

# Star Thoroughbreds syndicator Denise Martin banking on Foxplay fulfilling her great potential

Ray Thomas, The Daily Telegraph  
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THE transformation of Foxplay from recalcitrant racehorse to rising star is nearly complete.

Foxplay, the one-time problem child of the Chris Waller stable, is an odds-on favourite to score her second win in succession in the Tab.com.au Handicap (1400m) at Rosehill Gardens on Saturday.

The juvenile filly created a huge impression as she raced clear to score by three lengths over the Rosehill 1350m course two weeks ago.

Waller and jockey Hugh Bowman spoke in glowing terms about Foxplay's potential after that win — but the filly wasn't always so popular in the stable.



Syndicator Denise Martin of Star Thoroughbreds, who secured Foxplay for \$160,000 as a yearling at the Magic Millions Sales last year, takes up the story.

**“There was a lot of interest of interest in the filly and she is certainly one of the more expensive yearlings I’ve purchased,”** Martin said.

**“But when Chris brought Foxplay in for her first and second preparations during winter last year, she proved a real handful.**

**“When they took her out of her box to go to the track, she would just stand still. She wouldn’t go forward, she wouldn’t move.**

**“She was really testing everyone’s patience — she was a real madam.”**

Waller sensed the potential in Foxplay and persevered. By January, she was ready to go to the races.

Foxplay ran fifth on debut behind Honesty Prevails in the Widden Stakes then ran fourth to classy youngsters Kiss And Make Up and Detective at Canterbury.

**Hugh Bowman returns to scale after Foxplay's impressive performance last month. Picture: Simon Bullard**

Waller, buoyed by those promising efforts, sent Foxplay for a spell before bringing her back into his Rosehill stables for a winter campaign that began with her closing second to Raiment at Warwick Farm before her runaway win at Rosehill last start.

Foxplay has opened at \$1.90 with TAB Fixed Odds to go back-to-back on Saturday despite having topweight of 58kg and lining up against seven rivals including stablemates High Mist, Octavian Augustus and Awoke.

It is rare for Waller to have four juvenile runners in the same race but this is a unique situation for the champion trainer to be saddling up a quartet of youngsters who are last start winners.

**"These two-year-olds were all impressive winning but none more so than Foxplay," Martin said.**

**"She has the extra weight to contend with but clearly she is a talented filly and hopefully she can lead home a first four for Chris's two-year-olds."**

The Star Thoroughbred colours have been making a habit of doing just that in recent weeks.

Cellarman, who Martin purchased for \$90,000, won the Listed Wintergarden Stakes at Eagle Farm last week to give the owner and trainer their first feature race wins together.

**Martin's racing colours of purple, white stars and cap — made famous by Sebring, Theseo and Driefontein — have also been carried to victory the Avonaco (twice) and Aurora's Glow this winter.**

The leading syndicator has three runners at Rosehill Gardens on Saturday including Avonaco, the \$6 favourite to continue his good form in the TAB More Than Just Winning Handicap (1500m).

**"Avonaco is going really well and Chris has booked Koby Jennings so we can use his 2kg claim,"** Martin said.

**Pioneering, who is a daughter of Sebring, is Martin's other Rosehill runner and contests the Hyland Race Colours Handicap (1200m).**

**"She has been thereabouts all preparation without winning,"** Martin said. **"But she is down in the weights this time and with Jamie Innes's claim, she only has to carry 52.5kg.**

**"Foxplay, Avonaco and Pioneering all look like they are right in the mix and are major chances with any luck."**