

HABIBTI IVY CROWNED GRAND CIRCUIT TROTTING MASTER



Habibti Ivy, after winning the Philip McDonald Memorial Mobile Trot at Ashburton on 4 February 2017, she has since gone on to win the Group One Anzac Cup in NZ record time on April 21 (photo - Courtesy The Digital Birdcage).

Habibti Ivy, the older half-sister to Bromac Lodge broodmare Habibti Sadie, has been crowned winner of the Australasian 2016-17 Trotting Master Grand Circuit series after her game second in the \$156,000 Canam Rowe Cup on Friday, April 28.

The Paul Nairn-trained Habibti Ivy stormed through the pack to take out the Trotting Masters Grand Circuit with strong showings in the last two events in the five-race series.

She becomes only fourth mare to win the Trotting Grand Circuit title.

The only other mares to have taken out the top title since its inception in 2000 have been La Coocararcha (2002), Allegro Agitato (2006), One Over Kenny (who shared the title with A Touch Of Flair in 2007 and won outright in 2009).

Habibti Ivy notched her third NZ record for the season at her fifth 5YO start when she took out the penultimate Trotting Master event, the \$102,000 Anzac Trotters Cup (mobile 2200m) at Auckland on April 21.

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Her second to Temporale in the Rowe Cup (3200m), being outfinished late, was enough for her to secure the top ranking in the Grand Circuit races.

Habibti Ivy's late flourish had her surging ahead of other Grand Circuit winners, Australian-based Australian Trotting Grand Prix winner, On Thunder Road, Dominion Handicap winner Monbet, and Pryde's Easifeed Great Southern Star winner, Glenferrie Typhoon.

Raced by Gabriel and Julie Maghzal, Habibti Ivy trotted a slick 2:41.9 (1:58.4 mile rate) to win the Anzac Cup, lowering the previous NZ mares record of 2:42.9, set by Sunny Ruby at Auckland last December.

From the four gate, she pressed to the front at the 1500m in the HR Fisken & Sons-sponsored Anzac Cup and held early leader Lemond by half a head in the feature free-for-all trot.

Regular driver Blair Orange also gave the big chestnut-coloured Love You-Ten To One mare every chance from the trail in the Group One Rowe Cup.

However, she couldn't quite hold the stronger finishing burst from the Tony Herlihy-trained and driven 4YO Temporale (Monarchy-Whosinthenest), who tracked her through from three back on the markers and had the last say, winning by a neck.

Habibti Ivy, who raced strongly at three, winning the 2015 NZ Trotting Oaks (beating Sunny Ruby), then missed her 4YO racing due to injury, has been a revelation returning to the track at five.

She made a statement in her comeback race at Ashburton on February 4 when she won in 2:58.5 (mobile 2400m) for a NZ mares record win, then notched NZ mares record No. 2 when taking out the Lamb & Hayward 4 & 5YO Trotting Championship at Addington on March 31 in 3:14.8 (2600m stand).

Her form has been music to the ears of Bromac Lodge proprietor Bob McArdle, who secured her half-sister Habibti Sadie this term.

He subsequently bred the unraced Pegasus Spur mare with Love You in order to get a 3/4 brother or sister to Habibti Ivy, her top-winning sister Habibti (1:56.5, 16 wins & \$352,775) and also last November's good NZ Cup week winner, Lothario (1:57.4, six wins from 37 starts for \$64,150).

Habibti Ivy's rise has been the icing on the cake.

Complimenting Habibti Ivy's emergence is the form of half-brother Releven Dream (1:57.3) in Queensland, winning three of his last four trot starts including a track record win at Albion Park on April 8.

A night after Habibti Ivy's Anzac Cup victory, Releven Dream won again at Albion Park to bring his good-winning record to 12 wins and 10 placings in 53 starts for \$71,002 in stakes.

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