

Paul's success raging on

By Peter Foley

A \$10,000 mare retired as a maiden with a fractured knee, then unwanted at auction and nearly lost to colic has become the unlikely heroine of Paul Butterworth's accidental breeding success story.

Butterworth's career has a habit of turning on lucky moments, such as trainer Barry Miller offering the then 31-year-old greenhorn a job.

Butterworth bought Whistling Loren cheaply in 2020. Two years later, after 11 starts and four placings, she fractured a knee and her racing career was over.

Paul told the story in the raceday stalls at Ipswich after his filly Raging Raider, the first foal out of Whistling Loren, won her first race last Wednesday.

Whistling Loren is by Vancouver out of Miss Loren, who has also produced the Paul Snowden-trained Raging Force, by Cosmic Force, and Vantorix, by Captivant.

Raging Force won the Group 3 San Domenico Stakes last year. Vantorix, trained by Jenny Graham, won the Group 2 Spirit of Boom Classic during the Brisbane winter.

After Whistling Loren's final race, Butterworth and her other owners put her through the sale ring. There was no interest, so they bought her back.

"There was no one in the vendor's box, so they knocked it down for the first bid," he said.

"We didn't really want to breed with her, but we had no option. We sent her to Under the Louvre, and Raging Raider is the result. The family has just exploded."

But the story has remained precarious. Whistling Loren nearly died of colic after producing Raging Raider, and Butterworth said the mare was now bred only every second year.

As an owner, Butterworth had shares in a horse trained by Peter Moody when he was 18 but he had little to do with horses until much later.

"I put my first head collar on one when I was 31," he said.

He was taken on by Brisbane trainer Barry Miller, a salt-of-the-earth horseman nearing the end of his career. Stole It was his best horse at the time.

"I'd never touched one, and his foreman had left, and the company I was working for wanted me to sign a five-year contract, and I didn't want to do that," he said.

Before Barry came into the picture, Paul had played cricket in Melbourne and spent a season in England with Ripley in Surrey. He had planned to return home and coach.

"My girlfriend at the time was working there and Barry said: 'Do you want to work for me?' and I'm like: 'I don't know what I'm doing' and he said: 'I'll teach you.'

"He was great, Barry. He threw me into the deep end. I was either gonna sink or swim.

"He was a champion. Not many people got his humour. It was just the best. Real dry.

"He taught me so much without telling me; he just went: 'Go and do it' and made me work it out myself.



Raging Raider, with Ben Thompson in the saddle (orange and white colours) gets the better of his rivals before winning the Barrier Reef Pools Maiden Plate (1350m). (Trackside Photography)

"If I was smart enough to work it out, I was gonna be all right. If I wasn't, well, I was probably gonna get kicked.

"Stole It was an absolute weapon. Would try and kill you every day, that horse. So that taught me a lot too."

After two years with Barry, Paul went to Bart Cummings' stable. He strapped Viewed when he won the 2008 Melbourne Cup.

His next move was to Patrick Payne's stable as head foreman. He was part of the team that quinnelaed the 2010 Adelaide Cup.

Taking up an offer from an owner to buy him some horses led to a return to Queensland and training in his own right.

In 2017, Capital Gain, ridden by Jim Byrne, won the Group 1 JJ Atkins Stakes (1600m), thrusting Paul on to the national stage.

"It all happened a bit too quick; got given a lot of horses before I was really ready for them. If I had my time over again, I'd love to have knocked a lot of those horses back and concentrated on still developing," he said.



Jim Byrne drives Capital Gain to an outstanding win in the 2017 JJ Atkins Stakes (1600m) at Doomben. (Just Horseracing)

"But I feel like we've got a good understanding of the horses we've got now.

"We haven't got the big champions, and we're

buying \$20,000, \$50,000 horses, so it's getting hard to compete, but the stable's started the season terrific."



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