

PEDIGREE THOUGHTS

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CONGRATS-ULATIONS

There has been plenty written about Europe's first-season sire Champion, Iffraaj, in recent months including an article I did in *International Thoroughbred Magazine*. As a result I have turned my attentions to the US to take a look at their current leading Freshman sire and likely Champion, Congrats. To date this Gr 2 winning son of AP Indy's has sired 24 winners, from 59 runners, to win a total of \$1,608,438 to see off the also impressive debutants Bluegrass Cat (Storm Cat), Bernardini (A P Indy) and War Front (Danzig). Although Bernardini also sired two Gr 1 winners (A Z Warrior in US & Biondetti in Ity) Congrats' two Gr 1 winners looked to be two of the best in America. The first of these stakes winners was Wickedly Perfect, who won the Sorrento Stakes (Gr 2) at Del Mar before going onto being placed runner-up in the De Mar Debutant Stakes (Gr 1). Wickedly Perfect then picked up Gr win with a 2 length win the Alcibiades Stakes (Gr 1) in October at Keeneland. Although Turbulent Descent did not win her maiden until early October, this did nothing deter her from winning the Moccasin Stakes (L) at Hollywood Park before remaining unbeaten when finally taking Gr 1 for two-year-old fillies Hollywood Starlet Stakes (Gr 1) last weekend. Congrats third stakes winner is the Peru Restricted winner Check My Checks.

Congrats also had a number of stakes-placed horses who have certainly helped him earn top spot especially as these include Jordy Y, who was not only runner-up in the Arlington-Washington Lassie Stakes (Gr 3) but also third in the Alcibiades Stakes (Gr 1). I'm Steppin' It Up was another having finished third in the Champagne Stakes (Gr 1). It is therefore not surprising that Congrats has not only had an increase in stud fee for

the 2011 season from \$4,500 to \$15,000 but has also been relocated from Vinery's Florida Farm to their Kentucky Stud.

Both of Congrats two Gr 1 winners are bred on similar crosses as are both out of Strom Cat mares. Wickedly Perfect is out of a Tactical Cat daughter and Turbulent Descent is out of a Forestry mare. This is no surprise as the A P Indy/Storm Cat cross has produced 27 stakes winners of which seven, including Congrats', are Gr 1 winners. These also include Sky Mesa (Pulpit), Careless Jewel (Tapit) and this year's Florida Derby winner Ice Box (Pulpit).

With Congrats dam being out of Wild Applause, dam of Yell (Gr 2) and Roar (Gr 3) from the family of Sea Hero (Gr 1) and Hero's Honor (Gr 1), there is plenty more success ahead for this son of A P Indy.

MASTERY PEDIGREE

It always great to see a winner of the St Leger Stakes go on to achieve more Gr 1 success as an older horse. There have been plenty of winners of the oldest Classic to do this and the 2009 winner, Mastery (Sulamani), is the latest having won the Cathay Pacific Hong Kong Vase (Gr 1), from Redwood (High Chaparral), last weekend to give Godolphin their 200th winner and 67th stakes win of the year.

Mastery comes from an impressive family as he is a half-brother to Kirkless (Jade Robbery), the Champion two-year-old in Italy in 2006 having won the Gran Criterium (Gr 1), as well as his grand-dam being Cherokee Rose, the very smart Haydock Park Sprint Cup (Gr 1) winner. However it is the cross Mastery is bred on that caught my eye.

Mastery is by Arc (Gr 1) winner Sulamani (Hernando), who is from the

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Nijinsky sire-line, while his dam Moyesii is by Diesis (Sharpen Up). Therefore this cross represents the Nijinsky/Sharpen Up cross which has produced 24 stakes winners which also includes Gr 1 winners Execute (Suave Dancer/Sharpo), Casual Conquest (Hernando/Kris), Catella (Generous/Kris) and Carmine Lake (Royal Academy/Diesis). The reverse cross, Sharpen Up over Nijinsky, is also successful, perhaps more so, having produced 35 stakes winners of which include Gr 1 winners Halling, Three Valleys, River Keen Shavian and Selmis.

Moving back to Mastery. His pedigree pattern creates plenty of interest, which could explain his some of his brilliance. Firstly it produces line-breeding to Lyphard, via Hernando's grand-dam, Lyrism, and Moyesii's, who is a daughter of Dancing Brave (Lyphard). Secondly Mastery also holds line-breeding to Relance via her full-siblings Relko (dam-sire to Sulamani's 3rd dam) and Rediance (dam-sire to Doubly Sure), who are both son of Tantime. Both Relko (1960) and Reliance (1962) were top-class racehorses as the former was six times Gr 1 winner which includes wins in the Epsom Derby, Poule d'Essai des Poulains and Coronation Cup while the latter won three Gr 1 which included Prix du Jockey Club and the Grand Prix de Paris. Line-breeding Relance via her siblings has occurred in 27 stakes winners which includes 1988 St. James's Palace Stakes (Gr 1) winner Persian Heights

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year, and a big thank you to all whose who have supported us over the last 12 months.

There are more pedigree thoughts on my website at <http://bit.ly/fEnHZV> CWC

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