



PRIME DISPATCH

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**Rubisaki winning the Group 3 PJ Bell stakes at Randwick on Doncaster Day
9 starts 7 wins \$1,086,150**

The news that Might And Power had passed away over the Easter break brought back some good memories for me. He was a great galloper, very well named. He won the Caulfield Cup a couple of weeks after I started working with Bill Mitchell in 1997 and then went on to win the Melbourne Cup beating Doriemus who was owned by a syndicate which included Bill Mitchell's good client Keith Biggs.

He was by Zabeel who along with Danehill are the most dominant sires of the modern era in Australia and NZ. Zabeel did more to keep the NZ breeding industry relevant than any other horse I can remember. He did more than his sire Sir Tristram who was also a star.

Zabeel sired 166 stakes winners including 47 Group One winners. Included in this elite group was a horse named Dignity Dancer trained by Bill Mitchell. I have always felt I would be unlikely to ever be associated with another horse as good as him. He went through the Yarraman Park draft at the

1997 Inglis Horses In Training Sale where he was passed in for \$25,000. His reserve was \$30,000. Bill Mitchell decided to offer his breeder Keith Biggs the opportunity to retain the horse with the fall back being Prime Thoroughbreds would syndicate him. He had displayed very good ability during his preparation for the sale which is today known as the Inglis Breeze Up Sale.

Keith took Bill's advice and kept the horse and the rest is history. As a 3yo he was almost unbeatable and like Might And Power was a very clean winded horse. Dignity Dancer's win in the 2018 AJC Spring Champion Stakes was as good a win as I have ever seen with him breaking the 2000m course record at Randwick. There was a lot of pressure to run him in the Cox Plate and then VRC Derby but Bill felt the horse had done enough and Keith accepted his advice.

He was spelled and then went on to win the 3yo Triple Crown in Melbourne which included the Australian Guineas which was run over 2000m. He beat an outstanding horse in Mossman in each of the three legs of the Triple Crown.

At the same time Bill also had another very good 3yo named Kenwood Melody which won the MRC Caulfield Guineas. He wasn't as good a horse as Dignity Dancer but still outstanding and beat a very good field in the Guineas. Bill was keen to spell him and bring him back for the Sydney Autumn Carnival, but his owner wanted to run him in the Cox Plate against Might And Power.

Kenwood Melody was a great 3yo and tried his heart out moving into 2nd place at the 500m but didn't get the trip and was a spent force as they turned for home. Might And Power broke his heart. Kenwood Melody was never the same horse again and went to Hong Kong. He only had the six races in Australia winning three, the Caulfield Guineas, Stan Fox Stakes and Ming Dynasty Quality.

I learned a lot from those two horses. Patience and timing are the two most important attributes you can have in racing. Bill's decision to spell Dignity Dancer after the win in the Spring Champion Stakes was a masterstroke and he went to Melbourne putting together four great wins. He actually ran quicker time in winning the Australian Guineas than when he won the Spring Champion Stakes in course record time at Randwick. His time of 1 minute 59 seconds at Flemington was exceptional. To put it into perspective he ran 2.82 seconds quicker than Magic Wand's time winning the Mackinnon Stakes at Flemington in November 2019 on a good track!!!

Unfortunately, Dignity Dancer wasn't a sound horse and due to injury never regained the form of that magical six months. His winning run came to an end in the STC Rosehill Guineas where he was beaten by another son of Zabeel in Sky Heights. I left Rosehill feeling deflated that day but looking back the run in the Australian Guineas probably bottomed him out. It was an amazing performance, run in incredibly fast time on a Good 2!!!

I'm certain if the owner had agreed to spell Kenwood Melody after his Guineas win, he would have gone on to be a very good 1600m horse with a race like the Doncaster well within his reach.

I often see good young horses pushed too hard too early in this country and this is a reason we don't seem to have large numbers of competitive WFA stars we should have.

Now we come to Rubisaki. I'm not sure if she is going to reach the heights Dignity Dancer did but she is tracking in the right direction. She has won seven of her first nine starts. Patrick Payne and I have had a high opinion of her from very early in her career but are very aware she is a 3yo filly and will only be three once. She has been developing nicely and getting stronger as she matures. On Saturday she will have her final race for the season in the Group 3 James HB Carr Stakes at Royal Randwick.

After 22 years I may well have the horse to match Dignity Dancer's incredible ability. A win on Saturday would see her finish her 3yo season undefeated with six wins and \$1,155,650 in earnings.

Irrespective of where she runs on Saturday, she will head to Yarraman Park for a six weeks spell and then be prepared for the Spring wjth the ATC Golden Eagle her main aim. This is a \$7.5 million race.

Time will tell us where she will finish up, but I am excited about the 2021 Sydney Autumn Carnival where she could truly be a star.

YEARLINGS

I am gradually working through our yearlings and I am quite happy where I am placed at present.

RACING AND OTHER THINGS

The world is a troubled place at present with the Coronavirus putting the breaks on many facets of our lives. The one certainty is it will eventually end. The testing results in Australia and NZ are very encouraging.

NSW have released their results for the past 24 hours with just 7 new cases reported. Overall, the figures are good. The Herald Sun provides a very good analysis of the Victorian situation. Of the 1281 cases reported in Victoria 1075 have fully recovered. Sadly, 14 people have died from the virus and we only had 13 new cases in the state yesterday.

Most states are reporting single figure increases with Tasmania having the most serious situation at present although the main outbreak is confines to the North West Coast.

We are lucky racing has continued in all jurisdictions except Tasmania. Let's hope this continues and Tasmania can get back on track as soon as possible.



Husson Eagle – thank you for some great memories!!!