

# Blackfriars maintains narrow margin over heir-apparent



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**B**lackfriars can extend a record-breaking sequence of WA sires' premierships to 12 in a row this season with the help of his final-crop three-year-old geldings Above The Peg and Yaphet.

The Scenic Lodge legend currently maintains a narrow margin over his Group 1-winning son Playing God who is the heir-apparent to his crown in Western Australia.

Blackfriars (Danhill) sired his seventh winner in a week when Above The Peg won at Ascot last Wednesday but Playing God hit back with a winning treble at Ascot on Anzac Day.

Above The Peg came with a whirlwind finish to win running away from front-runner He's Gold (Rogano) in the Crown Perth Hcp (1200m). Bred by Anita Vale Stud, he's a younger half-brother to Oakleigh Plate (Gr 1, 1100m) winner Portland Sky (Deep Field) and was purchased for \$170,000 at the 2020 Perth Magic Millions sale.

Trainer Simon Miller was acting for a syndicate that includes prominent owners Barry McRostie and Fred Fairthorne Jnr. The colt won a Northam maiden on debut in October and was subsequently gelded during a summer spell.



Above The Peg

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Yaphet

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"We decided on a change of tactics today and he got the job done," stable manager Kelly Kinninmont said. "It proved he's a better chaser than sitting on the speed. He's a really nice type and should get further."

Connections have several options in the near future with races like the Raconteur Stakes (Listed, 1400m) and Belmont Guineas (Listed, 1600m) in June.

Yaphet signalled he has a bright future after a very impressive victory in the \$100,000 Cloud Cuckoo Cocktails Hcp (1600m) during the \$1.4 million Country Discovery meeting at Sale.

Trained on the Mornington peninsula by Cliff Brown, he launched a searching finish turning for home and kept finding for a narrow victory under Jye McNeil.

Yaphet is the final foal of 2005 Burgess Queen Stakes winner Snacking (Bletchley Park). He was bred and sold by Scenic Lodge for \$28,000 at the 2020 Perth Magic Millions to Barree Pastoral's Glen Whittenbury.

Brown has always considered Yaphet a 'nice horse' and his last-start victory over another highly-spruiked galloper So You See (So You Think) confirmed that belief. The pair were neck-and-neck all the way down the

straight but it was the son of Blackfriars who managed to get his nose down at the post. There was a six-length margin to the rest of the field.

"He's always given the indication that he's above average," Brown said. "There's been a few errors made along the way and his record should be better than it reads but it's good to start to see that promise delivered. The second horse looks really good too and they pulled away from the others."

Yaphet will keep progressing and Brown has nominated him for the Wilson Medic One Hcp (2025m) at Cranbourne on Friday and the Chairman's Stakes (Gr 3, 2000m) at Morphettville this Saturday.

After 12 years in Singapore, Brown is building up his team on the peninsula with yearlings like the Spirit Of Boom - Meow filly that was gavelled down for \$440,000 at the Inglis Easter Sale. The Vinery-consigned youngster, who is a three-quarter sister to Brisbane Stakes winner Outback Barbie, was bought on behalf of Whittenbury.

Brown celebrated a winning return home when The Inferno scored a last-to-first victory in the McEwen Stakes (Gr 2, 1000m) at Moonee Valley earlier this season. The Holy Roman Emperor gelding races in Whittenbury's colours and was repatriated to Australia after wins in the Lion City Cup and Singapore Guineas.