

TONY MORRIS



Pedigree analysis
Kingsfort

IRELAND'S Group 1 races for two-year-olds often provide meaningful clues to the following season's Classics, but it remains to be seen whether the 2009 editions, all contested on rain-softened ground, serve any purpose in that regard.

The Phoenix and the Moyglare were both run on a Curragh surface designated as heavy, and conditions there were scarcely much better for last Saturday's National Stakes, when the winner's time for the 7f was more than ten seconds slower than standard for the course.

But until future events tell us otherwise, we must take the results at face value, and as neither Termagant, who won the Moyglare, nor Kingsfort, who triumphed in the National, is due to run again this term, we will need to exercise some patience.

As things stand, it seems that Kevin Prendergast's Friarstown stable is home to Ireland's best of both sexes, and the pair are already recognisably bargains, bought at Goffs by veteran agent Frank Barry for a total of €70,000 between them.

Both are unbeaten, Kingsfort having emulated Termagant by winning his Group 1 after a single winning run in maiden company. And each registered a first top-level victory for a relatively unfashionable Kentucky-based sire.

In fact, Termagant was the first Pattern or Graded winner at any level for her sire, Powerscourt, whose initial crop reached the races only this year, whereas Kingsfort comes from War Chant's sixth crop, making a breakthrough for his sire after a few near misses.

Kingsfort won one of the hottest maidens in Ireland this season, scoring impressively over 7f at the Curragh in late June by daylight margins over Stunning View and Viscount Nelson, who both went on to frank the form. Prendergast had planned a break for the colt after his debut, and that duly became a necessity when he was laid low with a virus.

Some ten weeks elapsed before Kingsfort's return on Saturday, and while he was never going to be favourite with Phoenix winner Alfred Nobel among his rivals, he was everyone's idea of the principal threat to the leading Ballydoyle candidate.

As it turned out, Alfred Nobel, who had seemed very much at home on heavy ground before, was never a threat to Kingsfort, coming back last of the sextet. It was left to Jim Bolger's Chabal to make a race of it in the closing stages, but Kingsfort stayed on stoutly under pressure to resist that challenger by a neck.

Was the going an excuse for any of the beaten horses? It was impossible to say, but Kingsfort himself does not look like a colt who needs an easy surface. He may prove better still on good ground, if that should ever return to Ireland.

Of all the many successful sire sons of Northern Dancer, the thrice-raced, unbeaten and unsound Danzig probably ranks as the one who has had the most enduring influence. A begetter chiefly of sprinters and milers, he has been represented by plenty of so-so stallion sons himself, but via Danehill and Green Desert especially he features regularly in pedigrees of prominent runners, often in the top line.

War Chant is certainly not among his leading sons at stud on his record to date, although he currently ranks 53rd among American-based sires on worldwide earnings in 2009. Some



CAROLINE NORRIS

Kingsfort wins the National Stakes in soft to heavy going at the Curragh to underline his Classic potential

National winner first top scorer for his sire

War Chant sixth-crop juvenile has stamina in family for longer trips

SIRE WAR CHANT

Bred by Marjorie Cowan & Irving Cowan in Kentucky. Won 5 (6f-1m) of 7 races, viz. 1 out of 1 at 2 years, 4 (inc. San Rafael S.-Gr3, Oak Tree BC Mile S.-Gr1, Breeders' Cup Mile S.-Gr1) out of 6 at 3 years. Also 2nd in Santa Anita Derby. RPR: 124 at 3. Earned \$689,245.

Well-made individual, 16.2hh. Very well bred. By a leading sire and sire of sires. Half-brother to Ivan Denisovich (by Danehill; Gr2, also Gr1-placed), Double Cat (by Storm Cat; stakes-winner, Gr2-placed) and Ministers Wild Cat (by Deputy Minister; stakes-winner; Gr3-placed). Dam champion 3-y-o filly, Gr1 winner on turf and dirt. Granddam unraced, bred 3 winners. From formerly modest family, now more conspicuous.

Stands at Three Chimneys Farm, Midway, Kentucky, at a fee of \$15,000. Sire of 6 crops of racing age, inc. notable winners: Chattahoochee War (Gr3), El Roblar (Gr3), Karen's Caper (Gr3), Ballymore Lady (Gr3), Brilliant (Gr2), Asperity (Gr3), Chamberlain Bridge (Gr3), Norman Invader (Gr3), Sea Chanter (Gr3), War Kill (Gr2), Kingsfort (National S.-Gr1).

DAM PRINCESS KRIS

Bred by Mrs Vera & Exors of the late Roger Hue-Williams in Britain. Won 1 (1m) of 8 races, viz. 0 out of 1 at 2 years, 1 out of 7 at 3 years. RPR: 69 at 2, 81 at 3. Earned £8,688.

Leggy, quite useful handicap performer at 3. Appeared to stay 1m2f, but better at 7f-1m. Acted on good and faster ground, below par on soft. Very well bred. By a top-class miler, champion sire and good broodmare sire. Half-sister to 8 other winners, inc. Intimate Guest (by Be My Guest; Gr3), Great Heights (by Shirley Heights; Gr3-placed), and Reine D'Beaute (by Caerleon; granddam of Donativum), and to Streetcar (by In The Wings; unplaced, dam of Gr1 winner Luas Line). Dam dual Listed winner, Gr3-placed, half-sister to Classic Example.

Granddam Gr3-calibre winner, sister to triple Classic winner Altesse Royale. Excellent family, tracing to Marchetta.

To stud at 4 and dam of: March (1997 f by Boundary; unraced), Precinct (1998 c by Boundary; winner), Doin' The Dip (2000 f by Benny The Dip; unraced), Prince Arch (2001 c by Arch; Gr1 winner), Prinquet (2003 f by Marquetry; unplaced), Interest (2004 c by Banker's Gold; unplaced), Arty Crafty (2006 f by Arch; unplaced), Kingsfort (2007 c by War Chant; Gr1 winner). She has a yearling filly by Good Reward (lot 418 at Goffs Orby Sale, September 30).

CONCLUSIONS

First top-level winner for his sire, and seems sure to continue being his best advertisement to date. Sure to get 1m, may well stay 1m2f.

KINGSFORT

b c 20-3-2007

Danzig	Nearctic	Nearco
	Northern Dancer	Lady Angela
	Natalma	Native Dancer
Pas De Nom	Admiral's Voyage	Crafty Admiral
	Petitioner	Olympia Lou
War Chant (b 1997)	Roberto	Petition
	Kris S.	Steady Aim
Hollywood Wildcat	Sharp Queen	Hail To Reason
	Mr Prospector	Bramalea
Miss Wildcatter	Elizabeth K.	Princequillo
	Atan	Bridgework
Sharpen Up	Rocchetta	Native Dancer
	Reliance	Mixed Marriage
Kris	Soft Angels	Rockefella
	Zeddaan	Chambiges
Princess Kris (b 1990)	Khairunissa	Tantieme
	Saint Crespin	Relance
As You Desire Me	Bleu Azur	Crepello
	Royal Saint	Sweet Angel
Royal Saint	Aureole	Grey Sovereign
	Neocracy	Vareta
Bred by Airlie Stud in Kentucky. €36,000 Goffs Sportsman's yearling.	Blue Prelude	Prince Bio
		Palariva

may feel that he might have made a stronger impression if he had stood on this side of the Atlantic, rather than in Kentucky.

War Chant's female line was undistinguished, to put it mildly, until his dam Hollywood Wildcat came on the scene. There had been several generations of nonentities in the family when the minor stakes-placed Elizabeth K. was mated in Florida with the (then) lightly regarded stallion Mr Prospector.

The product of that union, Miss Wildcatter, never ran, but perhaps Mr Prospector provided the spark that set the family alight; he was apt to do that with cheap mares, and because of it earned his switch to Claiborne and eventual worldwide fame. In 1989 Miss Wildcatter went to Kris S., another cheap stallion on the rise, and the outcome was Hollywood Wildcat, whose victory in the 1993 Breeders' Cup Distaff earned her a championship and the right to visit any leading sire.

War Chant did not see a lot of action, but won his only start at two, progressed by way of a Grade 2 win in the San Rafael Stakes to split The Deputy and Captain Steve in the Grade 1 Santa Anita Derby, then found himself in the field for the 'real' Derby at Churchill Downs. He made no show, finishing ninth behind his barn companion Fusaichi Pegasus, came out of the race with a shoulder injury, and was sidelined for five months.

WHEN he resumed, it was on grass, and that was the making of him. He promptly won the Oak Tree BC Turf Handicap in impressive style, and three weeks later started favourite for the Breeders' Cup Mile back at Churchill. A storming run from the rear enabled him to catch long-time leader North East Bound close home, while the top European challenger, Dansili, encountered traffic problems and narrowly missed second place.

War Chant was not seen out again, retiring to Three Chimneys at a fee of \$75,000. Those last two runs proved that he was America's best three-year-old on grass by some margin, but that was not the sort of gift to carry much weight with Kentucky breeders. He was never going to get quality mares in abundance.

What War Chant needed was an early runner with real class, preferably on dirt, and it did not happen. He has had at least one Graded or Pattern winner from each of his first six crops, but all 11 have done their winning on grass or synthetic; Kingsfort is the fourth to have scored in Europe, after Karen's Caper, Asperity and Norman Invader, and this year their sire was available at the knockdown price of \$15,000.

Although Kingsfort was born in Kentucky, and his half-brother Prince Arch was a Grade 1 winner in Florida, he comes from a wholly European family. His dam Princess Kris won a 1m maiden at Bath, and among a string of her successful siblings was Intimate Guest, winner of the May Hill Stakes in 1987.

Granddam As You Desire Me was twice a Listed winner, and was herself a daughter of Royal Saint, heroine of a Fred Darling Stakes and sister to triple Classic scorer Altesse Royale.

War Chant has not yet got a major winner beyond 1m1f, but there is enough stamina in Kingsfort's family to suggest that he might not be inconvenienced by longer trips in 2010.