

**#DWCCarnival Preview:** Meydan all Set to Stage a Truly Super Saturday; Dubai World Cup Meeting Clues Aplenty on Offer

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Three weeks before the UAE's biggest day of horseracing, the Dubai World Cup card, this weekend's Super Saturday is a 'dress rehearsal' with all seven races mirroring the conditions of one of those on the big day, officially highlighted by the Group 1 Al Maktoum Challenge R3 on dirt along with the Group 1 Jebel Hatta, the turf highlight.

The seventh meeting of the 2021 Dubai World Cup Carnival at Meydan, is sponsored by Pillar Partners Emirates.

### **Group 1 \$390,000 Al Maktoum Challenge R3 (2000m D)**

Over the same 2000m on dirt as the \$12million Dubai World Cup, the Group 1 Al Maktoum Challenge R3 sponsored by Emirates Airline has on three occasions been won by a subsequent Dubai World Cup winner with Dubai Millennium (2000), Street Cry (2002) and Electrocutisionist (2006) all completing the double at Nad Al Sheba for Godolphin and Saeed bin Suroor.

Frankie Dettori rode all three to win this, though did not partner Street Cry in the World Cup, and is aboard dirt debutant **Dubai Mirage** for the same connections this year. Competing at his first Meydan carnival, the 4-year-old gelding has finished second on both local starts, in turf handicaps over 1600m and 1800m.

Being a gelded son of Dubawi, he certainly looks worth trying on the dirt surface and did lose his maiden tag on his sole all-weather appearance in Britain.

Saeed bin Suroor said: "Dubai Mirage has run well on the turf so far this season, finishing second on both occasions, and we wanted to give him a chance on the dirt. This will be a very tough race, but he has been going nicely at home."

For Fawzi Nass, Victorious and Adrie de Vries, **Salute The Soldier** was a Super Saturday winner last year, in the 1600m Group 3 Burj Nahaar. A 6-year-old Sepoy gelding, he bounced back to winning ways in the 1900m Group 2 Al Maktoum Challenge R2 just over three weeks ago.

De Vries said: "That was a new trip last time and he stayed well, suggesting the extra 200m will not be an issue. He seems in great form and it is exciting to, hopefully, be involved with a genuine Dubai World Cup prospect."

Second on that occasion to De Vries' mount was **Thegreatcollection**, also runner-up in the 1600m Group 2 Al Maktoum Challenge R1 when Salute The Soldier was third. To be ridden by Pat Dobbs, the 7-year-old Saint Anddan gelding is trained by Doug Watson for Zaur Sekrekov.

The trainer said: “He stayed the 1900m well last time and, on that evidence, 2000m is not going to be a problem. He has been in great form all season.

“Hopefully they go quick and he can close on them in the straight. We are really looking forward to seeing how he goes.”

The great collection’s most recent victory, in the middle of December, was in the Listed Dubai Creek Mile, chased home by Secret Ambition with Salute The Soldier back in fourth.

Trained by Satish Seemar for Nasir Askar, **Secret Ambition** was then runner-up when attempting to defend his crown in the Group 3 Jebel Al Mile. Most recently, he won the 1600m Group 3 Firebreak Stakes, at the carnival, a month ago.

With regular pilot Tadhg O’Shea suspended, Richard Mullen resumes the partnership victorious in the 2019 Jebel Ali Mile. Seemar also saddles **Quip**, **Saltarin Dubai**, victorious in the 1950m Listed Jebel Ali Stakes on his most recent start a month ago under Mullen, and **Roman Rosso**.

Salem bin Ghadayer is seeking a third consecutive victory in the race and fourth in five years. He saddles **Firnas**, **Tailor’s Row** and **Hypothetical**, runner-up behind Secret Ambition in the Firebreak Stakes before recording a second 1600m dirt Meydan handicap success a fortnight ago.

Bin Ghadayer said: “All three are in good form and have been running well, but this is, obviously, a tough race. We hope they all run well and can give a good account of themselves.”

### **Group 1 \$260,000 Jebel Hatta (1800m T)**

Over the same turf 1800m as the Group 1 Dubai Turf, the Group 1 Jebel Hatta sponsored by Emirates Airline, has attracted a field of 11 but might not be as competitive as the numbers would suggest.

For Britain and David O’Meara, **Lord Glitters** landed the course and distance Group 2 on his seasonal reappearance, a first success for the 8-year-old Whipper gelding since his career defining victory in the 1600m Group 1 Queen Anne Stakes at Royal Ascot 2019. Most recently, he was third, under a penalty, in the Group 2 Al Rashidiya, finishing one place behind Court House who had been allowed to dictate a modest gallop from the outset.

O’Meara said: “His last race was just not run to suit him as there was no pace. He does not have the penalty this time and, hopefully, there will be a stronger gallop.”

Godolphin are seeking a fourth consecutive Jebel Hatta success, as well as seventh in nine years, and have three chances. UAE debutant **Al Suhail** looks the best hope for Charlie Appleby, who also saddles **Art Du Val**, in a race the trainer has won thrice to date.

The mount of William Buick, **Al Suhail** has only run six times, the 4-year-old Dubawi colt winning twice, including his most recent start, the 1600m Listed Bahrain International Sir Henry Stakes at Newmarket in early January.

Appleby said: “Al Suhail had a setback after winning at Newmarket and subsequently we have had our eye on a Dubai campaign for him. His preparation has gone well and he did a nice racecourse gallop at Meydan last week.

“We are hoping that he can run a decent race with an eye on going on to the Group 1 Dubai Turf later in the month, so we expect him to come on for the run, but we have no doubt about his ability to run at this level.

“Art du Val ran a creditable race over this course and distance in the Singspiel Stakes and was also very competitive in the Zabeel Mile last time out. We think the return to 1800m is going to suit, but he will need to up his game again to be in the mix.”

Fellow Godolphin handler, Saeed bin Suroor, has also won the race on six previous occasions. He relies on Royal Marine, a Group One winner as a juvenile in October 2018, but winless since.

Bin Suroor said: “Royal Marine always works well in the mornings, when he shows some real class, but we need him to start displaying it again in races.”

### **Group 2 \$228,000 Dubai City Of Gold (2410m T)**

The prep race for the course and distance Group 1 Dubai Sheema Classic, the 2410m on turf Group 2 Dubai City Of Gold sponsored by Emirates Holidays has been won by Godolphin in each of the last four years, six in seven and eight in eleven.

Seeking a fourth consecutive success, Charlie Appleby relies on hot favourite **Walton Street**, a 7-year-old Cape Cross gelding who won the Listed Dubai Racing Club Classic Handicap on his sole appearance this year. That was six weeks ago.

Appleby said: “Walton Street was very impressive on his first start of the season and the form of that race has worked out well. It was always the plan to then come straight here and his preparation has gone nicely. This is a step up in class, but he deserves his chance at this level.”

A race inaugurated in 1998, Saeed bin Suroor has saddled the winner on no less than ten occasions, six of them ridden by Frankie Dettori who is aboard **Dubai Warrior** for John Gosden.

Bin Suroor saddles three though with Pat Cosgrave aboard **Dubai Future** seemingly the main hope ahead of **Brilliant Light** and **Desert Fire**, the mounts of Harry Bentley and Andrea Atzeni respectively.

Bin Suroor said: “Dubai Future is a tough horse, who always tries his best. This looks the right race for him and he appears to have a good chance.

“Desert Fire will be suited by the return to this distance and has been going well at home. I was very pleased with Brilliant Light’s effort in the Nad Al Sheba Trophy and he is ready to go again.”

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**[Interview with Musabbeh Al Mheiri](#)**

**[Interview with Antonio Cintra](#)**

**[Interview with Doug Watson](#)**

**[Interview with Pat Dobbs](#)**

*The interviews are conducted by Craig Evans, Race Caller with the Emirates Racing Authority.*