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PEDIGREE
ANALYSIS
Declaration Of War

Reputation of War's sire continues on the ascent

WE DIDN'T get the Juddmonte International we were expecting to see. Toronado, so brilliant at Goodwood and widely fancied to appreciate the longer trip, was the first horse beaten and would not have won at any distance. The rain which fell in abundance on the Knavesmire later in the week came too late for Al Kazeem, whose quest for a fourth consecutive Group 1 faltered when he failed to extend himself on the lively ground.

So perhaps there were excuses for the pair who seemed likely to dominate proceedings, but however valid they may have been, it would seem unjust to underestimate the performances of the first two home, four-year-old Declaration Of War and his year-younger rival Trading Leather. As tough and honest as any of their generation, each came into the race a proven top-level campaigner and came out of it having confirmed his class.

Declaration Of War did not have many miles on the clock after his first two seasons. With Jean-Claude Rouget at two, he raced just twice, both times on synthetics, and was unbeaten. Alerted to the promise implicit in those efforts, the Coolmore party became involved and at three he switched to Ballydoyle. Three runs yielded two victories, one in a minor event on the Curragh, the other in the Group 3 Diamond Stakes on Dundalk's all-weather track.

Having competed only five times before this spring, Declaration Of War now has 12 runs behind him, and since May all his starts have been in Group 1 company. On his first visit to Britain at Newbury he seemingly had plenty to find to feature prominently in the Lockinge, yet was backed as if defeat was the remotest of possibilities; when he came home a poor fifth, it seemed his bubble had been burst.

But we have seen him in a different light since then, as comfortable winner of the Queen Anne Stakes at Royal Ascot, runner-up to Al Kazeem in the Eclipse, third to Toronado and Dawn Approach in the Sussex and fourth in Moonlight Cloud's Jacques le Marois before he collected his second top-level triumph at York, where he posted his peak RPR of 126. Here is a horse with the constitution of an ox, as capable over a mile as over an extended mile and a quarter.

The Irish Champion at Leopardstown seems a natural target now, and why would he not be a serious candidate for the Breeders' Cup Classic, a race long coveted by the Coolmore team? He has proved effective over fast and rain-softened ground on turf and synthetics. His pedigree gives him licence to excel on dirt as well, which was not always the case with previous Ballydoyle contenders in America's inter-age championship event.

Declaration Of War and his high-class juvenile stablemate War Command – himself now a dual Group 2 victor – are sons of War Front, who would not have seemed the likeliest to succeed among the newcomers to the Kentucky stallion ranks in 2007, when Claiborne asked just \$12,500 for his services. The fact that he stood for \$80,000 in 2013 provides proof that things have gone very well for him in the meantime.

War Front was something less than a star performer at the track. Unplaced in his only start as a juvenile, he won

DECLARATION OF WAR b c 29-4-2009

	Nearctic	Nearco
	Northern Dancer	Lady Angela
	Natalma	Native Dancer
Danzig	Admiral's Voyage	Almahmoud
	Pas De Nom	Crafty Admiral
	Petitioner	Olympia Lou
War Front (b 2002)	Fappiano	Petition
	Rubiano	Steady Aim
	Ruby Slippers	Mr Prospector
Starry Dreamer	Forli	Killaloe
	Lara's Star	Nijinsky
	True Reality	Moon Glitter
	Red God	Aristophaes
Blushing Groom	Runaway Bride	Trevisa
	Halo	Round Table
Rahy	Glorious Song	Secret Promise
	Ballade	Nasrullah
Tempo West (ch 1999)	Gone West	Spring Run
	Secrettame	Wild Risk
Tempo	Terpsichorist	Aimee
	Glad Rags	Hail To Reason
		Cosmah
		Herbager
		Miss Swapsco
		Raise A Native
		Gold Digger
		Secretariat
		Tamerett
		Northern Dancer
		Flaming Page
		High Hat
		Cryad

Bred by Joseph Allen in US

VERDICT

- ▶▶Admirably tough, honest, consistent performer
- ▶▶Son of a sire who has exceeded expectations, and whose reputation is still on the rise
- ▶▶Product of a family that has produced its fair share of notable runners on both side of the Atlantic in recent generations

three out of five at three – a 6f maiden at Saratoga, an allowance event over the same trip at Belmont and a restricted stakes race, the Princelet, over an extended mile, also at Belmont.

He did get a Graded win at four, in the Grade 2 Alfred G. Vanderbilt Handicap at Saratoga, but otherwise suffered from seconditis, finishing runner-up twice at Grade 3 level, once in a Grade 2, and in two Grade 1s, the Forego and the Vosburgh. He achieved his highest RPR (118) when failing to concede 4lb to Pomeroy in the Forego.

Few American breeders understand ratings as they have long been developed and understood in Europe, but Beyer figures – something of a mystery to many here but familiar Stateside – do represent an accepted measure. Claiborne could advertise War Front as having registered eight Beyer figures of 100 or more, and that was always going to aid his cause when he was touting for business in his first stud season. He could flaunt quite an impressive pedigree, too,

and that fee just might prove a bargain.

War Front came along late in the stud career of his illustrious sire Danzig, conceived when that horse was 24 years old, serving reduced books, but still capable of getting high-class performers. Two dual Group 1 winners in Europe, Ad Valorem and Librettist, featured in the same crop of 38 foals, and the likes of Astronomer Royal and Hard Spun were still later additions to the list of major stakes winners generated by a horse who twice headed the sires' list in North America while also achieving outstanding success in Europe.

DANZIG got War Front out of Starry Dreamer, a three-time stakes winner who had smart Graded form on both dirt and turf, highlighted by a second place in the Grade 1 Gazelle Handicap. The mare's earnings came to \$564,789, and she was half-sister to two other significant earners in Teammate (by A.P. Indy)



Declaration Of War: his family a success on both sides of the Atlantic

and Ecclesiastic (by Pulpit), the former a Grade 2 winner and twice Grade 1-placed on dirt, the latter a Grade 3 winner on turf.

With hindsight, it is perfectly understandable that all those attributes combined to make War Front a success. He was off to a flyer, with 19 two-year-old winners in his initial crop, which numbered 75 and ultimately featured 11 stakes winners. He soon established he could get runners better than himself, with Grade 1 scorers on both dirt and turf.

At the latest count, War Front is responsible for 14 individual Pattern or Graded winners, his other notable scorers in 2013 including five-year-old Data Link (Gr3 turf), four-year-old Summer Front (Gr3 turf twice), and three-year-olds Lines Of Battle (Gr2 all-weather), Jack Milton (Gr3 turf), Departing (Gr2 and Gr3 dirt), and War Dancer (Gr2 turf).

Declaration Of War is the fifth foal and fifth winner from his dam Tempo West, who won three times and is a half-sister to Belmont Stakes hero

Union Rags. The mare's previous best runners were Listed winner Vertiformer (by Dynaformer) and Listed-placed War Pact (War Front), who were both campaigned in France.

Granddam Tempo won two of her only three starts and was half-sister to Marry Me Do, a durable Blushing Groom gelding who raced for eight seasons, winning 19 of his 74 starts, four of them in stakes company. Their dam was the talented Nijinsky mare Terpsichorist, whose 11 victories included one in a Grade 2 and another in a Grade 3, and she was a sister to Gorytus, once a presumed superstar but never the same after his mysterious flop in the Dewhurst.

This is a family readily recognised as successful on both sides of the Atlantic. The dam of Gorytus, Terpsichorist and their Grade 3-winning Raise A Native half-sister Mirthful Flirt – herself granddam of Belmont Stakes hero Colonial Affair – was Glad Rags, who won the first 1,000 Guineas I witnessed in person, 47 years ago.