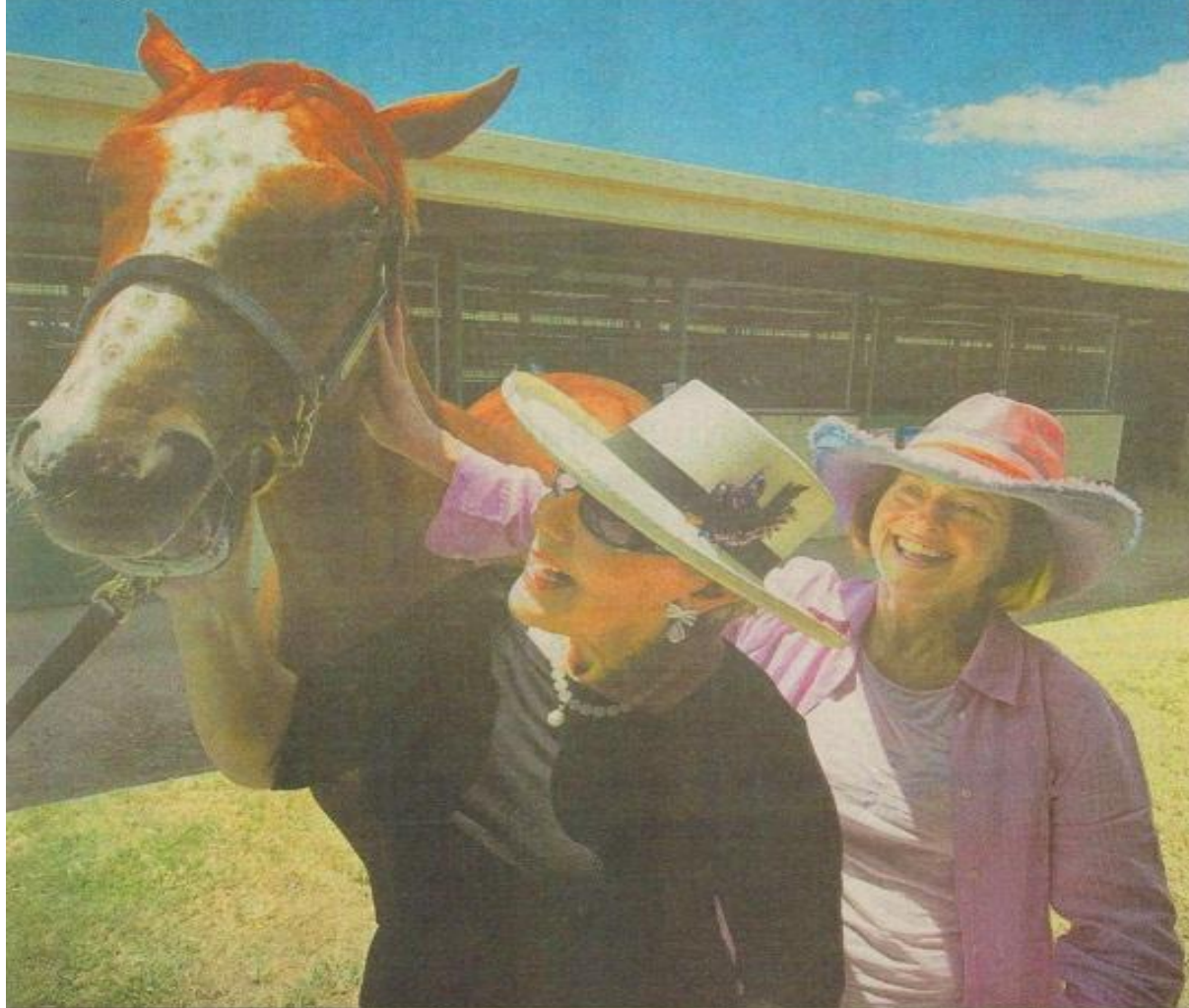


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RICH PICKINGS

Denise Martin and Gai Waterhouse spent up on the Gold Coast this week but they aren't finished yet. Magic Millions Classic favourite Driefontein could cap off a big week. Chris Roots reports - Page 3.

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Tomorrow there is a minimum \$1,000,000* pool on the cross meeting BIG6. First leg is the Magic Millions 270 Classic at 2.45pm. Friday, January 13, 2012

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Waterhouse takes stranglehold on Millions

Chris Roots

DRIEFONTEIN was the complete package in the Magic Millions sale yards last year but the clincher was her "sweet face".

The Magic Millions Classic favourite has continued to do everything right, winning her only two starts for Star Thoroughbreds and Gai Waterhouse, but there was one detail Denise Martin remembered about the filly from her notes.

"She had a sweet face, which is important in a filly. Gai often says that will give some indication that they will turn into a feminine broodmare," Martin said. "Driefontein was really well put together, had a

great approach and was very relaxed. She was strong. It is like anything you do in life, first impressions are often the best.

"You still have to hope they develop but she definitely has and we couldn't hope for more, especially after getting gate three."

Driefontein won her debut in Sydney by three lengths, then scored by 1½ lengths in the McLachlan Stakes at Doomben two weeks ago and is part of a gun team of two-year-olds in the Waterhouse yard.

"We have had a good season so far but this is the first big one and we want to win, and I think Driefontein can," Waterhouse said.

"She is almost the perfect two-

year-old, she jumps and runs and has the barrier to do that again.

"You know Denise has had a good year as well, this filly is a group 3 winner already and Raceway is very good, as we saw last Saturday."

It is like that with Martin and Waterhouse, they are constantly giving each other pats on the back but in reality it is a team effort.

Driefontein, named after a goldmine in South Africa because of her dam Follow Gold, is a typical Martin buy at \$70,000 and has been syndicated to people around the country. Waterhouse enjoys being part of the Star operation.

"It's not just about the high-flyers. Denise gets all sorts of different peo-

ple in horses, which is great for racing," Waterhouse said. "I think the people in Driefontein are going to have the day of their lives on Saturday and she is an outstanding chance."

Waterhouse also has \$500,000 buy No Looking Back in the Magic Millions, and she was not counting her out of getting the better of the pre-post favourite.

"They are both good fillies, Driefontein has already won the group 3 and probably done that bit more, but No Looking Back has won her only start and she deserves her place in the race," she said. "She is very well bred, her mum, Mirror Mirror, won the Magic Millions."

While Saturday is pay day at the

Magic Millions, the business of the carnival takes place during the sales. It is there where Waterhouse and Martin's relationship is on show.

Waterhouse sorts through the hundreds of yearlings before meeting with Martin beforehand.

"Picking the horses is up to Gai, that is what she is best at and I leave it to her," Martin said. "That means we get horses Gai wants to train. We meet for lunch on Tuesday and decide which ones will suit my needs. I have a \$200,000 limit and try to buy between \$50,000 and \$150,000."

Waterhouse adds: "Denise gets the final say and she is good at sorting out a group horse at the right price, as you see from her record."