



Kango has outfinished the tough as teak Cranbourne to win the Superstars at Addington last Friday night.

## Bruce Brodie now laughing all the way to the bank

**Hamilton's Bruce Brodie admits to being very disillusioned with the game at one time.**

He'd taken three yearling colts from his mare Dana Maguire to the sales and each of them had been passed in.

"They didn't even make it out of the box for a look and the last one didn't get one bid," said the now 86-year-old Brodie.

When that happened, Brodie stopped breeding from the mare.

But Brodie is having the last laugh because the first two colts were handy performers in four-time winner The C E O and Henry Hu, a winner three times in Auckland before a sale to Australia where he won his first start at Menangle in 1.52.

Henry Hu was sold after the Karaka sale to Barry Purdon and Chris Ryder.

And the third colt is Kango, who recorded his 10<sup>th</sup> win when he took out the Group 2 Superstars Championship in 3.07.8, home in 55.5, at Addington last Friday night.

Kango won five of his first six starts in late 2020, started in last year's New Zealand Cup, and has been in great

form since winning the Franklin Cup on New Year's Eve.

The five-year-old son of American Ideal has to date raced 32 times for his 10 wins and \$166,000 and is now being set for the Taylor Mile and Messenger.

All of which is a fair departure from what Brodie has been used to.

The former dairy farmer had won a few races with the gallopers Belmont and Suddenly under trainer Evan Rayner, but it was only when he moved to Mystery Creek about 18 years ago that he had a go with standardbreds.

He began by helping out Sean McCaffrey at Cambridge along with the late Dave Odium.

That led to them going into a training partnership and Brodie won a race in Auckland with Republican, while Presidential Belle won four races for them in 2007.

"They gave us a licence together, but basically I was training mine and Dave was training his, and it wasn't long before we went our separate ways," said Brodie.

Brodie, who was "going on 70 when he first got a licence", would win another race with Republican at a Taranaki meeting at New Plymouth in 2009, while Presidential Belle won another four races for Odium.

Brodie had bought Dana Maguire as a yearling at Karaka for \$12,000 and trained her for two starts, finished well down the track both times.

"Zac Butcher drove her for me and after the second race, he told me I shouldn't race her again because she was a knee knocker.

"I gave that caper away at that point."

Dana Maguire was a daughter of McArdle and the good mare Flash Atom (7 wins), a disappointing broodmare however with just two average performers from five foals for Ray Kennedy.

The C E O, by Gotta Go Collect, was syndicated and given to Mike Berger to train with his last win an amateur drivers' race at Cambridge.

Brodie kept Kango for himself and asked Arna Donnelly's father Brent to break him in.

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The rest as they say is history – Brodie has been laughing all the way to the bank since.

“While we didn’t have any luck with him in the spring when we came down last year for the Cup, the trip was the making of him,” said Donnelly.

“He wasn’t quite ready for that carry on then, but it hardened him up and turned him into a racehorse.”

Freshened after that first trip away, Kango was reunited with David Butcher when he won the Franklin Cup paying \$38.

He led up and was headed in the run home by the trailer Steel The Show, but fought back to win by a head in 3.20 for the 2700m stand.

Kango has not been worse than fourth in seven races since, often doing battle with Self Assured and South Coast Arden.

He came off 35m to win at Alexandra Park, beating Old Town Road (15m) and It’s All About Faith (35m), a fortnight before his hit and run raid on the Superstars.

Butcher worked to an early lead there and then made Matthew Williamson and Cranbourne work for 600m to take the lead, which left them vulnerable when Kango came up the passing lane to score by a head in a 1.56.2 mile rate for the 2600m.

Brodie didn’t make the trip to Christchurch and says he has only been on course once when Kango won his debut at Cambridge.

He was immobilized by a bad knee last year and then there was all the Covid border restrictions, but he’s looking forward to heading to Auckland for the features there in coming weeks.

So too are daughters Amanda and Claire, twins who have taken a real interest in Kango and “taken turns doing the speeches”.

Brodie and wife Maree have six daughters and no sons.

Amanda couldn’t make it to Christchurch due to work commitments, but Claire was there with partner Brad Payne and her sons, Archie and Austin.

They are twins after Claire was a twin herself.

Brodie has Dana Maguire back in foal to American Ideal and while he’s not making any plans to one day be breeding from a filly, or sister to Kango, a 13-year-old granddaughter in Pearl is already hoping for one.

Brodie does hope Dana Maguire has a filly one day and the breed continues with his family.

Dana Maguire has also produced a three-year-old gelding by He’s Watching, or a three-quarter brother to Kango.

He’s also a big horse which has just begun work again and Donnelly says he will also make the grade.

“I could have sold Kango many times over, but the family has been having so much fun with him, I wouldn’t dare think about it.”

Kango was just the second winner at Addington for Donnelly after Taipo won at the Kaikoura meeting last year.

Butcher doesn’t drive much at Addington these days either, compared to the days when he drove for Geoff Small and won Group 1s with the likes of Changeover, Elsu, Ambro The Thug, Copper Beach, De Lovely, Laura-ella and Tintin In America.

But Donnelly and Butcher will be looking for another big win when they combine with Rough And Ready for Saturday night’s \$100,000 Country Championship Final.

Donnelly will also be represented in the race by the consistent Bad Medicine, with her other main stable driver Todd Mitchell making an even rarer trip south.

Mitchell hasn’t won a race at Addington since the Michelle Wallis-trained Ima Gold Digger won the NZ Trotting FFA on Cup Day in 2010.

Rough And Ready and Bad Medicine fought out the City of Palmerston North Festival Cup in their last race and Donnelly expects both of them to be to the fore in what is a very big and open and even looking field.

Rough And Ready in particular has struck a purple patch of form in recent weeks having also won the Manawatu Country Cup and the Waikato Cup at Cambridge



Arna Donnelly is joined by Claire Brodie and partner Brad Payne along with twin sons Archie and Austin after Kango’s win in the Superstars.



“He got up in the ratings a bit last year and some things went against him, but he’s been going super since he finished second to Beach Ball in Auckland (in a 1.55.3 mile rate for 2200m),” said Donnelly.

“His recent racing has been a slight drop in class, but his confidence is back and he’s in the zone.

“Bad Medicine has hardly ever been out of the money (in 20 races) and is like a little Eftpos machine.

“His manners are excellent and I expect him to bound away from barrier one and get a soft trip on the fence.

“If he doesn’t get pushed too far back, I expect they’ll know he’s there at the end of two miles.”

Donnelly’s team has been on a roll lately and she was coming off a double at Cambridge with the inform



David Butcher and Arna Donnelly after Kango won the Superstars Championship. They will now attempt to win the NZ Country Cups Championship Final with the “in the zone” Rough And Ready.

trotter Aflyin Spur and Taipo the night before Addington last week.

Taipo was gifted a free win when he was able to slip into an R56-65 race and he outclassed a six-horse field of mostly three-win horses for junior driver Zev Meredith.

Taipo’s first four wins were in Auckland and he beat Heza Sport when he won at the Kaikoura meeting at Addington in a 1.55 mile rate.

“He’d dropped a few points after missing away from stands lately.

“He’s gone for an eight-week spell now as he hadn’t had a break for a long time.

“That will do him the world of good and he’ll show his class when he comes back.”

As for Kango, Donnelly is not sure if he’ll press on for the Auckland Cup.

“That’s getting a bit late in the season when I want to give him a decent break and have him back in the spring for the Spring Cup and Holmes D G.

“Covid mucked us around quite a bit last year, but I’d like to get those races under his belt before we head south again for another crack at the Cup.”

No doubt the Brodie clan including Bruce will be close behind if that happens later this year. – by Frank Marrison

## Fourth NZ record for trotting champ Sundees Son...



Sundees Son has left Muscle Mountain and Five Wise Men in his wake and sliced seconds off the 2600m New Zealand record in the NZ Trotting Championship. It was the fourth NZ record for the only trotter to win a million dollars in New Zealand alone.