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BRIGANTIN FLIES HOME GALLANT THIRD IN GOLD CUP AT ROYAL ASCOT TEAM VALOR HOMEBRED MAY HEAD DOWN UNDER TO MELBOURNE CUP MUNROS, FUREYS AND TOURING CREW WITNESS STRONG PERFORMANCE

Team Valor International's homebred Brigantin jumped into the mix for Australia's premier race, the \$6.3-million Melbourne Cup Handicap, when he overcame less-than-ideal ground conditions on June 15 and gutted out a third-place finish in the Gold Cup, the history-laden anchor of the elite Royal Ascot meet.

Barry Irwin, Team Valor's founder and CEO, was not feeling it throughout the day as he monitored the increasingly soggy conditions. Brigantin's best races had come over much firmer ground, including his wins in the Group 2 Prix Vicomtesse and Group 3 Prix de Lutece in France for master trainer Andre Fabre.



Team Valor revelers Julie Furey and Kimberly Munro greet Brigantin after his game third-place finish in the 2 ¼-mile Gold Cup, the oldest and most prestigious race of the elite five-day schedule at Royal Ascot

The Gold Cup also happened to be, by far, the strongest test of Brigantin's career, with Irish classic winner Fame And Glory leading the credential list along with Godolphin Racing's Group 2 winner Opinion Poll and the ten-year-old warrior Geordieland, who finished second or third in this race to the sensational Yeats three years in a row from 2007 to 2009.

Fame And Glory, from Aidan O'Brien's powerhouse yard that also accounted for Yeats, attracted most of the betting action as the 11-to-8 standout in a field of 15, while Brigantin took some late pounding down to 16-to-1 odds as he entered the stalls for the 2 1/2-mile marathon.

Brigantin, in the hands of young prodigy Pierre-Charles Boudot, looked uncomfortable early as he dug into the good-to-soft course from a midpack position. When Fame And Glory took command in the undulating straightaway, Brigantin began picking up steam with an assertive ride from Boudot, and the Kentucky-bred Cozzene colt spurted into the third spot approaching the wire, a fruitful and promising result considering the Melbourne Cup will almost certainly be contested on firm turf.

Brigantin's effort was especially satisfying since Dave and Kimberly Munro and Tom and Julie Furey, members of the partnership that races him, was there to see it along with eight other Team Valor partners who were on a tour of England.

Flemington racecourse will be the stage on November 1 for the Melbourne Cup, known quite literally as the "Race That Stops a Nation." The two-mile fixture happened to be won last year by a Kentucky-bred, American, who was based in France.

Team Valor and Craig and Holly Bendoroff's Denali Stud bred Brigantin along with Fabre's wife, Elisabeth. With the Group 1-placing, Brigantin is the 62nd Group or Grade 1 horse to race for an Irwin partnership. Ascot Gold Cup video [link](#)