

# TONY MORRIS



PEDIGREE  
ANALYSIS  
Vorda

**T**HERE is evidently plenty of strength in this year's French juvenile filly division. Newmarket's Cambridgeshire meeting attracted two raiders from across the Channel, and both scored impressive victories, Miss France taking the Group 3 Oh So Sharp Stakes on Friday and Vorda following suit in Saturday's traditional championship event, the Group 1 Cheveley Park Stakes.

Vorda, who cost only €9,000 as an Arqana October yearling but became a more expensive acquisition by Qatari interests, has now won four of her five starts. Novice trainer Philippe Sogorb recognised her merit before she opened with a 5f maiden win at Chantilly in April and sent her into Listed company over the same trip at Maisons-Laffitte on her second outing in mid-June. Victory there established her right to compete at Pattern level, and she duly completed her hat-trick back at the same course in the Group 2 Prix Robert Papin over 5½f.

She came up against a monster in the American colt No Nay Never in the Group 1 Prix Morny at Deauville, but proved an honourable second best in that 6f event, finishing three-quarters of a length ahead of Rizeena, who was herself to become a top-level winner in the Moyglare Stud Stakes.

That form seemed clearly in advance of anything shown by her Cheveley Park rivals, and it was no surprise she became the subject of heavy support on course, shortening to 11-8 (from 7-4). Always in touch under a textbook Olivier Peslier ride, Vorda responded well once shaken up, winning with a little more in hand than the margin of three-quarters of a length over Princess Noor might suggest.

Vorda carries the colours associated with Flotilla, last year's heroine of the Breeders' Cup Turf Fillies, and her owner is set on registering a second victory in that event. Flotilla had shown she stayed a mile before Santa Anita whereas Vorda's stamina must be taken on trust, but her pedigree allows hopes she will stay the trip.

Vorda is only the second Group 1 winner in Europe for her sire Orpen, after his first-crop daughter Torrestrella, who was successful in the 2004 Poule d'Essai des Poulaches. Of the 21 Pattern races won by his progeny in these parts, 15 have been at Group 3 level.

But there is rather more to his stud record than those figures reveal. He

## Orpen boost may have come too late

actually has a total of 16 individual winners in the elite grade, two of them in South Africa (including War Artist, well known here for his placed efforts in the Golden Jubilee Stakes and July Cup) and a dozen in Argentina, where he led the sires' list in 2011.

Orpen is a son of Lure, a dual winner of the Breeders' Cup Mile widely recognised as one of the best milers on grass in Danzig's output. As the produce of an Alydar mare whose dam was sister to Eclipse and Champion Stakes victor Pieces Of Eight, he retired to Claiborne with apparently excellent prospects in 1995, but proved sub-fertile and became the subject of an insurance claim.

Coolmore took a chance on Lure, bringing him to Ireland, but he could hardly expect to get top-quality mares in light of his well-documented problems, and he made little impact. His one notable performer here was Orpen, from his initial Claiborne crop, who won on his debut at Goodwood, then notched a smooth victory in the Prix Morny.

Orpen's second season proved disappointing. He went off favourite for the 2,000 Guineas but refused to settle and beat only one of his 15 rivals. He seemed to be returning to form when a respectable third in the Irish 2,000, but as ninth of 11 in the St James's Palace and last of ten in the Prix Maurice de Gheest he seemed no longer interested in racing.

He could hardly hope to figure on the 'must use' list of many prominent breeders after his inglorious exit. But some would remember his fine Deauville performance and recognise that he had been talented – and could still flaunt a pedigree of some consequence, being out of a winning half-sister to the dam of Machiavellian and from the immediate family of Danehill. Those relationships might

just stand him in good stead.

As it turned out, Irish breeders were not particularly enthused, and Torrestrella's early Classic victory did little to enhance his standing. He has been based at the Haras du Thenney since 2008 and was available at only €6,000 this spring.

Vorda and recent juvenile Listed winner Prestige Vendome should encourage better patronage for 2014, but by then he will be 18 years old and it is hard to imagine his status in Europe will ever rank as high as it is in Argentina, where his stock include a Horse of the Year in Lingote De Oro.

**V**ORDA is the second foal of Velda, who won twice and was placed five times in Italy. The mare's first produce, also an Orpen filly, is not a winner, but Vorda's timely second place in the Prix Morny was inevitably a factor in her yearling Dr Fong half-sister fetching €115,000 at Arqana two days afterwards.

Half-sister to three other winners, Velda is out of Viavigoni, who managed only a place as a two-year-old in Italy, but who shared her dam Val D'Erica with ten winners, among them Verardi, a son of Mill Reef successful in the Group 3 Premio Ambrosiano.

Val D'Erica was the best daughter of the Luthier horse Ashmore, earning titles as Italy's champion filly at both two and three. Having notched the Grade 2 Premio Dormello as a juvenile, she progressed to land the Classic double of Premio Regina Elena and Oaks d'Italia. She was also second in the Prix de Diane and fourth in the Prix Vermeille.

Vorda's five-generation pedigree shows the almost inevitable inbreeding to the ubiquitous Northern Dancer, but two other sires, Raise A Native and

### VORDA

b f 30-3-2011

Lure	Danzig	Northern Dancer	Nearctic Natalma
		Pas De Nom	Admiral's Voyage
Orpen (b 1996)		Alydar	Raise A Native
	Endear	Chappaquiddick	Sweet Tooth
Bonita Francita		Halo	Relic
	Devil's Bag	Ballade	Baby Doll
Observatory		Hoist The Flag	Hail To Reason
	Raise The Standard	Natalma	Cosmah
Velda (ch 2006)		Mr Prospector	Herbager
	Distant View	Seven Springs	Miss Swapsco
Viavigoni		Stellaria	Tom Rolfe
		Victoria Star	Wavy Navy
	Mark Of Esteem	Homage	Native Dancer
		Ashmore	Almahmoud
	Val D'Erica	Laconia	Raise A Native
			Gold Digger
			Irish River
			La Trinite
			Hail To Reason
			Bramalea
			Northern Dancer
			Solometeor
			Shirley Heights
			Delsy
			Ajdal
			Home Love
			Luthier
			Almyre
			Great Nephew
			Royal Myth

Bred by Edy SRL in France. €9,000 Arqana October yearling

#### VERDICT

- ▶▶ Convincing Cheveley Park victory revealed her as top of her class
- ▶▶ By a horse who has been largely neglected in Europe while becoming a significant achiever in South America
- ▶▶ The latest in a long line of outstanding runners descending in tail-female from Pretty Polly

Hail To Reason, are also doubly represented. Both were high-class two-year-olds, but only two-year-olds, breaking down at that age and taking up stud duties at three.

In the case of Raise A Native, it was a career of only four starts before he suffered a bowed tendon in August. He never raced beyond five and a half furlongs, but by winning all his races wire-to-wire he was placed top of the Experimental Handicap. Northern Dancer ranked 3lb below him.

Hail To Reason provided rather more evidence of his talent before his breakdown in September, by which

time he had packed in 18 starts and scored nine victories. His last two wins, in the Hopeful Stakes and World's Playground Stakes, confirmed him as champion.

Both horses became immediately successful at stud and their influence has endured, Raise A Native featuring most conspicuously in pedigrees through his son Mr Prospector, while Hail To Reason appears most frequently through his Derby-winning son Roberto.

Inbreeding to unsound horses need not be a worry when they figure as far back as the fifth generation.

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