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ALEXANDRA ROSE TAKES GRADE 3 MONROVIA HANDICAP AT SANTA ANITA, TEAM VALOR INTERNATIONAL/JUAN VAN HEERDEN MARE WINS SPRINTING, STABLE RUNS FIRST AND THIRD IN \$100,000 GRASS STAKES DOWN THE HILL

Alexandra Rose started the year off with a bang for her owner Team Valor International by storming to a three-quarter length victory on New Year's Day in the Grade 3 Monrovia Handicap sprinting 6 ½ furlongs down the infield hillside turf course at Santa Anita.

Rafael Bejarano allowed the 6-year-old bay mare a chance to settle in the run down the hill and kept her widest of all crossing the dirt path into the homestretch. When Bejarano cut her loose in the lane, the 6 to 1 chance had no trouble collaring Team Valor's other distaffer Audacious Chloe and was starting to draw away nearing the finish.



Alexandra Rose led a 1-3 finish in Grade 3 for Team Valor stable.

Alexandra Rose earned \$66,240 for the victory, her second in a stakes following a triumph at 2 in the Golden Slipper Stakes at Greyville.



Rafael Bejarano rode Alexandra Rose.

"This was the first time I've been on her. I didn't want to use her speed too early, so I was able to follow the speed. When we passed the quarter pole she was handling the course real well and she tried real hard. She tried to get out with me just a little bit, but she's a very good horse."

The South African mare capped a big first day of 2008 for the globally involved stable, as from four runners today TVI scored wins in feature races with two South African mares in Alexandra Rose and Jacaranda Jane (Turfway Park), ran second in a maiden race in Cape Town with another South African filly and got third in the Monrovia when favored Audacious Chloe was moved up from fourth on a disqualification.

Acquired by Team Valor after she had become a Grade 2 winner in South Africa, Alexandra Rose was narrowly beaten in a photo finish at 3 by Champion Bad Girl Runs for the Grade 1 Cape Fillies Guineas 2 years ago and showed she still had an interest in racing last season when she ran well for second in a Listed stakes in Dubai when trained by Mike de Kock.

Sent to Neil Drysdale in California, Alexandra Rose experienced some tenderness in her front feet, which required considerable patience on the part of her connections.



Winning connections in Monrovia winners' circle.

“She turned the corner last month when I had the blacksmith square off both front toes,” the trainer said. “Since then she has been training like the Grade 1 mare we always thought she would be for us. I think we will point her next for the Grade 2 Buena Vista going a mile, which is her best distance.”

Alexandra Rose is a daughter of Caesour, sire for Team Valor of its international Champion Filly Irridescence. Alexandra Bi, the dam, is a daughter of leading European broodmare sire Darshaan and is currently represented by the very promising South African-based Oaks candidate Albizia, best in 2 of 3 outings for the owner-breeder Varsfontein Stud.