

## Augusta Proud to run favourite

TOP bookie Vince Aspinall expects unbeaten Adelaide filly Augusta Proud will run as the favourite in today's Magic Millions Classic.

In the TAB Sportsbet market during Sunday Augusta Proud was at the head of a bunched group at \$4.50 just in front of the Gai Waterhouse-trained She's Meaner at \$4.80 for the Classic.

But She's Meaner was offered at \$5 at the Gold Coast Call of the Card on Saturday night without any meaningful bets being taken.

"The betting was a bit quiet all round but I sense Augusta Proud is the one the punters will want on the day. The barrier draw (two) makes appeal for a lot of people with the filly," Aspinall said.

"There was money at \$7 for Black Minx and I was challenged for a bet to win \$500,000 on Sugar Babe but at odds of \$8 when the best bet was \$6.50."

The recent record of favourites is ordinary. The last to be successful was Excellerator in 2001.

Augusta Proud's trainer Leon Macdonald said he had no fears if the filly was challenged for the lead even though she has controlled the tempo in four of her fine wins.

"I don't know what the instructions will be from Gai Waterhouse with her filly She's Meaner but if her jockey Nash Rawiller is desperate to lead than he can have it," Macdonald said.

"I'd be surprised if Nash pushed hard but my filly could race behind as long as she doesn't get boxed in.

"She can overrace and go a bit fierce if she gets hemmed in.

"When she won at Moonee Valley back in December my filly missed the start before she gathered pace to sit outside the leader so she has come from behind.

"I know one thing. If she can't win it will be because she is not good enough. I couldn't have her any better."

Aspinall is tipping an upset with the David Hayes-trained Whisper Bay to beat She's Meaner.

Like Augusta Proud, She's Meaner is unbeaten. She has won three straight including a five lengths last start victory in the Tommy Smith Slipper at Doomben nine days ago when rider Jim Byrne was under instructions to make sure the filly was given a good shake-up in the final 100 metres.