

FRANCE

GÉRARD LARRIEU ENJOYING A PURPLE PATCH

Bloodstock agent Gérard Larrieu enjoyed an excellent weekend with his purchases, headed by **Baby Rider (Gleneagles)**, a €220,000 Arqana August Yearling Sale purchase for owner Jean-Louis Bouchard, stamping his Classic claims with a storming finish to win the Gr.2 Prix Greffulhe, *writes Martin Stevens*.

On the same card at Saint-Cloud, **Crohanne (Havana Gold)**, a private purchase on behalf of the same owner, ran a promising third in the Gr.3 Prix Cléopâtre, while on Sunday, **Gold Trip (Outstrip)**, a €60,000 purchase by Larrieu for Bouchard at the Arqana August Yearling Sale, finished an honourable runner-up in the Gr.1 Prix Ganay.

The good spell got even better on Tuesday when **Saiydabad (Blame)** booked his ticket to the Gr.1 Prix du Jockey Club with victory in the Listed Prix Suresnes for his owner-breeder, the Aga Khan. Larrieu just happened to have bought the colt's dam **Sarkiyla (Oasis Dream)** – a Deauville Gr.3 winner and Gr.1 Prix Jean Romanet runner-up, in foal to **Le Havre** no less – for a mere €35,000 at last winter's Arqana December Breeding Stock Sale.

Explaining how he bought **Baby Rider**, Larrieu says: *"He was bred by Haras de Montaigu, a farm that breeds lots of winners every year, and as a yearling he walked just like a cat."*

Regarding short-term targets for the Pascal Bary-trained colt, who hails from the fruitful family of Gr.1 Derby hero **Wings Of Eagles**, the Chantilly Bloodstock man adds: *"He's still immature and should improve a lot again. His next outing will be in the Gr.1 Prix du Jockey Club, a race in which my main client Mr Bouchard has enjoyed a lot of success, as we won it with **Celtic Arms**, **Ragmar**, **Blue Canari** and **Dream Well**."*

*"However, since the Prix du Jockey Club distance has been shortened to 2100m, the [Gr.1] Poule d'Essai des Poulains could be the better springboard to fame, and I think **Baby Rider** would be better suited by the old trip of 2400m. However, we so far haven't seen any candidates who could be a **Sottsass**, so he deserves his chance."*

Crohanne, bred by the Adalene Partnership out of a winning **Makfi** three-parts-sister to Meydan Gr.2 winner **Military Law**, was purchased after she won a Saint-Cloud conditions race last month. The Mario Baratti-trained filly will be given further chances to gain a black-type success, Larrieu reports.

*"I think that with a bit more luck on Saturday, **Crohanne** could have finished closer to **Harajuku (Deep Impact)**, who she had beaten in the race before," he says. "She now goes for a Listed race and then the [Gr.3] Prix de Psyche."*

As well as finishing runner-up in the Prix Ganay, **Gold Trip** has also finished third in the Gr.1 Grand Prix de Paris and fourth in the Gr.1 Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. No wonder Larrieu was so keen to buy the Fabrice Chappet-trained colt's close relation **Sarkiyla**, a half-sister to his unraced dam **Sarvala (Dubai Destination)**, when she came up for sale as an 11-year-old in December.

She was bought by Larrieu for his own Haras de Saint Faust in the south-west of France. He says: *"I was very lucky to be able to buy such a good performer. She foaled a very, very attractive **Le Havre** colt in March and I have sent her to **City Light (Siyouni)**, because I saw her **Siyouni** yearling colt and he looks like a star, so I tried to produce a similar cross."*

City Light carried Bouchard's distinctive green silks and pink cap to victory twice in Gr.3 sprints and famously just failed to run down **Merchant Navy (Fastnet Rock)** when a short-head second in the Gr.1 Diamond Jubilee Stakes at Royal Ascot. He is standing his second season at Haras d'Etream at a fee of €7,000.

*"I must also say that **Sarkiyla's Distorted Humor** two-year-old filly looks very promising too. In the space of a few days the mare's pedigree improved significantly with **Gold Trip** in the second generation and **Saiydabad** in the first. Sometimes we all need a bit of luck!"*