

Stablemates on Road to Winterbottom



THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS WA

www.tbwa.net.au



Valour Road

WESTERN RACEPIX

Valour Road will be set for the \$1 million Winterbottom Stakes following his latest black-type victory in the LR Bolton Sprint (1200m) at Belmont last Saturday.

The Simon Miller-trained sprinter and his stablemate Special Reward (Demerit) are both being aimed at Perth's premier sprint in November. It was Valour Road's second feature success this time in following the G2 Euclase Stakes in Adelaide last month.

"He wasn't suited today but was just too good for them," Miller said after the Bolton. "His wheels begin to spin in the slippery conditions but Willie (Pike) was positive and built through the gears. It was a really good ride.

"I'm really proud of the horse. Adelaide was his grand-final and I've got to thank the owners for allowing me to keep him ticking over. He will go to Amelia Park for six weeks and that works perfectly for his next prep into the Winterbottom."

Bred and part-owned by Yarradale Stud owner Ron Sayers, Valour Road was Champion WA 2YO in 2017-18 after claiming the RL Magic Millions Classic at Pinjarra and G2 Karrakatta Plate at Ascot. From 10 starts, he has now won 5 races for earnings of \$842,600 and that includes a Westspeed bonus component of \$93,600.

Former Yarradale Stud shutter Frost Giant (USA) sired him from Melba Avenue (Street Sense) who is a half-sister to Group 3 winner Raspberries (Lonhro). Sayers bought her as a foal from Darley and sent her back to the source for a cover to Exceed And Excel last year.

Frost Giant (Giant's Causeway) shuttled to Yarradale for two southern books and is now recognized as one of the leading stallions in New York State. Based at Century Farm in Saratoga, he completed a stakes-winning treble in as many days after Valour Road saluted in Perth.

Kid Is Frosty (3f Frost Giant – Murmure by Lemon Drop Kid) won the LR Cupecoy's Joy Stakes at Belmont Park on Sunday and Hot Diggitty (3g Frost Giant – Hot Splash by Sunriver) added the LR Ontario County Stakes (1200m) at Finger Lakes on Monday.

Miller also believes Special Reward can emerge as a marquee horse for Demerit in the Group 1 Winterbottom. He made the prediction after the 3yo gelding's last-start victory in the Vale Kent Johnston Hcp (1200m).

"That's his best win to date," Miller said. "He punched forward, rocked along on a good speed and was still there at the end. He's made the transition from one prep to another and is still a bit immature.

"It was fitting he won the race named after Kent and you can never underestimate divine intervention. The Winterbottom looks right up his alley next season."

Johnston stood Demerit for seven books at Taunton Vale Stud before his death last month. His wife Nina has transferred the 12yo son of Lonhro to nearby Rangeview Stud.

Already a significant shareholder, Nina Johnston bought Demerit outright from his previous part-owners and then syndicated him among leading breeders Robbie & Jody Gray (Rangeview Stud), Eddie Rigg (Geisel Park), Siobhan Campbell (Bellbridge Park) and prominent trainer Brett Pope.

Demerit has emerged as a top-tier stallion in Western Australia with the winners of 175 races to date from his first four crops. He didn't have any 2yo runners this season due to a serious hoof injury in 2015.

Special Reward was knocked down for \$145,000 at the 2017 Perth Magic Millions to owners Peter and Kath Caporn. He's already paid that back with 6 wins in 9 starts for earnings of \$476,655 boosted by Westspeed bonuses of \$239,700.

"All Demerit needs now is a Group 1 winner," Rangeview Stud's Robbie Gray said. "And Special Reward could be that horse."