

## Haras de la Motteraye

# Spotlight

## Up and coming stud looks to the future



In 2009 Gwenael Monneraye and Lucie Lamotte opened the doors of their stud farm near Liseux in Normandy and La Motteraye Consignment was born. The couple, who are both in their early thirties, came up with the name by combining both of their surnames and it has since become a well-known feature at all of the major sales in France.

Gwenael spoke to us about their past experiences and future hopes as the pair put the finishing touches to their draft of yearlings for the final sales of the year.

*"I had travelled a lot and worked for many different studs before I met Lucie, who has a background in trotting racing, in 2005 while working for Haras d'Etremham. We then set off travelling together so that Lucie could have the same experiences as I had. We worked in many different countries, including New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, England and the United States. We both felt it was very important to see as much as possible of different methods of working with horses in other countries. It was also a good way of making contacts abroad and that was proven when many of the people we met during our travels supported us in the early days when we started up the stud in 2009.*

*"We were lucky enough to have success right from the beginning as from our very first yearling sale in 2010 we sold two Group winners in **Leupartie**, who won a Gr.3 and was placed in a Gr.2 as a three-year-old for owner Gerard Augustin-Normand, and **Abu Sidra**, who won a Gr.3 for Jean-Francois Bernard. Leupartie, who we sold for €25,000 to Sylvain Vidal, was particularly special as she was one of the very first horses to arrive at the stud on the day we opened for business.*

*"We have around 15 mares on the farm at the moment, which is the most that we can have with the current size of the stud. We are in the process of buying 40 more hectares so that we expand further. The plan is to keep our current farm for the sales preparation and use the new part for breeding so we can grow that area of our business further in the future. We normally receive around 15 foals after the December Sales from Irish and English clients who wish to keep them in France to be prepared for the yearling sales the following year, which allows us to have good quality yearlings. We also like to purchase foals in partnership with our clients to pinhook them the following year. We keep adding on stables each year and we currently have 30 boxes on the farm so we prepare around*



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30 yearlings per sale. This means that we have to be tough in our selection of the yearlings we are going to prepare. We prefer to make our selections based on our clients rather than an individual horse. I feel it is more important to continue working with clients with whom you have a good relationship and prepare all of their horses, rather than refuse some just to accept an individual yearling for somebody else. This year for example we prepped less horses for the Arqana August Sale as some of our clients asked us to take yearlings for the Osarus Sales, so we needed extra space for those horses.”

La Motteraye continue to cement their reputation as top-class consignors of yearlings and they once again ranked in the top ten vendors of both the Arqana August Yearling Sale and the v.2 Sale. “We had an excellent sale this year in August at Deauville, the highlight of which was selling a **Monsun** filly for €650,000 for a new client. I hope this success continues for our clients for the rest of the sales this year. We had 75 yearlings entered for the forthcoming Arqana October Sale and once again we have had to whittle it down to 30. We have a really nice draft of horses for that sale, with three yearlings by **Le Havre**, who is proving to be a very popular stallion at the moment. Some of our yearlings for the October Sale would not have been out of place in the August catalogue. I don’t like picking out individual horses to talk about at the risk of offending our other clients. We should have the same amount of horses again in December, 15 of which will be foals and mares. Selling foals is not as popular in France as selling yearlings at auction, but it is something I am keen to try and develop further in the future. I really



enjoy selling foals and I love pinhooking too. Although it will take a long time to become as popular as the yearling category, it keeps getting better each year.

“Our client base is 75% foreign and 25% French. Most of the foreign clients come from Ireland and England, but we also work with people from Australia, America, Germany, Italy and Spain to name just a few. The French breeding system has shown time and time again that it works well so lots of people want to give it a try here. After they have tried it once, then they want to keep going as it can be very interesting.

“This has been a great year for French stallions, such as **Le Havre**, **Siyouni** and **Kendargent**, which is a huge boost to breeding in France. We have only had good reports from our clients, but it is important to sell well in order to encourage existing ones to continue working with us and to attract new clients too. It is very important to have horses that are right for sales and for racing, that is our best form of advertisement. This year we have been lucky to have some of our graduates performing well on the track, including **Zejel**, who was Gr.3-placed behind **Thawaany** in Deauville and was also fourth in the Gr.1 Prix Maurice de Gheest, **To My Valentine**, who was Listed and Gr.3-placed before being exported to the USA to continue her career, as well as **Wednaan**, a **Dubawi** colt that we sold for €450,000 two years ago and has since been Gr.3-placed at Meydan for Mike de Kock. **Mambomiss** has also been placed in a Gr.3 this year, **Danza Cavallo** won at Listed level and **Auction** was Listed-placed. We have a great team on the stud, they are very young and dynamic and they have all travelled a lot, so they too have experience from all over the world. We have completely renovated the stud since we bought it and have installed a new walker, as well as creating separate paddocks for the colts and fillies. It has taken a lot of time and effort, but it is a real investment in the future. Our sales preparation is developed especially for each individual horse. We have a massive board on the wall with all the details of how long each horse should be walked per day and who should walk it etc. I prepared yearlings with James Egan at Corduff Stud and I have learned to be meticulous from him. We also work closely with a vet, nutritionist and chiropractor to make sure that every horse gets every care possible before it turns up at the sale.”

Just from listening to Gwenael speak, it is evident that this is a couple that are going places and it is clear why their clients remain faithful to La Motteraye year after year. “In the future we would really like to develop the breeding side of our business further. We will never prep more than 40 horses for a sale as I feel it is hard to focus on each individual once you pass that number. I would love to continue developing our partnerships with our clients and to keep pinhooking in both England and France.” The success of La Motteraye to date is clearly only the tip of the iceberg for the future.

SALLY ANN GRASSICK