



Patapan

## Brighthill Farm

ANNIE STUDHOLME

### ... Patapan, Perfectly Ready, Eagle Mountain

Coming off the back of a sensational season with the progeny of champion freshman sire Perfectly Ready, momentum continues to build for Nick and Anne-Marie King's Tauwhare operation, Brighthill Farm.

The King's can easily be forgiven for having a slight feeling of déjà vu with the stock of Patapan making their presence felt so early in the 2011/2012 season, just as Perfectly Ready's did just 12 months earlier.

Nick King is not one to get overly-excited, but at this stage of the season it's easy to draw parallels between the two.

Wind the clock back to last spring, and after a number of trials winners in New Zealand, Isle Be Ready put Perfectly Ready on the map when finishing a gallant runner-up in the Listed AJC Breeders Plate to the ultra-talented Smart Missile across the Tasman. Just weeks later the Lisa Latta-trained Brackenwood hit the headlines handing the young More Than Ready sire his first winner at Wanganui. Perfectly Ready finished the season with five individual winners with six stakes performers, heading off the regally-bred, Darci Brahma, for the First Season Sire Premiership.

Similarly, 12 months on and just two months into the new season Patapan has already notched up his first trial winner in Napatap trained by Rangiora's Paul Harris, at just his second trials start, with more waiting in the wings. Napatap's success follows on from really good feedback from breakers and trainers, says Nick King.

"It's a fantastic start for Patapan's stud career. It just reassures us that all the talk is relevant, it's not just talk. We are really excited. We always thought he would leave precocious two-year-olds. A winner of six starts as a two-year-old himself, he more than many other stallions to come to New Zealand deserves to have the test of two-year-olds put on him.

"He's been really well supported. We are confident he's had the best possible start; all we can do is cross our fingers and hope for the best. We have done our best. All the early indications are good, but now it's up to him. "You do have to pinch yourself though. We recognise how hard it is



Patapan 1st trial winner Napatap



Brighthill Farms PR x Priscilla half sister to Napatap

to win a premiership, let alone anything relating to two-year-olds in this country."

Although Perfectly Ready's two-year-olds lived up to all expectations, King is confident they'll be equally as good, if not better, at three.

Recent form suggests King's predictions are bang on with Perfect Katch finishing third in the Listed Westbury Stud Challenge Stakes at Ruakaka, and classy fillies of last season Queen Boudicca and Beejay Belle stepping out at stakes level. In Australia Isle Be Ready and Romstar have been flying the flag high with city victories.

King also firmly believes there is plenty more to come; pointing out that Perfectly Ready has covered 120 to 150 mares in each of his four years at stud.

For the stud, the early success of both Perfectly Ready and Patapan offers further affirmation for its policy of looking for stallions with top-class race performance, with a pedigree to match, adds King.



Eagle Mountain

Both Perfectly Ready and Patapan raced at the highest level. Perfectly Ready won at Group 1 and Group 3 level in Australia, whereas Patapan won at Listed and Group 3 level amongst his 16 lifetime wins in Italy.

Although people are quick to question the Italian race form, King says to put it in perspective, when Patapan won the Group 3 Rome Premio Umbria (1200m) as an older horse, he did so in 1.08 carrying a whopping 61kg. It's a race noted as Italy's premier sprint. "His times were phenomenal. There are very few horses that can do that. What people like about him is that he was a very sound, consistent racehorse. They love it that he won over four seasons."

New stallion Eagle Mountain, who has been re-launched this season with a limited book after striking fertility issues in 2010, boasts possibly the most impressive race record of all with five wins from 1200m-2000m including the Group 1 Hong Kong Cup and Group 2 victories in the Curragh Beresford Stakes, Royal Whip Stakes, Newmarket Joel Stakes. He was also placed in two derbies, and the Group 1 Breeders' Cup turf.

It may take longer to find the perfect stallion, but its proof you're better to hold out for the right one, says King. "We couldn't be happier. It's an exciting place for us to be with Perfectly Ready's first three-year-old crop and Patapan's first crop of two-year-olds. There is much to look forward to this season." ■



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