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GLOBETROTTING DWC CARNIVAL STAR PRINCE OF ARRAN POINTING TO SHEEMA



DUBAI (December 13, 2018)—One of the best-looking horses on the grounds during the 2018 Dubai World Cup Carnival turned out to be one of the best-performing on the world stage. Saeed Bel Obaida's Charlie Fellowes-trained **Prince of Arran** commenced 2018 with a 103 rating, a record of 3-for-19 and the look of an above-average stayer—but what he did from there was pretty extraordinary.

In 11 starts in 2018, the 5-year-old bay gelding raced in five different countries on four continents, while winning or placing in seven races. The son of Breeders' Cup Turf (G1) champ Shirocco became a Carnival winner in his second run (after a runner-up in his first attempt) over 3200m and was a respectable mid-pack finisher in the Dubai Gold Cup (G2) behind **Vazirabad**. He then shipped to the United States to finish a solid third in the Belmont Gold Cup (G2) before setting his sights on Australia and fulfilling the dream of his young conditioner to compete in the Spring Carnival.

In three starts Down Under, he proved to be top class; showing marked improvement and tenacity with a third in the Herbert Power Stakes (G3) over 2400m, a resounding victory in the 2500m Lexus Handicap (G3) three weeks later on Nov. 3 and a brilliant third just three days after that in the most prestigious race in the southern hemisphere, the Melbourne Cup (G1). He then shipped to Hong Kong to finish a respectable eighth of 14 after a poor trip in the Hong Kong Vase (G1) over 2400m last week.

“He’s done remarkably,” Fellowes said. “To do what he’s done; racing on four continents, run as many times as he has and turning up every time... he’s just been a great horse for us. I’m sure I’ll look back on him in 20 years’ time and hopefully he’ll be the horse that made my career (take off).

“Put a line through Hong Kong,” he continued. “I feel desperately sorry for the horse. He ran incredibly well and I really felt he was in such good form and a good place mentally. If he had a decent draw, he would have gone very close. Sadly, he got drawn in the car park and he’s not the kind of horse who can be out there. He’s a bit funny in the gate and he veered off at the start. The plan, which was to go forward and make it into more of a staying race, was completely abandoned at that point. I still feel he’s better over a mile and a half than over two miles. It takes him a long time to get his confidence and the reason he’s improved is he’s become braver and, as a result, we can be braver with him.

“The plan with him is to go to the (Longines Dubai) Sheema Classic. He will probably prep in the (Group 2, \$300,000) Dubai City of Gold on Super Saturday (Mar. 9) before that. He flies back England this week and will have a month or as long as I can give him in a paddock to remember what it feels like to be a horse again. He’ll likely head to Dubai at the end of February. He’s now rated a 112 and I truly believe he’s not finished and can improve past that.”

Fellowes took the time to reflect on the Melbourne Cup, which one would imagine was the most bittersweet moment of his fledgling career. At the top of the lane in the 3200m classic, Prince of Arran loomed like a winner, seizing command in mid-stretch and giving his connections an adrenaline rush of epic proportions.

“I had stood in the paddock before the race nice and calm. When he won the Lexus, there was a massive release of relief that we’d done it, we’d won a Group race on Derby Day and we made it into the Melbourne Cup,” Fellowes said. “Before the race, when it rained, I thought our chances were gone, so there was no pressure. But then, at the two-furlong pole, I saw he was moving better than anyone. I just put my hands on mouth. I remember thinking, ‘My god, I think I’m about to win the Melbourne Cup,’ but this was before (winner and runner-up) **Cross Counter** and **Marmelo** began to make their runs. We still came away from the race over the moon. My plan of running him three days prior worked.

“That’s what I love as a trainer,” he continued. “I love traveling internationally and seeing the big crowds and competing for the big prize money. I’m already starting to see the results of his performances and it looks we will have more in the yard next season and we are sending two others to the (2019) Carnival.

We are sending **Escalator**, a highly progressive 3-year-old turning four, who is rated 106. Being owned by the same Emirati owner as Prince of Arran, he we are hoping he can do well. He can run as far as a mile and a quarter on the turf and should run two or three times there. We are also sending a nice filly for the (Group 2, \$250,000) Cape Verdi (on Jan. 17) and (Group 2, \$250,000) Balanchine (on Feb. 14) named **Mia Tesoro**, who should love the Meydan track and will retire after the Carnival.”

Escalator, a patiently handled son of Cape Cross, has four wins from nine starts and exits a win in Leicester handicap company over 1600m on Oct. 29. Mia Tesoro, a Danehill Dancer mare who races for American Deron Pearson, has five wins from 25 tries, won in Listed company this season and was unplaced last out in Newmarket’s Nayef Stakes (G3) on Sept. 28.

Assistant and traveling lass Natasha Eaton (above, atop Prince of Arran), whose adoration and relationship with the yard star was described by Fellowes as “an incredible, brilliant bond” will be accompanying Escalator and Mia Tesoro when they arrive in the next few weeks. She will then wait for her favourite gallop-mate to arrive a month later to see if they can, indeed, top what was a tremendous 2018.

WALKING THUNDER TO UAE 2000 GUINEAS

Dubai Racing Club | Erika Rasmussen



Phoenix Ladies Syndicate's **Walking Thunder** is now a perfect 2-for-2 lifetime, thanks to a dominant victory in last Thursday's 1600m conditions event restricted to 2-year-olds. The son of Violence was inspiring when victorious at first asking on opening night of the Racing at Meydan domestic season, Nov. 1, and then was absolutely overpowering just more than a month later when stepping up one furlong with ease.

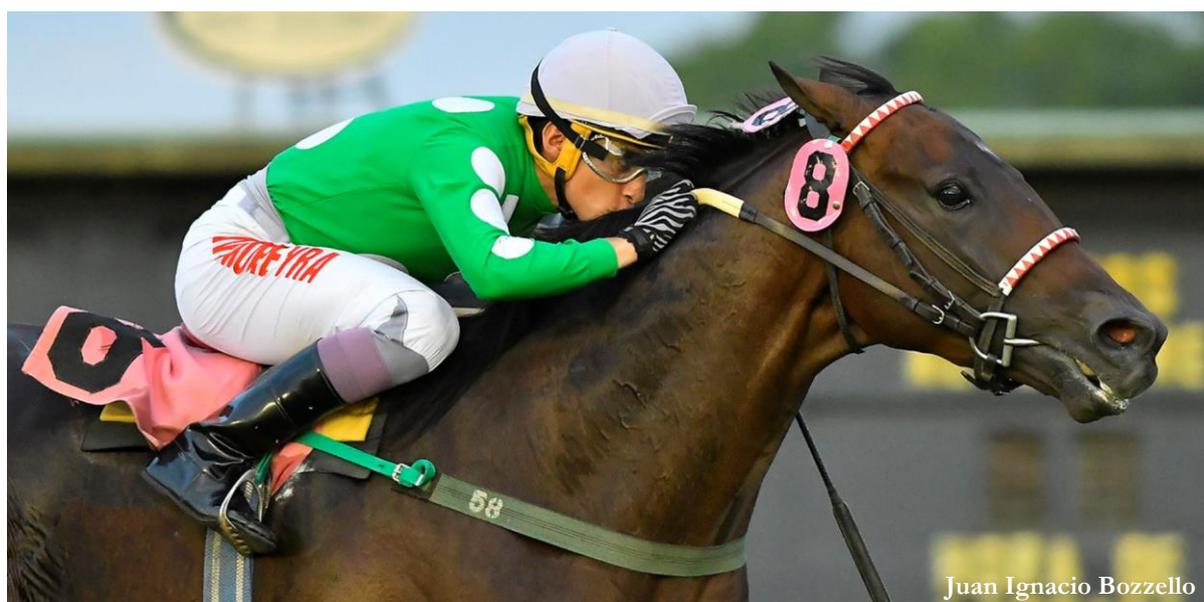
Trained Ahmad bin Harmash, the bay colt showed new dimensions in said repeat tally, sitting behind horses and taking the dirt kickback like a seasoned veteran. When called upon by jockey Connor Beasley, he responded instantaneously and gobbled up his foes in eye-catching fashion. Now, according to his connections, he will wait two months for his next start, which will come in the Group 3 UAE 2000 Guineas, which boasts a purse of \$250,000 and will be contested on Feb. 7. Effectively skipping the 2000 Guineas Trial in January, Walking Thunder will leave that prize for his 1-for-1 stablemate, **Superior**, who won his debut equally as impressively on Nov. 8.

"He's turned out to be a good horse and ran a great race last Thursday," said Amer Abdulaziz, principal of Phoenix Thoroughbreds, of which Phoenix Ladies is an offshoot. "The plan from here is to take him straight to the Guineas. We can split him and Superior that way, who will run in the Trial. Walking Thunder has already qualified for that sort of race, so he'll go there. We weren't sure about the 1600m for him and we knew Superior could get the trip, so that's why we didn't run both of them last week.

"Part of the plan was for him to get an education; put him behind and take the (kickback) to see if he could handle it before he faces it in bigger races," Abdulaziz continued. "Connor did an amazing job and kept him in the right place and then he just took off. It was very impressive. The Phoenix Ladies have some very good young horses and we also look forward to the older Phoenix (Thoroughbreds) big guns coming for the Carnival."

Walking Thunder is a son of the Street Boss mare Street Show, who is out of the Royal Anthem mare Reality Show—making for a solid blend of speed and stamina in his pedigree. He hails from the family of Grade 2 winner **Sky Cape** and is from the second crop of Violence, which also includes multiple Grade 1 performer and Kentucky Derby (G1) candidate **Dueling**, Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies (G1)-placed **Vibrance** and stakes winners **Its Gonna Hurt**, **Order and Law**, **Shy Cubana**, **Louder Than Bombs** and **Strike Silver**. Standouts **Whatwasithinking**, **Cicatrix**, **Talk Veuve to Me** and **Cosmic Burst** highlighted his freshman crop. Walking Thunder was a bargain \$42,000 at OBS April Spring 2-year-olds in Training Sale in Florida, USA.

ARGENTINA'S LOGRADO SET FOR CARNIVAL



Two Carnivals ago, trainer Erwan Charpy debuted a South American import who quickly made a big splash in Chilean-bred, Argentine multiple Group 1 winner **Furia Cruzada**. Said charge has since competed in two Dubai World Cups, placed in a pair of Group 1s and won 2017's Al Maktoum Challenge Round 2 (G2) over subsequent Godolphin Mile (G2) winner **Second Summer**. The iron mare is now preparing for her third Carnival assault.

Meanwhile, Charpy's arsenal of Argentine form has grown. Last month, he took over the care of a hulking bay grandson of Unbridled named **Logrado**, who comes to Dubai with similar credentials. An emphatic five-length winner when taking the prestigious Republica Argentina (G1) over 2000m (in a brilliant time of 1:58.50) on dirt two starts ago on May 1, the half-brother to Group 2 winner and multiple Group 1-placed **Lencelot** has had seven starts and was last seen running when third in the Estrellas Classic (G1) over that same trip on July 9. Overall, he has a 3-1-1 record and has impressed onlookers in the mornings at Meydan since arriving.

"I quite like him," Charpy said. "He's a very good horse and a tough, huge horse. A typical South American horse; very strong. I think he could be a very good Carnival horse. We have not had him for very long, but he came to us a pretty fit horse.

"I am aiming for the Singspiel Stakes on the first meeting of the Carnival," Charpy continued "It's nine furlongs (1800m) on the turf and it should be a good place to get started for him. Furia (Cruzada) will run in The Entisar on (December) 20th and then we will decide what to do with her after that, but will likely point her to the (Al) Maktoum Challenge series."

The Singspiel is part of a blockbuster opening night Jan. 3 card for the Carnival that includes six races worth a total of US\$995,000. A Group 3, it was won last year by Godolphin's **Benbatl**, who would go on to win the Dubai Turf (G1) in smashing style.

Logrado is a son of Manipulator, a regally bred Unbridled stallion, whose dam is dominant Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1) winner and U.S. champion Inside Information. Being out of an Interprete mare, he sports a pedigree that is as versatile as he has shown on the racetrack. After breaking his maiden at first asking over 1200m on dirt, he was a good fourth in the Gran Criterium (G1) over a 1600m on grass. In addition to his aforementioned G1 tally on dirt he also owns a one-sided allowance victory over 1600m on grass last April, stopping the clock in 1:33.94.

DUBAI TURF FORM STRONG IN HONG KONG



Dubai Racing Club | Andrew Watkins

Dubai World Cup night form shined in Hong Kong on Sunday with a pair of second-place finishes in the four rich Group 1 affairs. In the Hong Kong Mile (G1), 2017 Dubai Turf winner and 2018 runner-up **Vivlos** (above, left) said farewell to her fans in her career finale with a fine runner-up effort to **Beauty Generation**, the world's top-rated miler, in the Hong Kong Mile (G1). The winner is now considering a run in the Dubai Turf of 2019 and is already listed by many as a heavy early favourite.

In the Hong Kong Cup (G1), the top race of the day, **Deirdre** (above, right), who finished just behind Vivlos when third in this year's Dubai Turf, was a flying second in the 2000m race. Said effort backed up her rising profile and an arguably unexposed trajectory that could again cross paths with the expansive Meydan turf course in March.

In the Hong Kong Vase (G1) over 2400m, vastly improved Dubai World Cup Carnival winner **Prince of Arran**, an also-ran in the Dubai Gold Cup (G2), was a wide eighth, losing all chance with the poor draw and an even worse start. **Crocsmia**, seventh in the 2018 Dubai Turf, finished a lacklustre 10th.

In that race, it is worth following some of the shorter-priced horses moving forward in 2019. Three of the favourites are reportedly eyeing Dubai World Cup night, including **Waldgeist**, a hard-luck fifth, who is possible for the Longines Dubai Sheema Classic (G1). Others looking at possibly heading to Dubai include runner-up and rising Japanese star **Lys Gracieux** and Hong Kong's massively talented **Pakistan Star**.

Dubai Racing Club | Andrew Watkins



QUICK HITS: Peter Gelagotis-trained Aussie sprinter **Illustrious Lad**, a solid fifth in the Al Quoz Sprint (G1) in March, returned from a long layoff last month and appears to be racing himself into fine shape for his connections. The 7-year-old son of I Am Invincible was impressive on Dec. 8 winning the Listed City of Marion Stakes at Morphettville in his native country. The effort followed a comeback run when ninth in the Listed Absolut Stakes on Nov. 8 and then a fifth of 11 in the Kevin Heffernan Stakes (G3) nine days later. His connections have stated that they wish to return to the Al Quoz Sprint, which has been doubled in purse to \$2 million this year... Lost amid the buzz following the open-length victory by Walking Thunder on Thursday at Meydan was the superb runner-up performance on debut of well-bred 2-year-old colt **Bila Shak**. After what was not exactly a perfect trip, the Fawzi Nass-trained (and owned) bay colt ran gamely up the rail to close sharply into a clear second-best over the 1600m trip. By Scat Daddy, the grand-looking charge is a half-brother to Breeders' Cup Juvenile Turf (G1) runner-up Giovanni Boldini, who was also fourth in the 2014 UAE Derby (G2).

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