

Louis Goosen turns out a smart Graded winner

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THE pristine condition of trainer Louis Goosen's premises at the Vaal and his immaculate stable management would fool any visitor into thinking he runs a large championship yard, but Louis has always believed in quality over quantity.

He limits his stable to 20 or a maximum of 25 horses which makes it very hard to compete on the big stage since many low-profile trainers with similarly small strings view training as a hobby, resulting in generally limited across-the-board support from owners.

While he under-rates himself with his limiting belief that he does not have the mettle to train a big string, Louis's horsemanship has in recent months started to attract the type of level-up thoroughbred from which Graded winners can be produced.

The Goosen stable was very proud to have as many as three runners among the final acceptors for Champions Day, Saturday and it was good to see Louis' R60 000 Ready To Run purchase Waywest Goddess score a Grade 2 victory in the Fillies Nursery over 1160m.

Summerhill-bred Waywest Goddess packed too much speed for her opposition and won smartly from Ibrox Park and Stormy Coast. Louis also took fourth place with Maiden Cotton Candy, who produced a terrific run and looks set to win her fair share of races.

Waywest Goddess surprised racing enthusiasts with a runaway win over Empire Rose in the Ruffian Stakes over 1000m at the Vaal in March. While Goosen had her in similarly impressive physical shape for this race, he expressed his reservations about the daughter of Way West's ability to see out the extra distance on a soft track.

But Waywest Goddess proved that she is something special, coming from just off the pacemakers this time and running on strongly under Deon Sampson and with unused reserves in her tank. Considering her pedigree, Waywest Goddess will probably turn out to be similarly effective up to 1400m as an older filly.

"We're a small stable but we come to the races to be competitive," Goosen said. Owned by Claude Comaroff and Eric and Evelyn Joel's of Corryvreckan Racing, Waywest Goddess has returned her purchase price almost sixfold with two feature wins from four starts. She won't be stopping here!

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