbys. Prince Foote was a son of Brown's imported stallion Sir Foote (by 1892 Epsom Derby winner Sir Hugo), who stood at Motto in the early 1900s after having won the Futurity Stakes, Newmarket Handicap and Doncaster Handicap in a stellar 1902 autumn. Prince Foote went on to sire the champion colt Richmond Main—named after John Brown's largest coalmine (regarded at the time as the biggest in the world)—who won the 1919 AJC Derby and Victoria Derby.

Chand Beebee was raced by William Brown. She won only one race, at Hawkesbury in 1895, but she trained brilliantly in private at Motto, which encouraged Brown to keep racing her. She was entered for the 1884 Melbourne Cup (3200m), but didn't start; she ran in the Epsom Handicap (1600m) of that year.

The Maitland Daily reported her Hawkesbury win on April 8, 1895: “... the race was a triumph for the imported mare

Chand Beebee ... who has been racing for four seasons on the Australian turf and this was her first victory, although she had time after time in private exhibited the possession of tremendous pace, indeed no short race was placed beyond her reach by admirers ...”

When Chand Beebee was retired to Motto Stud Farm, her first three foals were bred by John Brown and nothing much became of them. William took over the mare and in 1899 bred the filly Chantress, who won for him the 1903 Newmarket Handicap (1200m). Her 1901 filly, Bee Bee, won the 1903 Maribyrnong Plate (1000m) at Flemington and her 1905 filly, Baw Bee, won the 1907 AJC Breeders' Plate (1000m) and 1911 Summer Cup (2400m). Incidentally, her five best progeny were by sons of England's champion sire St. Simon (GB), and it's unknown whether this was by design or something stumbled upon by William.

However, the old mare, in

her 18th year, saved her best to nearly last—a brown colt (in her image) by Positano (GB) (by St. Simon (GB)), born in 1908, who became the champion stayer, Piastre, winner of the 1912 Melbourne Cup, in which John Brown had the unplaced favourite Duke Foote (by Sir Foote (GB)).

William Brown continued his investment in thoroughbred breeding by buying the famed Segenhoe Stud (now Vinery Stud), near Scone, in 1918. While he kept up a small breeding enterprise there, most of the family focus in breeding had centred on his brother's Wills Gully farm at Singleton. Between them, the brothers, at the height of their involvement in racing, owned more than 500 horses—the Ingham “Chicken Kings”, or rather “Coal Kings”, of their day.

Chand Beebee died at Segenhoe Stud in 1920. William died in 1927 and John, who was reported to be Australia's first millionaire, in 1930.

A valuable response

There are few more astute men at a yearling sale than Barrie Griffiths, although it's not always his own eye that he relies upon.

For many years, with the help of the esteemed bloodstock guru George Smith, he bought such star fillies as Northwood Plume and Azzurro, but in recent years, apart from Smith, Griffiths has sought the advice of former trainer Ian McPherson. It was with McPherson that Griffiths and his wife Midge bought a bay Charge Forward-Live It Up filly at the second session of the 2008 Easter Yearling Sales in Sydney for \$50,000.

She ticked all Griffiths' boxes on type—soundness and athleticism—and she came from a pedigree that had produced champion fillies. Her dam, Live It Up, was by a stud flop in Match Winner (FR), but she had finished second behind Danarani in the 1994 Group 1 Flight Stakes (1600m) and she came from the direct family that produced one of Australia's greatest mares, Wenona Girl—the filly's sixth dam Golden Chariot won the Group 1 One Thousand Guineas at Caulfield

and produced four Stakes winners, including Wenona Girl and her half-sister Carrus, the dam of star colt Farnworth and the filly's fourth dam, Loyalty (by Wilkes).

Griffiths gave his purchase, Response, to trainers Mat Ellerton and Simon Zahra at Flemington. She won the Group 1 Sir Rupert Clarke Stakes (1400m, Caulfield) in 2010 and the 2011 Robert Sangster Classic (1200m) at Morphettville. She banked just short of \$840,000 and the Griffiths' sold her as a broodmare prospect for \$840,000 to Newgate Farm-linked SF Bloodstock, a division of the George Soros financial empire.

SF Bloodstock bred two foals out of Response. The first a filly by Fastnet Rock sold for \$1,050,000 to the China Horse Club in 2015—named After Call, she won twice from five starts. The second, a colt by Exceed And Excel, didn't make his reserve at sale and was retained. Named De Gaulle, he showed brilliant form in trials before breaking down unraced. He is standing at stud at Brooker Park, Darnum, in Victoria's Gippsland region.

Newgate sold Response, in foal to Snitzel, at the 2015 Magic Millions National Broodmare Sale to the bid of Japan's Katsumi Yoshida for \$1.5 million. The resultant filly made \$1.7 million, from the Arrowfield Stud draft, at last year's Inglis Easter Yearling Sale, bought by Nassar Lootah.

She was named Estijaab, which is Arabic for Response.

Estijaab was destined to win the Golden Slipper to make up for the ill-luck the family has endured in Sydney's famous juvenile sprint, especially during a five-year run in the 1960s: Wenona Girl finished second behind arch rival Sky High in 1960; her sister Emblem was scratched on the morning of the race in 1961; her brother Grammar Lad finished third behind Birthday Card in 1962; and Farnworth, a son of Wenona Girl's half-sister Carrus, was second behind Eskimo Prince in 1964.

This year's \$3.5 million Slipper (Rosehill, 1200m) was run on March 24. Estijaab, ridden by Brenton Avdulla for the training team of John, Michael and Wayne Hawkes, netted \$2 million. **U**

DECADES OF CHAMPIONS

1882: Foundation mare Chand Beebee (GB)—bred at the Queen's stud—imported from England as a 2YO.

1900s: Chand Beebee's 4th foal, Chantress, wins the 1903 VRC Newmarket Handicap. Bee Bee, Chand Beebee's 5th foal—1903 Maribyrnong Plate. Baw Bee, Chand Beebee's 6th foal—1907

1910s: Piastre, Chand Beebee's 9th foal—1912 VRC Melbourne Cup. Tressida, Chand Beebee's granddaughter—1917 NZ Great Northern Oaks.

1920s: Runnymede (NZ), son of Tressida—1925 New Zealand Derby. Amounis, great-grandson of Chand Beebee—champion, 1927 Cox Plate, 1926 & 1928 Epsom Handicap.

1930s: Amounis (above)—1930 Caulfield Cup. My Own (NZ), daughter of Tressida—1930 NZ Great Northern Oaks. Garrio, great-grandson of Chand Beebee—1935 Cox Plate. Yours Truly (NZ), son of My Own—1939 New Zealand Cup.

1940s: Tidal Wave (NZ), son of My Own—1940 Rosehill Guineas. Caithness (NZ), daughter of My Own—1943 New Zealand Oaks. Prince Standard, 5th dam Chand Beebee—1946 Victoria Derby, Rosehill Guineas. Gold Script (BZ), son of Caithness—champion 2YO & 3YO in NZ in 1948 and 1949.

1950s: Golden Chariot, 5th dam Chand Beebee—1951 One Thousand Guineas. The Wash (NZ), grandson of My Own—1954 Queensland Derby, 1955 Brisbane Cup.

1960s: Wenona Girl, daughter of Golden Chariot—champion filly, 2nd 1960 Golden Slipper, 11 Group 1 wins 1960 to 1964. Emblem, daughter of Golden Chariot—1961 VRC Sires' Produce Stakes. Grammar Lad, son of Golden Chariot—3rd 1962 Golden Slipper. Farnworth, grandson of Golden Chariot—1964 Champagne Stakes, 2nd 1964 Golden Slipper. Special Girl, daughter of Wenona Girl—glamour filly in 1969, won first three starts, two by 10 lengths. 5th 1969 Golden Slipper.

1970s: Visit, 3rd dam Golden Chariot—1976 Toorak Handicap. Sonstone, 4th dam Golden Chariot—1979 G3 Tranquil Star Stakes, 3rd Caulfield Cup.

1980s: Anyone Home, son of Visit—1980 Karrakatta Plate. Northern Reward, 5th dam Golden Chariot—1983 Phar Lap Stakes, 2nd George Main Stakes.

1990s: Kinjite, grand-dam Wenona Girl—1991 Spring Champion Stakes, 1992 Epsom Handicap. Live It Up—5th dam Golden Chariot—2nd 1994 Flight Stakes. Umah, 4th dam Golden Chariot—1996 Karrakatta Plate.

2000 on: Response, daughter of Live It Up—2010 Sir Rupert Clarke Stakes, 2011 Sangster Classic. Manawanui, 6th dam Wenona Girl—2011 Golden Rose. Estijaab, daughter of Response—2018 Golden Slipper.

Research: Danny Power