

PREFERMENT PEDIGREE ANALYSIS

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In my article for The Informant on Preferment after he had scored in the 2014 GI Victoria Derby I commented "...bears a striking resemblance to his sire, will himself make his mark at stud...and that NZ studs will dig deep into their pockets to ensure that it is this country that gets the benefit. NZ badly needs horses like this fellow to combat the invasion of European stayers into our historical markets. One might indeed ponder just where we might have been in this respect if Cambridge Stud had not obtained Zabeel back in 1991".

And now at least the first part has come true, and there is every chance the rest will follow. Since the victory of the colt in the Derby, he has further cemented his place as a superior racehorse winning three further Group Ones as a 4YO and becoming the Champion Australian Stayer of 2015-16, and securing a World Thoroughbred Rating of 116 in both 2015 and 2016 after being 115 in 2014.

Chris Waller brought his charge along quietly to start with and after going down by a nostril in the listed Geelong Classic, and he went on to win the Derby as a maiden in six previous starts. When he returned in the autumn his best effort was when beaten a nose in the GI Rosehill Guineas in the hands of his Derby jockey Damien Oliver.

As a 4YO he really hit his straps winning the G2 ATC Hill S. at Randwick from Magic Hurricane and Complacent and the GI VRC Turnbull S. from Royal Descent and Set Square, both at 2000 m., in the spring, and then at the end of February he ran 4th to Winx at 4 lengths in the 1600 m. GI ATC Chipping Norton S. before winning the 2000 m. GI VRC Australian Cup from Awesome Rock and Rising Romance, and then the 2400 m. GI ATC BMW S. from Who Shot Thebarman and Grand Marshal. All his major GI wins were on good 3 or 4 tracks and the weather did him little favour as a 5YO in the highest company with a fourth in the Turnbull to Hartnell and Jameka probably his best effort.

He retired as winner of 5 races (4 x GI and 1 x G2), 4 seconds, a third and 6 fourths and A\$3,432,730, which makes him the fourth highest stakes earner at stud in NZ. Sir Ivor, one of the greatest Derby winners of my time, was an excellent sire of fillies but for some obscure reason not especially so of colts, so the emergence of Sir Tristram with his balanced inbreeding 3 x 4 to Princequillo and linebreeding to Selene 4 x 5 (no Hyperion) came as something of a shock to some. What is even more remarkable is his endurance in pedigrees in this part of the world and few stakes winners of note escape his presence. Usually, but by no means always, it is Zabeel, who carries the banner for him and with 163 SWs to his name he has surpassed his sire's 130, and with 50 GI winners his record too. He has already ensured his male line's continuity with champion sire Savabeel, and other successful sire sons and with his son Preferment further glories await.

The dam sire of the Derby winner is Flying Spur (99 SW), who has been Champion Sire in Australia and Champion Sire of 2YOs in both Australia and New Zealand. His 12 group one winners include Mentality, Forensics, Alverta, Magnus, Sacred Star and Casino Prince, whilst the 70 stakes winners from his daughters include such as Sebring, Delago Deluxe, Headway, Speak Fondly and Grand Journey. Few of his descendants seem to stay much past a mile. The latter remark is even more true of Canny Lad (55 SW), the sire of Preferment's grandam. A top sprinter himself Canny Lad's progeny were mostly quick but they did include a few like Dodge (Queensland Derby) and Republic Lass (Australian Oaks) who stayed well

when stout sires were introduced. As a broodmare sire (74 SW) he has excelled (14 x GI) with such as Redoute's Choice, Desert War, Mnemosyne, River Lad, Manhattan Rain, I Am Invincible and Laser Hawk being from his daughters. The next sire down the damline is the Caulfield Guineas winner Beau Sovereign (24 SW and 37 SW as a broodmare sire). He was essentially a miler, and Aurealis, King of Babylon and Nilo, who are the next three sires along the bottom line were also speed horses.

One of Flying Spur's better stayers was Better Alternative, the dam of Preferment, who won twice in Australia to 2000 metres. Her first three foals are all winners viz. group winners Preferment and his full sister Rezoned (2500 m. G3 South Australia Fillies Classic) and the Sydney winner Loophole (8 wins). The grandam of Preferment is six race winner Ancient Lights who won in Sydney up to 1600 metres, and who left five winners including Dances on Waves (G2 AJC Villiers S.).

Ancient Lights is own sister to Ancient Song, winner of the GI VRC Salinger Stakes and G2 AJC Light Fingers Stakes and dam of GCTC Prime Minister's Cup winner Tampiko. She is also half sister to nine other winners including Danzig Beau and Royal Lott, both multiple stakes winners in Western Australia, and to Isabo (dam of G3 WATC Roma Cup winner Is Amazing). This is a branch of the number one family that produced Pago Pago and the current speedster Star Turn.

Preferment's chart is constructed around a Northern Dancer, Canny Lad, Danehill and Sir Ivor base, a widespread pattern that is not uncommon and is featured in Redoute's Choice (Danehill), a great sire who was a top miler but who can leave Derby horses as well as sharper sorts.

Preferment's sire Zabeel is bred on a male cross between Sir Ivor and Northern Dancer, and is balanced linebred to Selene and Mahmoud. The distaff side has Flying Spur bred on a three way nick between Northern Dancer / Mr. Prospector / a female line of Sir Ivor plus another female one of Northern Dancer, and, of course, the male Northern Dancer line is that of Danehill with his inbred 3 x 3 balanced double of Natalma. Flying Spur is balanced inbred 3 x 4 to Northern Dancer and linebred to Natalma and Native Dancer. This cross with Zabeel is powerful stuff indeed and it is surprising that it is not more often prominent.

The grandam of Preferment, Ancient Lights provides two male lines of Star Kingdom through Biscay and Kaoru Star, both proven nicks with Northern Dancer. Her pedigree makes great play between the very closely related Nasrullah, Nilo, Jambo, Diableretta and Dodoma (half sister to Nasrullah) with four balanced lines. Better Alternative, the dam of Preferment is balanced line bred to Hyperion and Fair Trial.

Preferment, therefore, boasts intense patterning as described plus a remote one between Sir Tristram and Beau Sovereign's sire Sovereign Edition, a nick with a high success rate a while ago. The whole chart comes together most pleasingly with a lot of sex balancing being inbred 3 x 5 to Sir Ivor, and line bred to Northern Dancer (4 x 5/6), Natalma (5 x 6/6/7), Native Dancer (5 lines), Nasrullah (4), Mahmoud (4), Hyperion (10), Selene (14), Fair Trial (4) and Mumtaz Begum (7 lines). There are at least 23 lines of Lady Josephine, always a purveyor of class.

So what sort of mares should we seek for him? He is a grand looking, sound, well conformed individual as was his sire. I surmise he was best around 2000 m. stayed 1 ½ m. but not 3200 m. and good going brought out his best, although he acted well enough on soft but not heavy

ground. One might expect him to be able to sire good runners from a mile upwards and to follow his male lines example as a classic sire.

His pedigree indicates a wide variety of options for breeders and most mares will find something to give them a chance of success, which is a factor in most top rank sires as it was with his sire and grandsire. Mares carrying Sadler's Wells (or Fairy King) would not only bring the famed super-nick, that produced Frankel, between Galileo and Danehill into play but would also give the usually sex balanced combination of Sadler's Wells with his three parts brother Nureyev, Zabeel's damsire, which has also enjoyed phenomenal success. Encosta de Lago is currently the best broodmare sire in Australia and his daughters particularly appeal as mates for Preferment. Redoute's Choice also appeals as it repeats the strongest patterns in the new Brighthill stallion, and as the closest the Danehill balanced double can be is 3 x 4 this should not be a deterrent.

The stallions Night Shift and L'Enjoleur both carry lines of the great Canadian mare Ciboulette, who is also fourth dam of Flying Spur. She can occasionally be found in local pedigrees, for instance Align, St. Reims and Fully Fledged.

I have filtered the likely broodmare sires into a group that for one reason or another I consider most suitable – they are, in no particular order : Thorn Park, Pins, Elusive City, Le Bec Fin, Duelled, El Hermano, Fast 'n' Famous, High Chaparral, Keeninsky, Sakhee's Secret, Bullbars, Echoes of Heaven, Full Fledged, Jimmy Choux, Darci Brahma (Zabeel 3 x 4; Danehill 5 x 5), Mastercraftsman, Makfi, Road To Rock, Rip Van Winkle, One Cool Cat, Tavistock and Thewayouare. Several Brighthill sires will have daughters available that will gel well with Preferment e.g. Perfectly Ready, Dalghar and Azamour. I, perhaps, ought to stress that this horse will suit mares by any number of other broodmare sires and that the bottom half of the mare's pedigree might add substantially to the overall quality of the mating and improve the chances of breeding that champion.