

# FEATURE



AFTER AN UNDERWHELMING 2017, MANY FELT TEAM GODOLPHIN HAD SOMETHING TO PROVE.. UNDER A GROUP ONE CHARGE LED BY CHARLIE APPLEBY THE BOYS IN BLUE CAME BACK IN 2018, ASHLEY CLIFF WRITES

Godolphin have struggled in recent years whilst their Irish counterparts, Ballydoyle have dominated European racing, but 2018 started with a strong performance on home soil for the boys in blue. Having won most of the valuable races leading up to the Dubai World Cup, the night promised to be full of blue, but no one could have imagined how blue Meydan would be that night.

Godolphin had to wait until the Al Quoz sprint to get off the mark, Blue Point was withdrawn at the start and would later go on to win the King Stand-

at Royal Ascot. His absence paved the way for stable mate Jungle Cat to take the victory. Godolphin's best chance of the night was Benbatl in the Dubai Turf, having been narrowly defeated in the Jebel Hatta three weeks before, Young jockey Oisin Murphy would retain the ride and make sure no one was beating him on the day, he would eventually win comfortable by 4 lengths.

Former Coral Eclipse winner Hawkbill would win the Sheema Classic for William Buick before 2017 UAE Derby winner, Thunder Snow would cap off a memorable night for Godolphin by

winning the Dubai World Cup. With the Dubai season culminating on World Cup night, all eyes turned to Newmarket for the first classic of the season where the blue army were looking for their first classic winner since Dawn Approach's Guineas win in 2013. Masar headed into the race having destroyed the Craven field by 9 lengths, but once again Aidan O'Brien and Coolmore would have one better on as Saxon Warrior spoiled the party.

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However, **Masar** would repay his owner with the biggest prize of them all, the Epsom Derby, a race Godolphin had famously never won. An ecstatic William Buick & Charlie Appleby had provided Godolphin with a victory that Sheikh Mohammed could only have dreamed of.

Masar unfortunately suffered an injury after the Investec Derby and wouldn't be seen for the remainder of the 2018 season, however, Godolphin have confirmed that the colt would remain in training as a 4-year-old. Masar's main target in 2019 will be the Arc at Longchamp, although Masar will winter in Dubai, a run in the Sheema Classic is not planned.

Godolphin would enjoy more success abroad as **Benbatl** went onto win Group ones in both Germany and Australia before finishing 2nd to Winx in the 2018 Cox Plate. Best Solution would also add to Godolphin's Group one tally down under.

Prior to 2018, Godolphin had famously never won the Epsom Derby or the Melbourne Cup. Charlie Appleby would provide His Highness Sheikh Mohammed with both of these victories within six months. **Cross**

**Counter**, who had already had a good season in the UK before which culminated in a close second behind stable mate Old Persian in the Great Voltigeur at York, with subsequent St Ledger winner, Kew Gardens in third. Cross Counter would also become the first horse trained in Britain to win the Melbourne Cup.

#### **The Future Looks Bright for Godolphin**

**Quorto**, the unbeaten son of Dubawi is the second highest rated two-year-old (behind Too Darn Hot) heading into the winter break where he is set to winter in Dubai and is currently 8/1 for the first classic of 2019, the QIPCO 2,000 Guineas. Having won all three of his starts, he looks set to be Godolphin's best chance of 2,000 Guineas success.

An impressive winner of the National Stakes at the Curragh however the form is now questionable as Anthony Van Dyck (2nd) has subsequently finished well out of the placings in the Juvenile Turf at Churchill downs which was won by stable mate Line of Duty. **Line of Duty**, a Galileo colt Group 1 is not unheard

QUORTO



LINE OF DUTY



CROSS COUNTER

## GODOLPHIN IN NUMBERS

**630** WINS GLOBALLY  
IN 2018

**128** STAKES WINS

**30** GROUP 1 WINS

**GROUP 1 WINNERS:**  
JUNGLE CAT **BLAIR**  
**HOUSE** BENBATL  
**HAWKBILL**

THUNDER SNOW  
**ALIZEE** IMPENDING  
**BLUE POINT** BEST  
SOLUTION **WILD**  
**ILLUSION** FINE  
NEEDLE **HARTNELL**  
QUORTO **KITESURF**  
**LA PELOSA** ROYAL  
MEETING **ROYAL**  
**MARINE** LINE OF  
DUTY **BEST OF DAYS**

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LINE OF DUTY IS A BIG, PHYSICAL HORSE AND A MILE LOOKS TO BE THE MINIMUM TRIP - LOOK OUT FOR HIM HEADING TO THE DERBY NEXT YEAR

of in the racing industry, but it's quite rare that Godolphin are the owners. Although it took him 3 starts to break his maiden, his ability has never been questioned.

After Group 3 success in France, he headed to Churchill downs for the Juvenile turf, and although he hung badly in the final furlongs, he stayed on very well and is one to keep an eye on. He's definitely a colt to get excited about, currently 20/1 for the 2019 Investec Derby.

**Royal Meeting**, this son of Invincible Spirit had only won a Yarmouth maiden before heading to France for the

Criterium International, a small but competitive field was ahead with huge respect for Ballydoyle's Hermosa as well as the Group 2 Mill Reef winner, Kessaar. He's a big physical horse and 8 furlongs looks set to be his minimum trip, so a Derby style campaign is more likely.

**Royal Marine**, this son of Ravens Pass has only had three starts this year and you wouldn't say he would be a group one winner after his debut, but an impressive run from the colt saw him win the Prix Jean-Luc Lagardere at Longchamp on Arc day. He is around 20/1 for the 2,000 guineas.