

King Of Athens

TO STAND IN WA

King Of Athens (USA) is the latest addition to the WA sire ranks at St Jude Farm in Serpentine.

A classic colt in Ireland last year, King Of Athens brings another successful branch of the Danzig sireline to local breeders through War Front (USA) who has sired 97 Stakes winners from his Kentucky base at Claiborne Farm.

King Of Athens was bred and raced by a Coolmore partnership with the Niarchos family's Flaxman Stables. He was runner-up to stablemate Arizona (No Nay Never) on debut in a nursery at the Curragh before having his colours lowered by the same colt in the G2 Coventry Stakes (1200m) at Royal Ascot.

Trainer Aidan O'Brien sent him to Lingfield to break maiden ranks the Ladbrokes EBF Novice Stakes (1400m) and the race was already settled after a speedy start from an inner stall. Making all the running and travelling comfortably, he kept up a strong gallop to easily dismiss Lexington Rebel (Fr) by five lengths.

"King Of Athens is a smart horse," jockey Seamie Heffernan said.

"He ran very well in the Coventry so it's not a surprise that he won, and he won well."

Following that first prep, he was sent for a winter spell as one of Ballydoyle's leading 3yo prospects for 2020.

"He's a lovely horse with a great temperament and is regarded highly here," O'Brien said.

"He's a good-limbed colt with lots of quality and plenty of ability."

King Of Athens returned the following summer and didn't dodge a contest in the LR Irish 2000 Guineas Trial (1400m) at Leopardstown. He tracked the leaders on the rails and was going best at the furlong only to be caught late in a duel with Ten Year Ticket.

He followed up with a fourth in the G3 Ballycorus Stakes at Fairyhouse before a stifle injury called a halt to a career that spanned just a dozen starts. He's the first son of War Front to stand in WA and is bred on a Galileo cross which has delivered Group 1 stars U S Navy Flag (England), Roly Poly (France) and Fog Of War (Canada).

O'Brien saddled his dam Together Forever (Galileo) to a Group 1 victory in the 2014 Dubai 2YO Fillies' Mile at Newmarket. Her sister Forever Together added another Group 1 for the same connections in the 2018 English Oaks.

King Of Athens will stand at St Jude Farm for an introductory fee of \$3,300 (inc gst).



For bookings or further information contact James Miorada on 0418 912 662.

Image: King of Athens (rails) and Ten Year Ticket fight out the LR Irish 2000 Guineas Trial at Leopardstown last year.



THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS WA

TAYLORS GO TO TOWN WITH *Universal Ruler*

The Taylor family have been counting their blessings with Universal Ruler in the foaling barn and at Belmont Park.

They welcomed a filly foal (pictured) by the Scenic Lodge sire from Lucky Roar (So Secret) last month and a day later cheered home Universal Ruler mare Zephyr Queen.

"It's Lucky Roar's first foal and she's a beautiful filly!" trainer Jimmy Taylor said.

Her dam retired to stud last year following a career that generated \$225,000 in prizemoney from two wins at Ascot and a black-type placing in the LR Starstruck Classic. She was raced by Jimmy's wife Tina, his mum Lois, Paul Quartermaine, John & Jenny Maas, Ian Russell and Jason Norrish.

The Taylors also race Zephyr Queen and stable client Ian Russell is in both mares, too.

"Zephyr Queen is tough and softened up the leader before fighting them off in the straight,

" Taylor added after her victory in the Cool Ridge Hcp (1200m)."

"She was drawing away again on the line and it was a brilliant ride by Keshaw (Dhurun)."

Zephyr Queen has banked prizemoney of \$222,250 and earned another \$2,900 in EPONA credits for her first win this season.

"We can afford to send her to a good stallion," Taylor continued. "EPONA is a great initiative by RWWA."

Zephyr Queen was bred and sold by Scenic Lodge for \$9,000 at the 2017 Perth Magic Millions. Her dam Deboshnokov (Stravinsky) is a half-sister to G1 Thousand Guineas winner Inaflury (Zabeel).

Universal Ruler has established an early lead on the WA winners' table with 8 individual winners this season. The son of Scenic (Sadler's Wells) holds sway from All American (7), Blackfriars (6) and War Chant (6).

Scenic Lodge stands Universal Ruler and Snippetson for \$8,250 service fees alongside Dash For Cash at \$2,200. All fees (inc GST).



SMASHING START FOR *Playing God*

Playing God has the firepower to post another PB this season with a significant changing of the guard on the horizon in WA.

The Group 1 racehorse and sire has finished 5th and 3rd for the last two seasons while building a base for championship honours in the years to come at Darling View Thoroughbreds. And the good news out of Mundijong is that he has recovered from surgery for a displaced large colon last November.

"Playing God is in really good order and great physical condition," Darling View general manager Brent Atwell reported.

"It's a big season ahead for Playing God and I'm All The Talk. They will both cover their biggest books yet."

A Playing God showing promise for this season is third-crop daughter Smashing who opened his Perth account this season last month. The Neville Parnham-trained grey mare flew home for a half-length victory over Starlift (Blackfriars).

"She surprised me," jockey Chris Parnham conceded. "We were only moderately away and had drifted right back by the 400m mark. I was sure she had too much to do and I still thought we were done at the furlong. But she kept digging and can develop into a Saturday horse on that win."

Neville Parnham is on record as declaring the younger sister to Lordhelpmerun (G3 WA Sires' Produce Stakes) will make open-class in the next twelve months. He should know having prepared Playing God to 8 wins and \$1.67 million in prizemoney. He also polished Smashing's dam Pure Heaven (Snippetson) and second-dam Magic Heaven (Magic Ring) to multiple wins at Ascot.

Smashing is a homebred for Parnham with his wife Carol in partnership with popular stable client Paul Cooke. There's a 2yo full-sister waiting in the wings and they sent Pure Heaven back to Playing God last October.

Darling View Thoroughbreds stands Playing God (Blackfriars) for a State-high \$16,500 with I'm All The Talk (\$6,600), Patronize (\$4,400) and Lucky Street (\$3,300). All service fees (inc GST).



Star Mare Strikes

Ruby Racing & Breeding mare Sambar is making national headlines this season with Stakes winners Tiger Of Malay (Extreme Choice) and Samizdat (Not A Single Doubt).

Sambar is owned by the O'Bree family who are based in the mid-west at Kojarena. They bought the More Than Ready (USA) mare from Amelia Park in 2016 and her page has since gone from strength to strength.

Tiger Of Malay won the G3 Up And Coming Stakes (1300m) at Kembla Grange last month on the same day Samizdat rocketed home in the LR Belmont Newmarket (1200m) in Perth.

The O'Bree clan – Rod & Bridie and their children Jaime & Daniel – sold Tiger Of Malay for \$255,000 at the 2020 Inglis Easter Sale and kept a share in a syndicate managed by Henry Field (Newgate Bloodstock) and China Horse Club. Trained by Richard and Michael Freedman, he won the G2 BRC Sires' Produce Stakes in May and his spring campaign includes Group 1 features in Sydney and Melbourne.

"Tiger Of Malay always showed quality from a young age and we were just so happy with him leading up to the Easter Sale," Jaime O'Bree said.

"We really wanted to keep him but we also want to genuinely sell our horses. I talked to Henry and he was more than happy to let us keep a share.

"The Freedmans have placed him beautifully. It's been a dream ride so far and hopefully he can make a name as a future stallion this spring.

"Samizdat is making it an extraordinary season for Sambar. She has done a cracker of a job."

Samizdat had topped the 2017 Perth Magic Millions when purchased by trainers Chris and Michael Gangemi for \$325,000. The Belmont Newmarket was his fourth black-type victory following the RL Magic Millions 3YO Trophy, G3 Asian Beau Stakes and LR Scenic Blast Stakes.

The good-looking chestnut earned a trip to Melbourne where he will be suited down the straight-six at Flemington.

Sambar is in foal to Lonhro and is booked to Exceed And Excel this season. A daughter of Vinery legend More Than Ready, she was a Randwick winner for Gai Waterhouse and her page has black-type going all the way back to 1980 Golden Slipper Stakes winner Dark Eclipse.

The O'Brees have also been pleased to see All Too Hard star Behemoth in Group 1 winning form this season. His half-sister Ofcourse She Does (Murtajill) is owned by Group 1 breeder Ellie Giles and her Dawn Approach yearling filly was part of the Ruby Racing & Breeding consignment to the this year's Perth Magic Millions.

The filly didn't make reserve in February but returned to the Swan Valley a second time for the Magic Millions Winter Sale in June. Catalogued by Yarradale Stud (as agent), she made \$28,000 to the bid of Ascot trainer Dan Morton.

