



Thailand Purchase Provides Team Valor With a Huge Lick Medaglia d'Oro Weanling Realizes \$470,000 at Keeneland Handsome Bay is Second Top Selling Colt in First Session

By Jessica Martini/Nov. 6, 2018

Following the exploits of dual champion Songbird (Medaglia d'Oro) two years ago, Team Valor International's Barry Irwin struck to secure the filly's half-sister Wide Range (Mineshaft) and repatriated the then 11-year-old mare from Thailand. Her first foal born since she returned to the U.S., a colt by Medaglia d'Oro ([hip 237](#)), went through the ring at Keeneland Monday and sold for \$470,000 to Clear Ridge Stables.



"I've tried to do a couple of traditional investments in the last couple of years and Wide Range was one of those," Irwin said. "It wasn't that difficult to find her. The guy who had her was a regular buyer at Keeneland and he bought well-bred horses as cheaply as possible. So finding her wasn't the tough part. But there were so many hoops to jump through to get her here. The route of travel for this horse was something crazy. The dam had to go from Thailand to South Korea and then some other interim place, then Alaska and Chicago. It was unbelievable, but it turned out to be worth it."

Wide Range, who is already the dam of graded stakes winner Mico Margarita (Run Away and Hide), is currently in foal to Violence.

Even as he enjoyed Monday's sales ring success, Irwin was focused on a new dimension he has added to his Team Valor operation.

"We buy horses, syndicate them and it's a vehicle for people to have some entertainment, to enjoy themselves," Irwin explained of the traditional Team Valor partnerships which have included 2011 GI Kentucky Derby winner Animal Kingdom (Leroidesanimaux {Brz}). "We don't do it telling people that this is an investment or a financial opportunity. However, going forward, we are going to have a division of our company that does try to do things on a for-profit basis."

Irwin and Team Valor executive team member Jessica Berry got the new investment-minded division of Team Valor started last month at the Arqana October Yearling Sale.

"A couple of weeks ago, I went to the Arqana sale and I bought five yearlings," Irwin said. "They are all fillies and I've given them to trainers in the South of France with the idea of racing them, winning a race and then selling them."

The most expensive of the five Arqana purchases was a daughter of Siyouni (Fr) ([hip 5](#)) acquired for €95,000. The group also included a pair of daughters of Dabirsim (Fr) and fillies by War Command and Camelot (GB).

The decision to purchase yearlings with an eye towards re-selling was made after a competitive season trying to buy 2-year-olds, according to Irwin.

"I am in the market every day of the racing season," Irwin said. "I was only able to buy one filly in Europe this entire year as a 2-year-old, Devant (Fr) (Showcasing {GB}). She worked out well. She won the G3 Prix Miesque and she got beaten a nose in the G3 Six Perfections. But she was the only one I was able to buy."





"And all of the other ones were bought at that Arqana October sale for about \$20,000 and \$80,000. I figured, 'What the hell? I'm just going to go to that sale, find some I like myself, race them and try to sell them.'"

The five yearlings are a test run for Team Valor and it could expand in the years ahead.

"I want to try this one first and see how it goes next year," Irwin said. "Then, if it goes well, we will branch out into a few different sales."

Irwin concluded, "I want people to know that we are continuing to do the partnerships, but we have had a change of direction and we are also going to do things on a for-profit basis. So if anybody sees one of my horses and it interests them, I don't want them to say, 'It's Team Valor, they'll never sell it.' I want them to look at me as a guy who will sell a good horse." [@JessMartiniTDN](#)