

January 21, 2012

## COMTESSE DUBOIS LAST-TO-FIRST NECK WINNER IN LAISSERFAIRE STAKES BARRY IRWIN YEARLING BUY TOPS ELDERS, RECORD NOW 4 WINS, 8 RACES TEAM VALOR'S SPRINTER IS LIKELY TO BE IMPORTED TO UNITED STATES



Comtesse Dubois, facing older fillies and mares, surged from last to first under veteran reinsman Glen Hatt to win today's Laisserfaire Stakes by a neck going 5 ½ furlongs on turf at Kenilworth race course.

Among 5 runners in a field of 7 trained by Justin Snaith, Comtesse Dubois drifted from her 7 to 2 morning line to the 5 to 1 third choice behind another pair of Snaith sprinters, but when push came to shove, the powerful sophomore was a convincing winner, while conceding 6.6 pounds to the second-place finisher, an English-sired daughter of Celtic Swing owned by Mrs. Graham Beck.



Comtesse Dubois (black cap) always was cut out to be a black-type winner, having run a good second to the top sprinter-miler Trinity House in her debut, winning her second outing for fun and becoming Grade 3 placed at 2. In 4 starts this season, she now has 3 wins and an unplaced behind Val de Ra, the top sprinter regardless of sex in South Africa. Val de Ra beat JJ The Jet Plane and What a Winter in the very next race to claim yet another title and a Grade 1 win in South Africa.

Riding the filly for the first time, Glen Hatt took Comtesse Dubois back after the break, settled her in the rear of the field along the outside rail. Halfway through the race, Hatt allowed the powerful bay filly to extend her stride. In the final furlong and a half, Hatt got Comtesse Dubois into a great rhythm and drove her to catch leading Sweet Aria with 50 yards remaining and pushed her out to win by more than a neck at the wire.

Comtesse Dubois from 8 career outings, now has 4 wins, a black-type score and a Grade 3 placing.

Barry Irwin, who bought her at the National Yearling Sale, says "She looks good enough to race successfully in the United States and we will make plans to export her. "Our plan in buying yearlings in South Africa is always to find horses capable of cutting it in America and importing them. This filly fits the profile perfectly. She should have a good career in the U. S. sprinting on turf and synthetics."

Comtesse Dubois is stakes winner 122 to represent a racing partnership formed since 1987 by Irwin and she was winning stakes race number 249. This was TVI's first stakes win of 2012.



*Justin Snaith (trainer) and Jono Snaith (racing manager) got the job done today.*