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## BRIGANTIN ON HIS WAY TO GROUP 1 ASCOT GOLD CUP AFTER FRENCH WIN TEAM VALOR HOME-BRED WINS GROUP 2 VICTOMTESSE VIGIER IN PARIS COZZENE COLT MAKES ALL FOR TRAINER ANDRE FABRE AT LONGCHAMP

Team Valor International home-bred Brigantin punched his ticket for next month's famed Group 1 Ascot Gold Cup at the Royal Ascot meeting in England with a gutsy nose victory at Longchamp in Paris in the Group 2 Prix Vicomtesse Vigier.

The chestnut son of Cozzene was making his third start of his 4-year-old campaign for trainer Andre Fabre, for whom the Kentucky-bred had begun the season slowly, running down the course in a Listed event over 12 furlongs, followed by a much improved fourth last time in his first try over the marathon distance of 15 ½ furlongs (half a furlong short of 2 miles).



*Brigantin runs sensational 22-second final quarter to win Group 2.*

In Sunday's race, the \$182,723 Vicomtesse Vigier, Brigantin was sharp in his second start over the marathon distance and when a likely pacesetter veered off course early, Brigantin made the pace. The stocky, powerful colt rated kindly for young rider Pierre-Charles Boudot, who last season rode Brigantin to his and the jockey's first Group win in the Group 3 Prix Lutece.

Brigantin was challenged repeatedly from a half-mile out to the wire and he had just enough to hold off the heavy favorite Dunaden by a short head. Dunaden had beaten Brigantin about a length and a quarter one race earlier in the Grade 3 Prix de Barbeville. In that race, Boudot was unable to ride Brigantin because he had fallen earlier in the week and French rules dictate that once a fallen rider has been taken to hospital, he must wait a certain period of time before he is allowed to resume riding.

Third place, about 2 ½ lengths farther back came Marinous, who was looking to give trainer Freddy Head a memorable double, as earlier on the card he had saddled the incomparable Goldikova to a 13<sup>th</sup> Group 1 victory.

Brigantin now sports a record of 4 wins and 4 seconds in 12 outings and actually won another black-type event from which he was disqualified when he was inadvertently carried too little weight in a stakes event in France.

It is now off to the world famous Ascot Gold Cup over 2 ¼ miles next month at Royal Ascot, where Team Valor International will be on tour with several partners in England during mid June. Megan Jones is conducting the tour of England. Later in the month, Miss Jones will be taking another Team Valor group to South Africa for a trip centered around the Durban July Stakes at Greyville.

Like Kentucky Derby hero Animal Kingdom, Brigantin was produced by a mare imported from Germany to race in America for Team Valor.