

Farm Life

An initial entry provided by Philip Tyndall.

Background

Starspect, better known to all as Speccy, is a very laid-back, lovely natured horse. As a young filly at Cumbre Stud she was always friendly and liked to hangout at the back of the pack. As a stabled horse at a city-racing stable she continues to be friendly and popular with all who have contact with her. She is still relaxed and unfazed by noise and fuss. It is hoped her relaxed nature will contribute to her potential as a staying type.

Her sire (father) was the Irish shuttle stallion Spectrum, and her dam (mother) was UK bred Star of Grosvenor, who was brought to Australia as a brood mare. Starspect is her third foal. Other horses by Spectrum currently racing include the mare Wild Iris, racing in this week's Caulfield Cup, and Cargo Cult, a promising local stayer

Early Education and Training

Speccy began her early education during the spring of 2004. She was educated and pre-trained by Gavin Beever in the rural atmosphere of Cumbre Stud, a 300 acres stud and pre-training property at Sedgwick, south of Bendigo. Over many months, Gavin slowly built up her strength and stamina. In early summer she was sent to the Caulfield stables of trainer Tony Vasil, who also trains Speccy's stable-mate, the filly Testa Reale.

During the summer Speccy did light track-work at Caulfield and became acclimatised to city life before returning in the early autumn to Cumbre for a spell in the paddock. While many of her age group were in serious training for the autumn 2 year-old races, Speccy had her head down eating and growing and enjoying country life. But it wasn't all rest and recreation as Gavin rode her regularly to maintain a base level of fitness.

In late autumn this year he began a program of slow build up work ("walk-trot-canter") over a couple of months until she was fit and ready to go back to Caulfield. By the time Speccy returned to her city stable she had grown considerably. To my eye, she began to look like a real stayer, yet different in shape to most Australian staying types of today. With her long body and large rear-end, she reminded me of the champion racehorses more likely seen in old paintings of great stayers; perhaps thatr shape has something to do with her European bloodlines. If only Speccy can measure up to the feats of some of those champions.