

PEDIGREE ANALYSIS Kingston Hill

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OT seen on a racecourse until September 21, Kingston Hill has come a long way in a short time. And, judging by the manner of his emphatic victory in last Saturday's Racing Post Trophy, he has good prospects of going all the way to the top over middle distances next season.

Kingston Hill made his debut on soft ground in a 7f Newbury maiden. The market suggested he must have shown some promise at home as he was the only runner seriously supported against the Hannon hotpot Exchequer, and the race showed he knew his job. Having made smooth progress from halfway, he delivered his challenge approaching the final furlong, took the favourite's measure 100 yards out and then strode clear to win readily by a length and a half.

Just three weeks later Kingston Hill was pitched into Group 3 company for the Autumn Stakes over the Rowley Mile. He again had a short-priced favourite to contend with in the Ballydoyle colt Oklahoma City, whose two most recent runs had brought him a second in the Group 2 Beresford Stakes and a comfortable win over 16 rivals in the valuable Tattersalls Millions 2YO Trophy. That looked a tough assignment on paper, but he made light of it, responding well to pressure two furlongs out and then assuming command inside the last before being ridden out to score by two lengths.

On that showing Kingston Hill had to be considered a colt with serious potential, but would he be ready to take on Group 1 rivals in the Racing Post Trophy only a fortnight later? Owner Paul Smith gambled that he would, stumping up the £17,500 to supplement him, and as it turned out that he was the only Pattern winner on parade at Doncaster, it probably wasn't a difficult call. The soft ground would not be a problem and the distance would suit. He had a favourite's chance, and the punters recognised that.

While many expected Kingston Hill to win, few expected he would win with such complete authority. Never far off the pace, he picked up readily when Andrea Atzeni asked the question, eased into the lead over a furlong from home, then drew clear to win in fine style by four and a half lengths from Johann Strauss, who sported the colours of Paul Smith's father, Derrick.

In the space of five weeks Kingston Hill went from obscurity to celebrity, getting better as the challenges became, theoretically, more difficult. He is going to train on and get better still, a mile will not represent the limit of his stamina and he is a good mover who will act on faster ground. In addition, he seems to be a sober, uncomplicated character with an admirable attitude to his work.

Winners of the Racing Post Trophy can go on to victory in the 2,000 Guineas, as Camelot proved in 2012, but that was a rare occurrence, unmatched since High Top 40 years earlier. The Doncaster event is usually won by a colt whose true metier at three is as a middle-distance performer, and I expect Kingston Hill

to come into that category next season. Mastercraftsman was a popular choice to head this year's first-season

sires' table, and Kingston Hill's victory appears to have wrapped that up for him now. Craftsman landed a Group 3 win in the Killavullan Stakes at Leopardstown on the same afternoon. **Trophy hero expected to thrive over middle distances** 



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## **KINGSTON HILL**

	Danehill	Danzig	Northern Dancer Pas De Nom
Danehill Dancer Mastercraftsman (gr 2006) Starlight Dreams	Danenin	Razyana	His Majesty Spring Adieu
	Mira Adonde	Sharpen Up	Atan Rocchetta
		Lettre D'Amour	Caro Lianga
	Back Tie Affair	Miswaki	Mr Prospector Hopespringseternal
		Hat Tab Girl	Al Hattab Desperate Action
	Reves Celestes	Lyphard	Northern Dancer Goofed
		Tobira Celeste	Ribot Heavenly Body
Rainbow Quest Audacieuse	Blushing Groom	Red God	Nasrullah Spring Run
		Runaway Bride	Wild Risk Aimee
	I Will Follow	Herbager	Vandale Flagette
		Where You Lead	Raise A Native Noblesse
(b 1997)	Persian Bold	Bold Lad	Bold Ruler Barn Pride
Sarah Georgina		Relkarunner	Relko Running Blue
	Dance By Night	Northfields	Northern Dancer Little Hut
		Elvina	Dancer's Image Relicia

Bred by Ridgecourt Stud in England. 70,000gns Tattersalls October Book 2 yearling

## VERDICT

>>Emphatic Racing Post Trophy win raises hopes for top-level middle-distance success in 2014

>>From the first crop of a horse whose stud innings has started very promisingly

>> Product of a family that has produced major winners over a variety of distances in recent generations

and another of the sire's 18 individual winners is Amazing Maria, successful in Goodwood's Group 3 Prestige Stakes in August. Those excellent results add up to an extremely auspicious start for the Coolmore resident, who stood at €12,500 in Ireland last spring and has also been active at Windsor Park Stud in New Zealand.

It was easy to predict that Mastercraftsman would make a

significant mark with his juveniles, as

he was a two-year-old champion himself, winning four out of five at that age, including Group 1 victories in the 6f Phoenix Stakes and the 7f National Stakes, both on the Curragh. But he was more than a speedy youngster, recording further Group 1 triumphs at a mile in the Irish 2,000 Guineas and St James's Palace Stakes, and arguably his two best performances came over longer trips when placed behind Sea The Stars in the Juddmonte International (beaten only a length) and the Irish Champion.

HE longest distance Mastercraftsman tried was on Dundalk's all-weather track in the Group 3

Diamond Stakes, just a little short of 1m3f. He finished strongly when winning by five lengths on that occasion, so who can say what the limit of his stamina might have been? What can be said is that he was genuinely versatile in terms of distance, and that allows a belief that he will get stock who may excel in each and every category. We already know that he imparts class, so the omens are propitious.

I incline to the view that Kingston Hill will be one for middle distances in 2014. Experience tells me that running away from rivals at the end of a mile on soft ground at Doncaster in October does not amount to a recommendation to take single-digit odds about following up on the Rowley Mile seven months later. To my mind this is a colt who will require longer trips to be seen to best advantage as a three-year-old.

Examine Kingston Hill's female line closely and mixed messages are to be found. His dam Audacieuse had two very different half-brothers in Acomb Stakes winner Waiter's Dream (by Oasis Dream) and dour stayer Lord Jim (by Kahyasi), the pair exhibiting the attributes generally associated with their respective sires.

That tends to confirm my belief that Kingston Hill will thrive at middle distances, as Audacieuse was herself a daughter of a significant staying influence in Rainbow Quest and she gave her best performance as a three-year-old when winning the Group 3 Prix de Flore over 1m3f at Saint-Cloud.

Of course, we can't know the composition of the gene package that Mastercraftsman and Audacieuse passed down to their son, and for all we know he may have inherited some of the factors that made his granddam's half-sister Danseuse Du Soir proficient over shorter distances and a Group 1 winner in both the Poule d'Essai des Pouliches and the Prix de la Foret. We can't rule out that possibility and anyone who has already committed their cash to Kingston Hill for the Guineas must wish that those factors for speed are present in the colt.

Danseuse Du Soir was one of a dozen winners delivered by the winning Northfields mare Dance By Night, the others including a couple who earned black type in Dana Springs (by Aragon), successful at Listed level in both England and France, and Don Corleone (by Caerleon), who added Group 2 and Group 3 placings to his Listed victory at Haydock.

Danseuse Du Soir produced two smart performers herself in five-time Group 3 heroine Jumbajukiba (by Barathea) and Scintillo (by Fantastic Light), who was Italy's champion two-year-old in 2007 when he took Group 1 honours in the Gran Criterium, and who later landed a Group 2 in France and a Group 3 in England.

It is always a sobering thought to come across a fifth dam whom I remember in action on the racecourse, and in the case of Kingston Hill's fifth dam, Relicia, the memory is actually of before she reached the racecourse. I was present when she was submitted as a yearling at Tattersalls and George Forbes bought her for 17,500gns on behalf of Souren Vanian. She was the star turn in an impressive draft from Brook Stud, and I well recall congratulating the stud's owner, Sir Kenneth Butt, on his success. And his response, which was less than gracious.

Could it really have been 45 years ago?