



A Blast From The Past

Blue Reading: A Colorful Competitor

by JACKIE BARNES

Blue Reading was a multiple stakes winner of 17 races in a colorful career spanning five years from 1949 to 1953. The bay colt was bred in California by Mrs. A. W. Ryan, wife of Ryana Ranch and Northridge Farms owner J. W. Ryan, and was foaled on Feb. 11, 1947. He had a number of outstanding racing achievements in his career. Many of these records have ties to the Golden State's current breeding and racing programs.

At two, Blue Reading had made a few starts for his breeder before attracting the attention of leading trainer R. H. McDaniel, who claimed the colt at the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club on Sept. 1, 1949, for \$6,500 on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Clement L. Hirsch.

Under the guidance of McDaniel, the colt thrived in his new surroundings. Blue Reading went on a seven-race winning streak, including a victory over the highly regarded Your Host in the Homebred Stakes at Bay Meadows Racecourse on Oct. 12. This marked the first stakes win for his owners, as well as his sire Reading II (Aus).

The colt also won the Salinas Handicap and San Bruno Stakes to be ranked with Your Host as the two best colts in the West. His reputation grew even more after his length victory over Competing Beau in the 1 1/16-mile El Camino Stakes on Dec. 10.

In his final start at two, Blue Reading came up short in the \$72,500 California Breeders' Champion Stakes at seven furlongs finishing a distant second to Your Host.

At year's end, he was ranked at 114 pounds on the Experimental Free Handicap to Your Host at 118.

In the summer of 1950, as the season moved to Del Mar, Blue Reading excelled at the seaside venue with a win in the La Jolla Handicap. His final time of 1:36 equaled the track record.

Blue Reading had a breakout season at age four, winning three major stakes at Del Mar. Following his win in the Bing Crosby Handicap, he set a new track of 1:41 3/5 with his resounding victory in the San Diego Handicap. With this win, he went over \$100,000 in career earnings, a first for both his sire and his breeder.

After winning a minor Bay Meadows stakes race at five, Blue Reading scored his final two victories at age six at Santa Anita Park. After winning the Santa Catalina Handicap by a nose on Jan. 10, he won the San Carlos Handicap just seven days later.

Blue Reading's career totals were 57-17-12-6 for earnings of \$185,745. Ten of those placings came against stakes competition.

His sire was a multiple stakes winner of 10 races in Australia, including the AJC Derby and St. Leger and VRC Derby and St. Leger. He was imported to the United States by Louis B. Mayer where he set a new track record with his victory in the 1942 Green Velvet Handicap.

The stakes-placed, seven-time winner Blue Alibi, dam of Blue Reading, was a Ryana Ranch homebred. She was an Alibhai (GB) full sister to stakes winner Style Prince and half-sister to stakes winner Allied Glory. This mare also produced Blue Reading's stakes-placed full brother Bold Reading, as well as his stakes-winning half-brothers Apple Valley and Alibi Blue.

Clement L. Hirsch was a leader in Southern California racing for more than four decades. A highly successful businessman, he campaigned numerous stakes winners, including world record-setter Figonero (Arg), Del Mar Futurity winner June Darling and grade I winner Magical Maiden, the granddam of current Legacy Ranch stallion Papa Clem.

Blue Reading was a talented hard-knocking individual. California's history was greatly enriched by his efforts, along with the classy and colorful people who surrounded him. 🐾



\$29,750 Santa Catalina Handicap—January 10, 1953

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\$23,350 San Carlos Handicap—January 17, 1953

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