

INSIDE: STUDS AND THEIR STALLIONS SPECIAL

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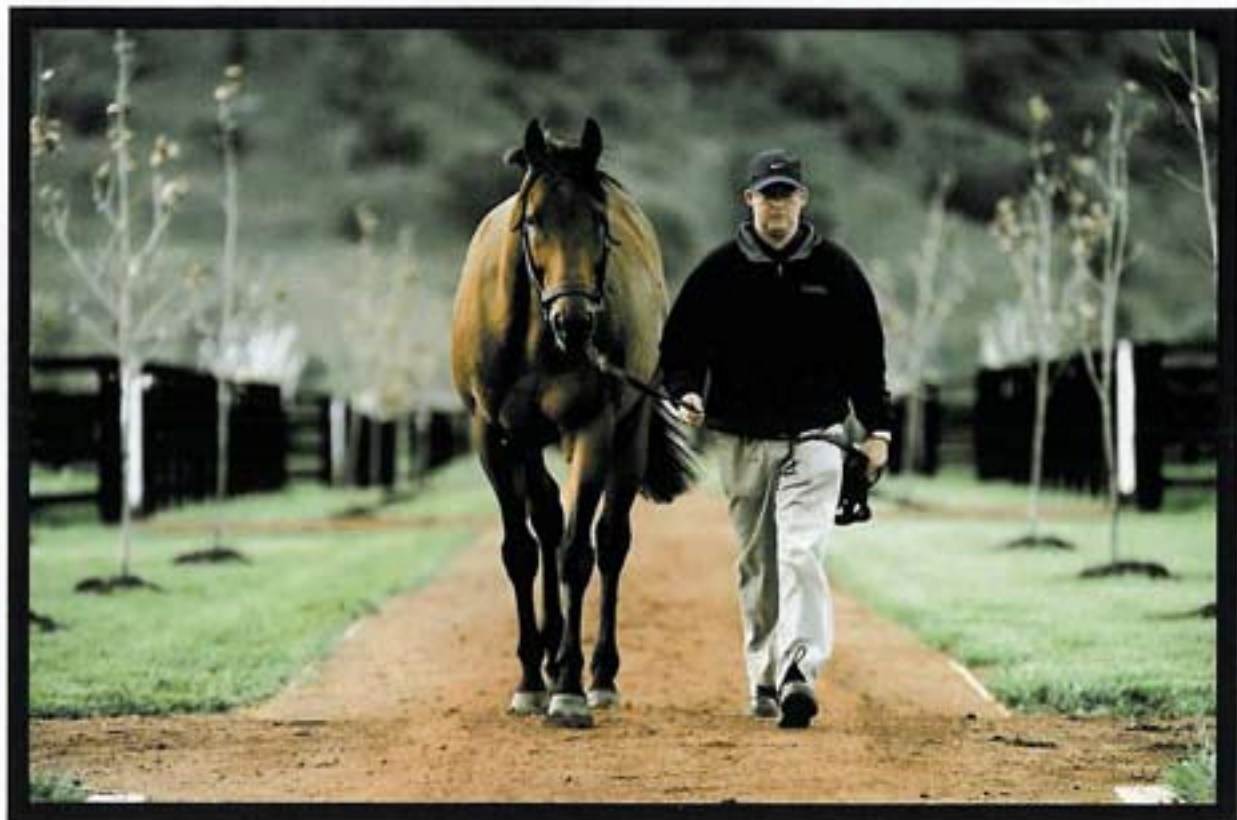
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DESTINATION VICTORIA

Darley Consolidates even further

Story by Nathan Exelby

WITH YET ANOTHER high profile stallion crossing the Murray and heading to the Hunter Valley this season, Darley Stud has decided to reverse the trend, setting up a base in Victoria.

It was announced last month that Testa Rossa would be leaving Victoria and heading to Vinery Stud this year.

He follows a growing line of Victorian success stories that subsequently moved to the Hunter, the most notable of course being Encosta De Lago, who rose to prominence at Blue Gum Farm, but now stands at Coolmore as the second most expensive stallion in the land.

But the Victorians had a couple of wins of their own last month.

News of Darley's move into Victoria came at the same time as Caulfield Guineas winner God's Own was secured for the state, where he will reside at Yallambee Stud.

And Darley has pulled no punches with the five horses it is sending south, highlighted by Reset, the unbeaten dual Group 1 winner who did all of his racing in Melbourne.

The son of Zabeel and outstanding mare Assertive Lass stands at a fee of \$33,000 and will be joined by Dubai Destination (\$22,000),

Street Cry (\$16,500), Country Reel (\$7700) and the Storm Cat stallion Consolidator (\$13,750), who is one of just two new season stallions at Darley Australia in 2006.

Darley has acquired Northwood Park, a property situated on the Goulburn River at Seymour, to be home of its Victorian operation.

In preparation for the 2006 season Darley has improved some of the existing infrastructure to make the farm capable of standing stallions.

The immediate attention will be focused on the stallion barn and paddocks, covering shed, arrivals area and vetting area.

Beyond 2006, Darley's intention is for the Victorian stud to mirror the existing Hunter Valley stud, with the focus remaining on the business of standing stallions.

Improvements such as an office, purpose-built stallion complex, foaling unit, yearling barn and fencing are medium to long-term development projects.

Oliver Tait, Darley's Australian General Manager, said it was a logical move for the organisation.

"Victoria has a very strong racing industry, which combined with many other factors such as a healthy local economy, make it a very



left RESET: back where it all started;
right OLLY TAIT, Darley's Australian General
Manager: a logical move for the organisation

BRUNO CANNATELLI



MARTIN KING SPORTS

attractive and exciting part of Australia for us to increase our participation in," Tait said.

"Victoria is home to many breeders who own a large population of superior quality mares, many of whom have given our stallions tremendous support in previous years, so it seems a natural progression for us.

"In addition, the sales in Victoria, particularly the yearling sales, continue to go from strength to strength and are obviously supported by the local product.

"By standing stallions in Victoria our stallions become more accessible and more easily accessed by our clients and potential clients.

"It also demonstrates our long term support and consolidates our serious commitment to Australasia's breeding and racing industry."

Tait said the Super Vobis structure had no bearing on the move into Victoria.

"However, we certainly acknowledge that breeder incentive schemes are important to our clients and healthy for the racing industry in general, so it is definitely an additional benefit we can participate in and contribute to VOBIS," he said.

Darley have carefully chosen those sires they believe will be best suited in Victoria.

"Choosing which stallions would be standing in Victoria was the most important decision we have made so far," Tait says.

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"Selecting precisely the right combination of stallions is imperative and we spent a lot of time on formulating the correct mix.

"Our clients require different attributes in stallions, such as race record, sire-line, fee, origin and stage of career and we feel we have chosen a very highly-credentialed group of stallions that will satisfy those requirements."

Reset was an obvious choice.

He was undefeated in five starts in Victoria, highlighted by his win over, among others, Starcraft and Elvstroem, in the Group 1 Australian Guineas.

Renowned as a sire making race, its list of winners include successful stallions like Military Plume, Flying Spur, Pins and Reset's own champion sire, Zabeel.

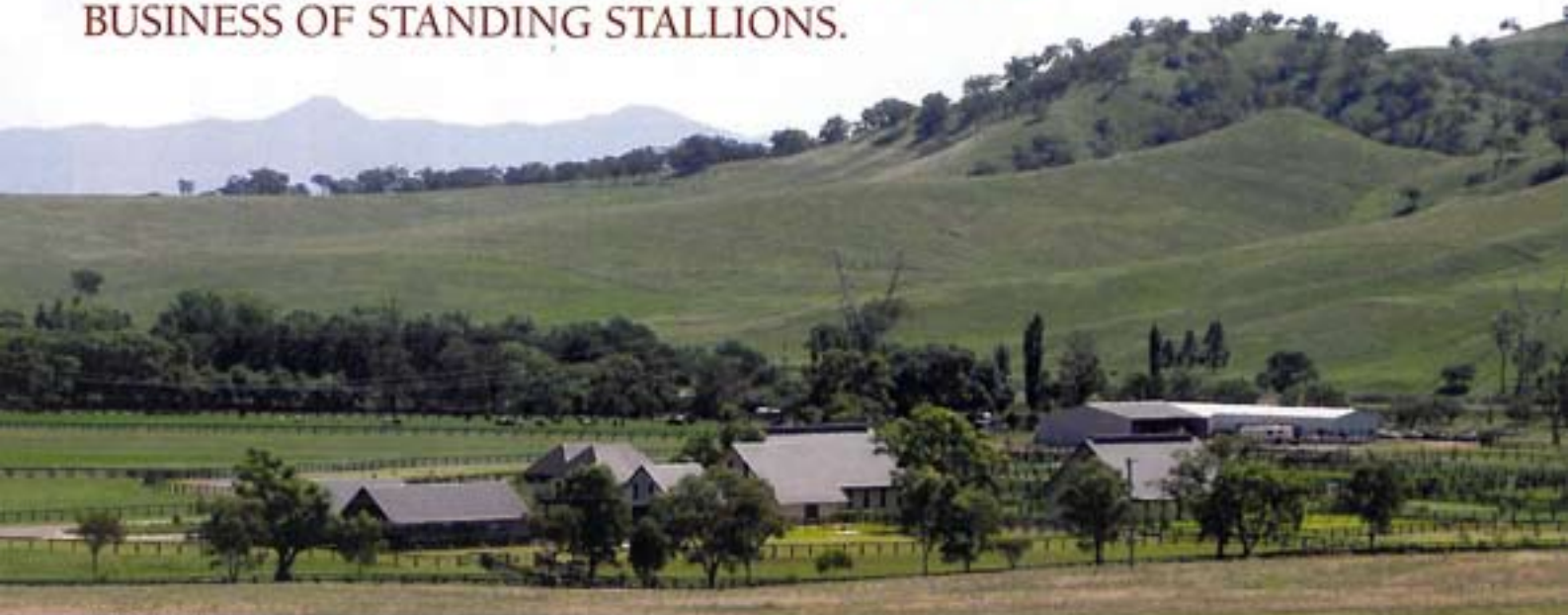
Reset made it a Group 1 double next outing – in what turned out to be his final start – easily winning the Futurity Stakes against older horses.

Broodmare owners rushed to support him when retired to Darley's Hunter Valley base.

He covered 146 mares on debut in 2004 and another 140 last year.

His list of first season matrons included star mares like Bold Promise (dam of G1 winners Merlene and Miss Pennymoney), Danelagh, Gold Lottey, Juanmo, Singeing Lamp, Songline (dam of Sunline), Starstruck and Tully Thunder.

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BEUNG CANATELLI

The list was equally impressive last year, with Bold Promise and Songline again, together with Dubai Ice, Lady Jakeo, Mango Daiquiri, Our Fiction, River Crossing, Show Of Force and So Gorgeous.

Dubai Destination also heads south after two years shuttling to the Hunter.

His first season book numbered 139 and broodmare owners assured he easily topped the century mark again in his second season.

The son of Kingmambo was an imposing racehorse and boasts a formline that no other can.

He, in fact, was the last horse to beat Rock Of Gibraltar in Europe, before that horse went on a Group 1 winning rampage.

And Dubai Destination beat him easily – running away from the Danehill colt at the end of the Group 2 Champagne Stakes (1400m) at Doncaster.

His three-year-old season was restricted to just the one start, but at four, he returned and lived up to the Group 1 tag that his \$US1.5million pricetag demanded.

In the Group 1 Queen Anne Stakes (1600m) at Ascot, he obliterated G1 winners like Right Approach, Where Or When, Victory Moon and the World's highest rated horse of that year, Hawk Wing, by a widening four lengths.

Dubai Destination is from the same family as Agnes World and proven Australian sire Red Ransom.

Dubai World Cup winner Street Cry returns for his fourth season in Australia.

His yearlings sold up to \$210,000 in Australia this year and averaged \$62,500 across all sales.

He is regarded as the best son of sire of sires Machiavellian and is from the same outstanding family as Shamardal.

Country Reel, a son of Danzig, was a Group 2 winner at two and is from a half-sister to outstanding sire Anabaa.

Like Reset and Dubai Destination, he too is standing his third season in Australia this year.

Rounding out the Victorian quintet is Consolidator, a powerful chestnut son of Storm Cat.

A \$US1.25million yearling, Consolidator was a Group 1 winner of the Breeders' Futurity Stakes at two.

At three, he obliterated his opposition – which included subsequent Kentucky Derby winner Giacomo – in the G2 San Felipe Stakes (1700m) by a widening six and a half lengths.

"World-class racehorses like Dubai Destination and Reset are two



2002 Dubai World Cup winner STREET CRY returns for a fourth season

stallions with impeccable race records; Country Reel was a 2YO sprinter, whereas Street Cry, who was also a top-class juvenile, was rated the best in the world at four," Tait said.

"Street Cry offers breeders a fast-track to success given his first-crop will turn two in August this year, and Consolidator possesses that first-season sire appeal.

"Country Reel, Dubai Destination, Consolidator and Street Cry are shuttle stallions so Reset injects some Australian flavour.

"A wide variety of sire-lines are also represented, such as Mr. Prospector, Storm Cat, Danzig and Zabeel; and our fees range from \$7700 for Country Reel to \$33,000 for Reset."

Tait says it is likely the five horses chosen will continue to stand in Victoria, rather than being swapped with others.

"At the moment the stallions standing in Victoria will probably become permanent residents of Victoria," he said.

"We aim to build up a strong following of these stallions from the local market. However, we are also encouraging breeders to send their mares from NSW to our stallions in Victoria and vice versa."

Tait is looking forward to building a successful operation in Victoria, following in the footsteps of what has been achieved since setting up in New South Wales five years ago.

"The Victorian industry has reacted very positively to our move," he said.

"The Victorians understand and appreciate the opportunities associated with having an organisation like Darley, and the stallions that Darley stand, in their back-yard."