

**FOLLOW THE SUCCESSFUL SIRE LINE
HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF!**

SCAT DADDY

Champion Sire of Sires

NO NAY NEVER

Champion First Season Sire (2018)
Leading Sire of Two-Year-Olds (2022)

CARAVAGGIO

Champion First Season Sire (2021)

SIOUX NATION

A Leading Sire (2022)

LAND FORCE

Year 1: 152 Mares | Year 2: 118 Mares

Leading First Season Sire at the 2021 foal sales
in terms of profitability index (James Thomas, Racing Post 16/12/21)

FIRST YEARLINGS SELLING SOON



The only son of No Nay Never standing in the UK

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SUMMER YEARLINGS ARQANA

From '€90 in the bank' to major players

LA MOTTERAYE

Scott Burton talks to the team behind La Motteraye

IF THE landscape of thoroughbred breeding across France is unrecognisable from the scene ten or 15 years ago, that is in large part because of the arrival of a new generation of stallion masters and breeders, most of whom travelled extensively before putting down roots in the Normandy soil.

Gwenaël Monneraye and Lucie Lamotte have become a growing influence in this new wave through their La Motteraye operation, which will consign 20 yearlings at Arqana August, including a very rare pearl indeed; the first product of 2019 Prix de Diane heroine Channel, a Sea The Stars filly who will make a little bit of Deauville history when she enters the ring.

As Monneraye explains, the couple returned from their travels with concrete plans, though they far outstripped their modest means.

"The accountant told us we had €90 in the bank and so, to begin with, there was no way we could buy horses to start breeding for ourselves," he says. "We absolutely had to find

some clients and the story revolves around the people we'd met on our travels. Wherever we went, we'd told people that one day we would go out on our own and that I would be calling them to send us a horse.

"That's exactly what we did and I'd say 20 per cent of people decided to help. But that was fine because we moved in on December 5 and began making calls the following day. By the evening of December 6, the stud was full."

Surveying the sweep of 140 acres of the present-day La Motteraye – soon to grow by another 50 – which nestle in a valley on the border between the Calvados and Orne departments, it is hard to

and, step by step, it began to snowball."

The early support of Sylvain Vidal and through him Gérard Augustin-Normand was a key break, while the farmer in Monneraye is adamant about the most pivotal element in the La Motteraye story.

"The major turning point was the purchase of our first land," he says. "It took six years from starting out, and owning our own land and building our own barn was like a real breath of fresh air."

"We were able to organise the work much better and we'd never had more than one or two staff, so there was no time to think. We were able to take a step back and really put a plan in place for the farm, investing in an intelligent way.

That was the real start."

Despite his easy personal manner, Monneraye is a man who plans almost obsessively.

The yearling barn is built with the finest materials and is a triumph of labour-saving design – "I

spent 15 years

mucking out for other people, so had a lot of time to think about how best to do it," he says – while the acquisition of their own land has enabled the couple to really grow their own breeding operation in parallel with consigning for clients.

"Since we've been here, we've bred [Group 3 winner] Pao Alto from a very small number of mares and then, when we got to 25 mares, [Tattersalls Gold Cup winner]

imagine such threadbare beginnings.

Monneraye says: "We rented everything, we couldn't buy anything. At the end of the first year we went to Arqana with the idea we could start a little bit of pinhooking and they lent us a not-inconsiderable amount of money. I can't say for sure I would have lent that kind of money to two people under the age of 30."

"But it worked because we were able to buy our first mare



Lucie Lamotte and Gwenaël Monneraye of La Motteraye, which will consign 20 yearlings to Arqana this month including (opposite page) the Sea The Stars filly out of Prix de Diane heroine Channel



Alenquer was born and raised on the farm," he says.

"More recently, we bred [Group 3 scorer] Deauville Legend and really the results prove this land is a tremendous boost to what we're doing.

"We've been able to continue investing in the broodmare band and we've attracted new clients."

Organisation and planning is key in the high-pressure environment of the August sale, whether it is liaising with agents for viewings or clients in the moments before a lot enters the ring.

In that sense, Monneraye's muscle memory of sales around the world will be crucial when the Channel filly goes through.

"When she goes into the ring there is obviously pressure but you are in a bubble at that stage," he says.

"You've done the maths and we put the reserve in only three lots beforehand. I leave it to the last moment because you are caught up in the action."

"We have 60 lots that go through the ring in December

but I manage to speak to each client at the last moment. It has to be then and it takes a lot of organisation. But I think it is our strength that we work so closely with people."

He clearly loves the cut and thrust of the sales ring, whether it is Newmarket in December or on a sultry Deauville summer night.

HE SAYS: "You might have a doubt whether one person or another is going to be in on a horse, but you get to know people and you can tell a lot by who does what when they are in the ring outside before they go into the pavilion."

"I worked for James Egan at Corduff Stud and he taught me a lot about reading the market for a particular horse at the last moment."

And what of the queen herself? Conscious not to favour one client over another, Monneraye is guarded about picking out highlights in the draft, but his eyes light up as we watch the Sea The Stars-Channel filly

(lot 234) led up in front of the offices.

"It's pretty extraordinary," he says. "I think it's the first time a first product of a Diane winner has gone through the Arqana ring. It's amazing to be entrusted with a filly like her."

Memories flood back to the joyous scenes at Chantilly, when Channel made the dreams of Samuel and Elodie de Barros come true, right at the start of their thoroughbred journey.

Monneraye says: "The owners have invested heavily over a short time, having previously been involved with trotters, and they have paid a lot for broodmares, while they have gone to Dubawi, Frankel and Sea The Stars for their covers."

"It's fantastic they trust us and, on top of that, they are lovely people who are very passionate about the game. We obviously want to sell the filly as well as possible and it's just a great thing to be involved with."

Monneraye compares his and his wife's travels around New Zealand, Australia and the US, as well as Britain and Ireland, to the way Chinese industrialists have observed and learned from their western counterparts.

"I can look the English in the eye now and say that I have put everything at my disposal into being as good as they are," he says.

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'When she goes into the ring there is pressure, but you are in a bubble at that stage'

Gwenaël Monneraye of La Motteraye