

La Motteraye On The Rise

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Lucie Lamotte and Gwenael Monneraye | *Kelsey Riley*

By Kelsey Riley

La Motteraye has become a familiar name on the French sales scene in recent years and, in just six years of existence has already outgrown itself, as evidenced by the fact that owners Lucie Lamotte and Gwenael Monneraye purchased a new and larger property to accommodate their burgeoning business just two weeks ago. La Motteraye, which this week sends 39 mares and foals through the ring, is located 45 minutes from Deauville.

Lamotte explained that she and Monneraye enjoy consigning, but now plan to expand their business to include more breeding.

“We have about 25 mares on the farm and we’d like to keep it around that amount,” she said. “We [board] for clients in France and abroad and we have a few of our own mares.”

Lamotte and Monneraye started La Motteraye in December 2009 at a 30-hectare property they rented just a kilometer from their new land. Lamotte noted they were supported from the beginning by some key players in France and abroad.

“We started quite quickly; Sylvain Vidal from La Cauviniere was buying a lot of mares out of training and he helped us by putting plenty of mares on our farm, so we started with him,” she said. “We had people like Liam Norris and William Huntingdon buy a few foals and they were very confident in us.”

La Motteraye sent out its first consignment at the 2010 Arqana August yearling sale, and the results could hardly have worked out better: all eight lots were sold, with three going on to be group-level horses.

“It was a very good draft and every year we’re getting bigger and bigger,” Lamotte said. “Now we’re trying to focus on less horses, but more quality. We always had it in our heads to be consignors; we loved prepping yearlings, so we wanted that to be our focus.”

The improving quality of the La Motteraye program is evident in this year's draft, which includes foals by the likes of La Havre (Ire), Mastercraftsman (Ire), Raven's Pass and young sires Planteur (Ire), Dabirsim (Fr) and Wootton Bassett (GB) as well as mares in foal to the likes of La Havre, Olympic Glory (Ire) and Toronado (Ire).

"We have a very good draft this year; every year it's getting better and better," Lamotte said. "We have very good mares in foal to good stallions like Le Havre, Olympic Glory, and Toronado and good, well-bred foals."

Lamotte noted the continued improvement of the French breeding industry—fueled by the French racing premiums—has helped she and Monneraye kick-start their business.

"The premiums were a big help for us," she said. "When we started all the English, Irish, Spanish, and Italians wanted to breed in France and use our system. It's so well-made; it's very good for breeders. It was a big help in us starting our business and we hope it will continue like that."

Lamotte said they purchased three foals at Tattersalls last week, and said she would eventually like to put their business on the global map.

"I think one day we'd love to go to the U.S. [to buy] foals," she said. "We would prefer first to concentrate on Europe, but one day we'd like to buy some foals in the U.S. There is a big, big market there."