



Mondays with DAVID ALLAN



Mastercraftsman, excellent as a sire and broodmare sire.

Taking advantage of accessible genes

Yesterday England did me a favour by winning at Lord's a day before I leave for Johannesburg thus not missing a ball. Dina Asher-Smith won three golds at the Europeans in Berlin setting three world leading times and putting her in the frame for full-scale "Group 1s" to come. And while she was doing that – and continuing to charm us all – the Niarchos filly Alpha Centauri (by Mastercraftsman) won her fourth Group 1 on the racecourse.

The Jacques le Marois – or to give it its full mouthful "Prix du Haras de Fresnay-le-Buffard Jacques le Marois" (Group 1) – is a 1 mile/1600 metres Deauville super race for 3 year old colts and fillies (and, emphatically, "no geldings"). Jessie Harrington's charge Alpha Centauri won it by 2½ lengths.

This column pictured her on [16 July](#) and now looks forward to her joining the great fillies.

"Great fillies" is a subjective analysis. For this writer it started in childhood with Petite Etoile by Petition.

Before the Pattern was instituted she ran 19 times winning 14 and finishing 2nd in 5. My earliest sporting heroes/heroines? Stirling Moss and Petite Etoile.

Many would pick Miesque (Nureyev) a 10 times Group 1 winner (and, as it happens, great-grand-dam of Alpha Centauri). But it is hard to look beyond Goldikova (Anabaa) and Zenyatta (Street Cry) with 14 and 13 Group 1s respectively.

A special favourite in amongst all those has to be Triptych (by Riverman out of the Hail To **(to p2)**)



Alpha Centauri by Mastercraftsman, now four times Gr1 winner.

DAVID ALLAN (cont..)

Reason champion Trillion) who mixed it in many tough contests, winning 9 Group 1s and finishing 3rd amongst 7 Group 1 winners in the greatest race I have ever seen, Dancing Brave's Arc. <https://bit.ly/1WOHuFs>.

That mare's life ended in bizarre tragedy when she ran into a farm vehicle driven into her paddock at night. She was in foal to Mr Prospector.

I often imagine the day when we are able easily to export a South African filly to race in Europe and emulate and (go one better than) Iridescence and National Colour who showed brilliance in the Falmouth (won this year by Alpha Centauri) and Nunthorpe respectively. But day dreaming is one thing, and expanding our gene pool in South Africa is another.

Without in any way referring to the real experts who live and work in South Africa, the general racehorse owning population is not broad-minded when it comes to sires. Trainers working to a budget have the devil of a job to get many to go outside a few well-regarded stallions.

Such a trend has a narrowing effect that – in its extreme form – drives mid-range breeders out of business and writes off many stallions before they have started. Whatever you think of the rights and wrongs of that syndrome, it restricts the development of a range of genes.

A stallion with a wonderful female line is always a candidate for broodmare sire status. If unknown or unrecognised or somehow suffering from a negative prejudice, those genes are not going to get a fair crack of the whip.

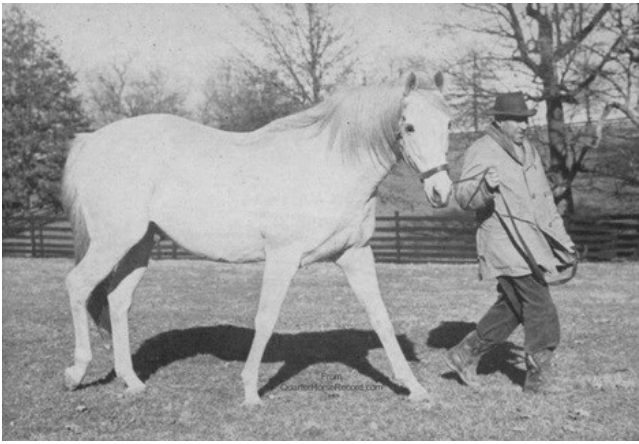


Lester Piggott on Petite Etoile.

This writer has advocated certain overseas sires that are not household names in South Africa as broodmare sires. One is Kyllachy, now retired, a son of Pivotal who is all about speed.

Another is Mastercraftsman, the sire of four times (so far) Group 1 winner Alpha Centauri amongst half a dozen Group 1 winners to date. I am nuts about him as a future broodmare sire and am thrilled to have recommended him as a mate for an Oasis Dream mare bought in UK and brought to South Africa in foal known to be carrying a filly.

Until recently Mastercraftsman was underrated, falling betwixt and between on the Coolmore roster to the extent that a couple of years ago he could be "had" very reasonably within a package. Now he can't, although he is still value as his better books are coming through e.g. Alpha Centauri, following The Grey Gatsby, Kingston Hill and others.



MAHMOUD in Kentucky (left); Goldikova (Olivier Peslier (right).



DAVID ALLAN (cont...)

Mastercraftsman sits 4th of European sires by winners and 6th by stakes won. He has made it!

Why so potty about Mastercraftsman? Many years ago, I read all about Mahmoud's (then) fastest ever Derby win in 1936. The grey son of Blenheim out of a daughter of the great Mumtaz Mahal (The Tetrarch) captured the imagination, bringing to the party those legendary female lines.

In our early forays to Keeneland, there were a few elderly mares by Mahmoud's son The Axe still around, but the best we could do was to acquire a Lyphard's Wish filly with The Axe fairly close up below. We enjoyed a bit of success, and she bred a Stakes winner or two during her 22 years of life with us.

We moved on to the next generation Al Hattab as a broodmare sire, then later to Black Tie Affair. At the same time, the idea of a mare – then increasingly

rare - by Grey Dawn was an obsession. That wonderful broodmare sire was by Herbager out of a mare by Mahmoud.

And so to Mastercraftsman. His sire Danehill Dancer got them all shapes and sizes, but he got this grey fellow right. At Group 1, Mastercraftsman won twice at 2 then the Irish Guineas and the St James Palace at Royal Ascot. He was 2nd to Sea the Stars in the Juddmonte.

He is out of a mare by Black Tie Affair (by Miswaki out of an Al Hattab mare). His great granddam (bottom line) is Tobira Celeste who may not quite be Fall Aspen or Balidaress or Urban Sea but is pretty close.

Mastercraftsman could not realistically have been bought to stand in South Africa – or anywhere else other than Ireland. But his and others' fillies can be bought sensibly. Mares in foal can be bought sensibly. Mares can be sent sensibly. We can bring such genes in that way. - **tt.**



Innovative Stallion Managers

davidallan@allanbloodlines.com
 Mobile: +27 (0)72 740 9061
 Whatsapp: +44 (0)7774 697640

raysharman@allanbloodlines.com
 Whatsapp: +44 (0)7970 675326

symvanniekerk@allanbloodlines.com
 Landline: +27 (0)21 828 9288



