

# APPLEBY TRIO LOOKS TO FEND OFF BLITZKRIEG IN G2 AL FAHIDI FORT; FINAL SONG TUNES IN FOR GUINEAS GLORY

DUBAI (January 23, 2020)—Thursday evening's Dubai World Cup Carnival card at Meydan Racecourse, worth \$1,045,000 over six fixtures, is topped by the Group 2 Al Fahidi Fort over 1400m on turf. The evening also has the first classic of the season, the Listed UAE 1000 Guineas, as well as the Listed Dubai Dash for turf sprinters, Al Bastakiya Trial for sophomore colts looking to stretch out in trip and a pair of long-distance handicaps—one on each surface. The entirety of the card is sponsored by pillar partner DP World and features runners from nine countries, including the first of the season from USA. First post is 6:30 p.m. local time.

## Race 5 (8:50 p.m.)—Group 2 \$250,000 Al Fahidi Fort (1400mT)

The Al Fahidi Fort features a strong trio from the yard of defending DWC Carnival champion trainer Charlie Appleby, including likely co-favourites **Mythical Magic** and **Glorious Journey**, with the latter wearing the Darley maroon and white of HH Sheikha Al Jalila Racing. **Mythical Magic** and **Mubtasim**, both winners during the 2019 DWC Carnival, will adorn the Godolphin blue. First jockey to the Appleby yard, William Buick, chose **Mythical Magic**, with second rider James Doyle to be astride **Glorious Journey** and Brett Doyle upon **Mubtasim**.

**Mythical Magic** won last year's Zabeel Mile (G2) in fine style a few weeks after finishing a good second in this race. **Mubtasim** won and placed in handicap company last season and appears primed for a good campaign, though the waters are deep in this test. **Glorious Journey** won last summer's Hungerford (G2) at Newbury over this distance and appears well-suited on multiple levels in this spot.

The first USA-based horse to compete in Group company during the 2020 DWC Carnival, **Blitzkrieg**, is a G3 winner stateside over 1600m on grass. The 5-year-old gelded son of War Front enters off a good fourth in the 1100m Joe Hernandez (G2) at Santa Anita for 2007 Godolphin Mile-winning trainer Doug O'Neill and owners R3 Racing and Calara Farms. Said prep was purposely below his best trip and meant to function as a sharpener. Pat Cosgrave picks up the mount on the import.

### NOTES: O'Neill Discusses Blitzkrieg's Preparation and Arrival in Dubai

Godolphin has a third runner in the race in the form of Saeed bin Suroor-trained **Royal Meeting**, a G1 winner at two who raced just twice last season at three, only managing a third in G3 company in Australia. Long well-regarded by his trainer, he will be ridden by Christophe Soumillon for the first time since winning his top-level test over this distance.

"He has settled in well since arriving from Australia and is working well," Bin Suroor said. "The 1400m looks ideal for his comeback before, hopefully a crack at the Zabeel Mile and we hope he is a horse for Super Saturday and Dubai World Cup night."

Handicap veteran **Poet's Society** and Listed winner **Inverleigh** complete the field. The latter is trained by Salem bin Ghadayer, who said: "He arrived quite late, so it has been a bit of a rush with him, but we think he is improving with his racing. That said, this looks a very strong renewal."

## Race 2 (7:05 p.m.)—Listed \$250,000 UAE 1000 Guineas (1600m)

Nine 3-year-old fillies have been declared for the season's first classic, the UAE 1000 Guineas, six of whom contested the 1400m UAE 1000 Guineas Trial three weeks ago. That was won by Godolphin and Saeed bin Suroor's **Final Song** in excellent fashion and a swift time for the 1400m. Stretching out to 1600m, the Queen Mary (G3)-placed filly and expected favourite reunites with Christophe Soumillon and takes on the same pair who chased her home last time, **Down on Da Bayou** and **Rio Angie**.

"She was a good juvenile in Britain and won the trial well," Bin Suroor said. "Hopefully she can follow up with the UAE Oaks the next target and we would like to think she will be a filly to challenge the boys in the UAE Derby on Dubai World Cup night."

A half-sister to 2016 UAE 1000 Guineas and Oaks winner Polar River, Salem bin Ghadayer-trained Down on Da Bayou has speed to burn and appears the one to catch in this spot. Rio Angie, who was superbly impressive on debut in November, makes her third start and appears primed to improve from her run three weeks ago for trainer Doug Watson. Mickael Barzalona rides Down on Da Bayou, while Pat Dobbs pilots Rio Angie.

### NOTES: Watson Discusses Rio Angie's Chances in the UAE 1000 Guineas

Dubai Love, for the same team as the favourite, appears one who could improve for Bin Suroor, as she was a fine fourth last time and may appreciate the extra furlong this time. Fellow Godolphin colourbearers **Chasing Dreams** and **Silent Wave** have shown ample class, but must overcome pedigrees that do not exactly scream dirt performance for trainer Charlie Appleby. The royal blue team is joined by three Scandinavians to complete the field, including Norway's **Ascot Brass** and Swedish duo **Silent Night** and **Havana Red**.

## Race 3 (7:40 p.m.)—Listed \$175,000 Dubai Dash (1000mT)

A field of eight lines up in the Dubai Dash, which looks to live up to its name, with ample speed to burn in the form of 11-year-old galloping fountain of youth, **Caspian Prince**, Doug Watson-trained surface-switcher **Waady** and Spanish speedball **Abrantes**. Still, all must fend off the powerful late kick of Juddmonte Farms' Charlie Hills-trained **Equilateral**, who is easily the class of the field under James Doyle and something close to his best should be difficult to top.

### NOTES: Watson Talks About Switching Waady Back to Turf

Hills has a good second line of defence in the form of **A Momentofmadness**, who was seventh last out over this trip on opening night of the DWC Carnival. A stalk-and-pounce type, he shares that style with USA-based Doug O'Neill runner **Prodigal Son**, a compact bay gelding by Square Eddie who will be the first runner of the DWC Carnival for O'Neill.

Top-weighted **Rusumaat** and **Neverland Rock** complete the field.

## Race 4 (8:15 p.m.)—\$100,000 Al Bastakiya Trial (1900m)

UAE Derby dreams are on the line in the course and distance 1900m Al Bastakiya Trial, a race won last year by eventual UAE Derby third-place finisher, Manguzi. Appearing wide-open this year, it is topped by **Dark of**

**Night**, a late-closing Mussabeh Al Mheiri trainee for owner Nasir Askar, who is having a massive season. Third two weeks ago in the UAE 2000 Guineas Trial over 1600m, he should appreciate the increase in trip.

Saeed bin Suroor starts four, topped by **Lost in Time** and **First View**. Both exiting the Trial, as well, they are joined by a third, **Laser Show**, and maiden Shamadal-sired filly **Princess Bride**. Christophe Soumillon, who chose First View last time and went off as the favourite, moves to Lost in Time in this round.

Scandinavians have come in spades for this two-turn test, with six runners, led by 90-rated **Timo Nurmos**, while local maidens like **Sanad Libya** and **Zabardast** deserve a look in here based on the talent they have respectively shown from a lone start, as well as their dirt route-friendly pedigrees.

#### **Race 1 (6:30 p.m.)—\$135,000 P & O Marinas Handicap 90-108 (2410mT)**

The evening kicks off with a long one, a 2410m turf handicap that drew a full field. Godolphin appears strong with the likes of **Gifts of Gold** and **Dubai Future** from Saeed bin Suroor and **Court Poet** and **Zaman** from Appleby, but is not unbeatable in this stamina test. Ireland's **Massif Central** represents the always-capable yard of Mick Halford, while Ahmad bin Harmash-trained **Sharpalo** returns from a layoff looking to do one better than his second in this last year.

David Simcock and Mike de Kock know how to win at Meydan and each come with live long shots in **Kasaman**—a French acquisition for the former—and hard-knocking massive animal **Majestic Mambo**. Meanwhile, trainer Mick Channon, who won last week with Certain Lad, will attempt to win another one with a longshot this week when he saddles **Koeman**.

#### **Race 6 (9:25 p.m.)—\$135,000 Jebel Ali Port Handicap 90-108 (2000m)**

The evening ends with a handicap that covers the course and distance of the Dubai World Cup, 2000m on the dirt. **Franz Kafka**, well-regarded by trainer Simon Crisford and already a winner here this season on turf, makes his dirt debut. **Dubai Icon** is expected to improve markedly from his run in a 1900m handicap on opening night—a race that naturally bled into this affair for about half this field.

American import **Parsimony**, second to champion Game Winner in G3 company last summer, looks to pounce upon arrival, but must overcome his rail post for trainer Doug O'Neill and owner Reddam Racing. Meanwhile, Godolphin's Appleby-trained **Zorion** heads the weights and finally makes a start on the dirt with a pedigree that screams it.

#### **[NOTES: O'Neill Talks About His High Hopes for Parsimony](#)**

**Grand Argentier**, **Above Normal**, **Tried and True**, **Etijaah** and **George Villiers** are all hard-knocking handicappers who can win this on their day. A fitting, thrilling ending to a great evening of racing.

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