

“If” is a very big word in any language, but if **Proisir** had not been foaled in the same year as **Dundeel** he would have been unreservedly hailed as the champion three-year-old of Australia with two major Group One successes to his credit.

It was Dundeel who beat him on both occasions, collaring him well inside the last 50 metres after he appeared to have the race won and going down by a total of less than three-quarters of a length in both. That’s racing, but it is also the window of opportunity for New Zealand breeders, because it is doubtful if he would have left Australia’s shores if he had won either or both. Make no mistake, this good-sized brown horse was high-class indeed at all distances from 1400 to 2000 metres and seemed to act on any going.

Proisir made his racecourse debut for the Gai Waterhouse stable at Hawkesbury on the first day of his three-year-old season, winning his 1200-metre maiden handily. A month later and up a furlong in distance, he made it two for two by beating the very good filly **Norzita** by more than two lengths, and then in stakes company for the first time he scored by almost six lengths in the Gr. 3 Spring Stakes at Newcastle over the metric mile.

His trainer, quite typically, made no secret of the high regard she had for the brown colt, and we should remember that at that time she had **Pierro** in her barn. She clearly thought that staying 2000 metres against his peers would hold no terrors for **Proisir** in the Gr. 1 Spring Champion Stakes at Randwick. He settled at the back with only Dundeel behind him, and they stayed that way as the New Zealand colt launched his bid out wide, momentarily holding up Proisir’s run. Proisir nevertheless reached the lead and a ding-dong battle ensued with Dundeel snatching a head victory inside the last few yards.

The usual stellar field lined up for the Gr. 1 W.S. Cox Plate. Once the field had sorted itself out, the big-striding **Proisir** worked his way to the lead, although worried at times by **Ethiopia** who seemed intent on pursuing the same tactics. Proisir was still in front as they straightened but could not hold out the swoopers as **Ocean Park** went on to beat the three-year-olds **All Too Hard** and **Pierro**. It was, however, a good run in the circumstances and he would probably have ended up closer without the attentions of Ethiopia.

Proisir returned in the autumn at Rosehill for the 1400-metre Gr. 3 Hobartville Stakes raced on a heavy track and this time, after being drawn very wide, he ran third to **Pierro** and **Rebel Dane** with **Dundeel** behind him.

The Gr. 1 Randwick Guineas (1600m) was run at Warwick Farm in 2013, which may not have suited **Proisir** as well as the usual major course. This time he jumped well and settled in third place, made his effort along with half the field over 200 metres out, mastered all but one of them and once again narrowly went down to **Dundeel** by half a length with **Rebel Dane**, **Ferlax** and **Sacred Falls** among the beaten lot. And sadly that was that, as he met with an injury which was aggravated as an early four-year-old and he was retired to stud.

Proisir’s sire **Choisir** became the trendsetter for Australian raids on England’s major sprinting prizes when, in 2003, he won the Gr. 1 Royal Ascot Golden Jubilee Stakes and Gr. 2 King’s Stand Stakes and ran second to Oasis Dream in the Gr. 1 Newmarket July Cup. He was the 2003 champion European older sprinter and had previously been champion Australian two-year-old, as well as winning the 2003 Gr. 1 VRC Lightning Stakes. He shuttled to Coolmore in Ireland from 2004 to 2009 and has enjoyed considerable success in both hemispheres. His 68 stakes winners include seven at Group One level and include **Olympic Glory**, the joint world champion three-year-old male miler of 2013 whose four Group Ones include the Ascot Queen Elizabeth Stakes, and **Starspangledbanner**, the champion European and Australian sprinter in 2010.

Choisir seems to have gelled extremely well with Sadler's Wells and Sir Tristram blood, more especially the latter, which bodes well for his son at stud here.

The damsire is the incredibly successful **Encosta de Lago**, a son of Sadler's Wells' full-brother Fairy King. He has been champion Australian sire twice plus once on worldwide earnings and he now has 106 stakes winners (23 at Group One). The sire of the granddam of Proisir is that king of the broodmare sires Centaine, Dewar Trophy winner and five times champion broodmare sire (and likely to make that six any day soon).

The female line is well known in this neck of the woods, as his fifth dam is the dual New Zealand broodmare of the year **Sunbride**, from the No. 16 May Bride family. Sunbride's 11 winners included General Command (Sydney Cup, AJC Metropolitan Handicap, Queen Elizabeth Stakes), Straight Draw (Melbourne Cup, Sydney Cup, AJC Metropolitan Handicap) and Ilumquh (Caulfield Cup). She is also ancestress of Triumphal Queen, Dayana, Grand Cidium, Terrific and North Island.

Sunbride was a half-sister to Easter Bride, who was owned by a near-neighbour of my family when I was a boy, when she won the King's Stand Stakes at Royal Ascot. She too set up a dynasty and is ancestress of Hurrah, Grand Echezeaux, Darci Brahma, Burgundy, Romanee Conti, Ethereal and many more.

The fourth dam is **Bridesmaid**, whose five winners included stakes winners Gold Pulse, who was also second in the Gr. 2 Chelmsford Stakes, third in the AJC Derby and fourth in the Melbourne Cup, and Down The Aisle, also the unraced Reasonable (dam of stakes winners Idea and Perpetual Check, both by Grosvenor). The non-winner Imperial Bride was third dam of Proisir and she left four winners including Factor, who won twice in Melbourne and left four winners. These included stakes-placed Mr. Esteem and six-race city winner Prophet Jewel, the dam of two winners including Proisir.

The pedigree chart of Proisir is a well-balanced one with paternal grandsire **Danehill Dancer** (163 SW) 3 x 4/5 Northern Dancer to two male lines of Native Dancer and is balanced to Native Dancer and Hyperion. Choisir's dam Great Selection is also balanced to the latter, as is her son Choisir to Hyperion and Nasrullah.

Choisir is bred on the successful Northern Dancer nick with Biscay and his sire Star Kingdom. On the distaff side of the chart Encosta de Lago is bred on a rare Northern Dancer male and female line nick with a Mr. Prospector daughter, and he is balanced to Northern Dancer, Native Dancer and Selene. Factor, Proisir's granddam is bred on a fairly remote Star Kingdom nick with another female line of Northern Dancer, and she is balanced to Hyperion. Proisir's dam Prophet Jewel is balanced to Northern Dancer, Native Dancer, Hyperion, Selene and Forli. Proisir himself is sex balanced line bred to Northern Dancer (5 x 4/7/6), Natalma (5 lines), Native Dancer (8), Hyperion (16) and Nasrullah (6).

In order to further enhance the sex balance in Proisir's progeny we might seek male lines of Sharpen Up, Biscay, Bold Reason, Star Way, Mr. Prospector, Sir Ivor, Centaine, Lunchtime, Caro and Vain, also female lines of Danzig, Danehill, Danehill Dancer, Fairy King, Sadler's Wells, Tom Fool, Silly Season, Star Kingdom and Century.

There will be no shortage of mares that are likely to find something worthwhile in Proisir and I have already pointed out the possibilities in Sir Tristram and Sadler's Wells blood, but a number of matings seem to have great possibilities. Of these I favour most Captain Rio, Bachelor Duke and Rich Hill's own Any Suggestion. Thorn Park, High Chaparral, Coat's Choice, Duelled, Elusive City, and Fast 'N' Famous also have possibilities. Darci Brahma, D'Cash, His Royal Highness, Keeninsky and his sire Stravinsky, King's Chapel, Perfectly Ready, Shinko King and Volksraad are all well worth a second look as the addition of the mare's quarter may make all the difference.

Rich Hill's new acquisition is awash with possibilities, and should have every chance of making a really good sire like Choisir's son Starspangledbanner is already proving.