

Archers Bay to test waters stateside

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

For Iris Bristow, winning the second jewel of the Canada's Triple Crown was every bit as sweet as the first.

The Campbellville breeder said she had a lot more confidence in Archers Bay's ability to triumph at the Prince of Wales than during last month's Queen's Plate.

"After the Queen's Plate, we knew he had the stamina," explained the co-owner of Archers Bay.

Still, however favoured Archers Bay may have been, it didn't lessened Bristow's excitement at Fort Erie as she watched her three-year-old make a remarkable rally down the stretch to victory.

The Canadian-owned colt trailed by a full 12 lengths at one point but eventually took the win in a solid 1:55:20. He shaded Nite Dreamer — fourth at the Queen's Plate — by one-and-a-half lengths.

Recalled Bristow of the race, "What can I say, it was just great."

No crown shot

Her champion thoroughbred became the fifth Plate winner to double up in the Wales in the last 10 years, though he won't get the opportunity to complete the Triple Crown in the Breeders' Stakes on the grass of Woodbine August 16.

Instead, Bristow, co-owner Eugene Melnyk and trainer Todd Pletcher, will test the waters of big-money events in the United States.

"I'd loved to stick around and go after the Triple Crown, but you have to do what's best for the horse's career," Bristow said. "We all believe he's capable of winning down south now so that's where we're heading."

"The timing just won't work out with the final leg of the Crown."

The move is just another indication of how the attraction of the Crown seems to be dwindling each year. Last summer's Plate winner, Awesome Again, didn't even wait around for the Prince of Wales before heading stateside.

The fact that the Canadian Crown no longer offers a \$1-million bonus is one of the chief reasons behind its fading popularity for premier thoroughbreds.

On to Saratoga

One of the first targets on the Archers Bay team's hit list is Saratoga, where Awesome Again captured the Grade 2 Jim Dandy Stakes last year.

"Archers Bay is an extremely capable horse. It's going to be very exciting to see what unfolds for him," said Bristow.

Despite his premature departure from the Canadian circuit, Archers Bay will still be eligible for postseason honours. A horse must make a minimum of three starts in the country to be in line for a Sovereign Award.

The Prince of Wales was Archers Bay's third.

Another highlight in Bristow's career came Friday at Belmont where two of her rookies — Kitridgebay and Fontbelle — each took second place in their respective racing debuts.



File photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Archers Bay (seen here with jockey Kent Desormeaux) won his second jewel in the Canadian Triple Crown recently, but won't be going after the sweep later this summer.

Third time lucky

The third time was a charm for Milton's peewees lacrosse team.

Finishing runners-up at their own tournament and another in Brampton earlier this season, the Mavericks finally shed their bridesmaid status with a championship performance in Burlington.

Capping a stellar weekend, they destroyed the Samia Pacers 8-2 in the title match.

Matt Lenardon led offensively with four goals — three of them coming within a six-minute span in the second period. Captain Matt Chuchmach, Mark Galick, Creighton Reid and Matt Reid were the other marksmen.

The tournament served as a warm-up for the provincial championships in two weeks.

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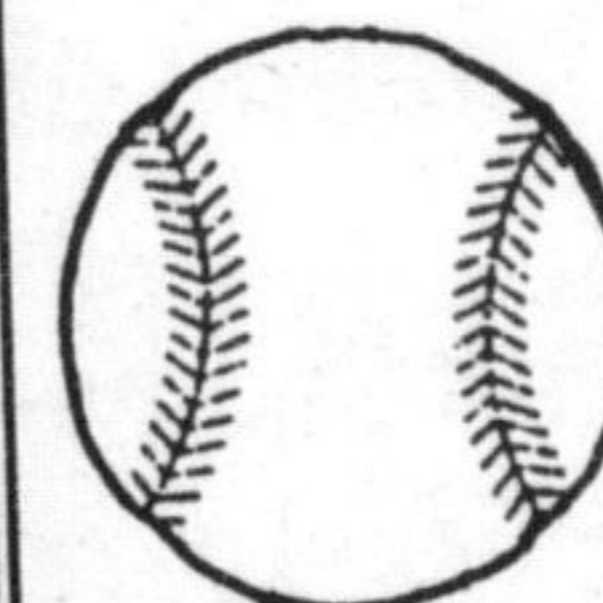
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