

STUD NEWS *by Kristen Manning*

BREEDING GIANTS

dominate Saxon Warrior's pedigree

DEEP Impact, Galileo (IRE) and Danehill (USA) are three of the true heavyweights of international breeding. They have sired a total of 793 stakes winners, 213 of those Gr.1 winners, and in James Bester's words they are "the three Colossi that bestride the world of turf".

As indicated by their impressive strike rates; Deep Impact's winners-to-runners ratio is sitting on an outstanding 74.8% with 10.5% stakes winners; Galileo 68.4% and 14.5%, Danehill 77.2% and 17.9%. Now that is influence.

"Being a son of Sunday Silence (Halo), Deep Impact represents the most influential dynasty in Japanese racing and breeding history," Bester said. "While Sadler's Wells and his son Galileo are the most influential sire/son combination in European racing and breeding history. And it follows that Danzig and son Danehill have been the most influential force in the history of Australian racing and breeding."

Which is what makes the pedigree of Coolmore Stud's new shuttler Saxon Warrior (JPN) so exciting. His sire is Deep Impact, his dam Maybe is by Galileo and his second dam Sumora is by Danehill. There are no weak links in the breeding of this horse who also has family, performance and type on his side.

The winner of four of his nine starts for the Aidan O'Brien stable, Saxon Warrior hit the ground running, swamping his rivals from the rear in a maiden mile at the Curragh in August 2017.

On the strength of that performance he was sent out an odds-on favourite in the Beresford Stakes-Gr.2 (8f) a month later, the imposing bay was closer to the pace this time and proved a class above his rivals. A Gr.1 test was next and this came in the Racing Post Trophy (8f) where he took on the then-unbeaten subsequent European Horse of the Year Roaring Lion. An exciting battle between this high-class pair ensued, Roaring Lion drifting into Saxon Warrior's path as they approached the line, just a neck separating them.

"He's a very special horse, we think," O'Brien said on the back of that hard fought victory which saw Saxon Warrior end his two year-old season unbeaten. "He's done everything we've asked of him and he's only been a baby."

From thereon Saxon Warrior raced only at the elite level and first up in his second campaign, he impressed when charging home from mid-field to claim victory in the 2000 Guineas-Gr.1 (8f), a race known for its long and proud history of producing great stallions. Members of its honour roll include Stockwell, Gainsborough, Djebel, Big Game, Court Martial, Tudor Minstrel, Sir Ivor, Nijinsky II, Rock of Gibraltar, Sea the Stars and Frankel.

"He's an absolute monster of a horse," jockey Donnacha O'Brien said. "I was very impressed . . . I think he's very, very good."

Close up at his final four outings against some of the world's best (not always having the best



Saxon Warrior (JPN)
(Deep Impact-Maybe by Galileo (IRE))

of luck, at one stage set back by illness), Saxon Warrior went so close to further Gr.1 glory only just beaten by Roaring Lion in the Eclipse Stakes (10f) and the Irish Champion Stakes (10f), each time showing great heart. Testament to that is he pulled up sore from his final gallant battle, retired after a tendon lesion was discovered.

"To battle the way he did to be beaten only a neck shows how brave a horse he is," O'Brien said, adding that "it's a big pity that we've had to retire him. He was a brilliant horse who put up his best performance when winning the 2000 Guineas. He was a very talented racehorse; top class."

The Deep Impact/Galileo cross on which Saxon Warrior is bred has not been well represented by numbers but is over achieving with three of the nine winners bred this way being Group winners. The Deep Impact/Danehill combination has been well represented by 15 stakes winners from 93 winners including Saxon Warrior's fellow Gr.1 winners Mikki Isle, Danon Premium and Satono Ares.

Galileo's statistics as a broodmare sire make for good reading (151 stakes winners) and Saxon Warrior's dam Maybe is one of his finest on the track too as she won her first five starts including the Moyglare Stud Stakes-Gr.1 (7f), earning the title of European Champion 2YO Filly. Making an instant impact at stud Maybe produced the stakes placed

Pavlenko (also by Deep Impact) as her first foal, with Saxon Warrior being just her second. A sister to the Gr.3 winner Promise To Be True, Maybe is a daughter of Danehill's Listed winner Samora, herself a three-quarter sister to the wonderful filly Dancing Rain, winner of the English Oaks-Gr.1 (12f) and German Oaks-Gr.1 (11f).

This prolific international family has also been represented the triple Gr.1 winner Dr Devious (English Derby, Dewhurst Stakes, Irish Champion Stakes, sire of 21 stakes winners), the Japanese big race winner Suzuka Phoenix and the local Awesome Rock (Mackinnon Stakes-Gr.1).

And there is already a high class member of this family on the Coolmore roster with Saxon Warrior's sixth dam Cambrienne (Sicambre), a daughter of the Dewhurst Stakes-Gr.1 winner Torbella (Tourbillon 2mx3m) and granddaughter of the Irish Oaks-Gr.1 winner Djebellica, also being the sixth dam of the five-time Gr.1 winner Pierro.

Sire of the likes of elite stars Pierata, Arcadia Queen and Shadow Hero, Golden Slipper winner Pierro (Lonhro) is doing a good job at stud after retiring in 2013, siring 18 stakes winners including other Gr.1 gallopers Levendi and Pinot. How interesting it will be to see the result of Pierro's daughters visiting Saxon Warrior in the future. Saxon Warrior stands at \$24,750 in 2019. ■