PEDIGREE DYNAMICS

Fun with Sunline and Ha Ha

Many an article has been written about Sunline and doubtless there will be many more to come. Without pre-empting her retirement, it is an interesting exercise to ponder on what stallions would best suit this champion mare.

Surely she will be considered with only the most commercial stallions and deservedly so. The likes of Danehill, Fusaichi Pegasus, Red Ransom, Octagonal and Zabeel are names that will spring to mind.

What makes for far more fun however, is to cut loose those commercial shackles and hypothetically examine which stallions make the very best matings with Sunline's pedigree. This may be hard for some readers to cope with. The best way of overcoming the initial horror at considering sending Sunline to a stallion with a stud fee of less than $50,000 is to imagine that she has an unraced full sister and it is this mare that we are analysing.

Having (like so many others I expect) examined Sunline's pedigree to find out what makes it tick, there appears to be a handful of prepotent lines that are reinforced in the mating of Desert Sun with Songline. Desert Sun's damsire Hotfoot is a descendant of MARCHETTA as is Turn-to on his fifth remove – this is the family of Songline's damsire Alvaro.

The LA TROIENNE family is also duplicated, with Desert Sun carrying Pardal (Hotfoot's grandsire) to reinforce Cornish Prince, damsire of Western Symphony in Songline.

RED SUNSET is another matriarch to be reinforced in Sunline's mating. Desert Sun carries Crepello, while Songline has Better Honey as her second damsire.

Although these three families have certainly given Sunline some good genetic opportunities, my bet is that her success can be sourced at the combination of Danzig (grandsire of Desert Sun) and Rockefella (sire of Alvaro).

I first wrote about the genetic relationship between Danzig, Rockefella and Bletchingly and its success about four years ago, for U.K.'s Pacemaker magazine.

Despite the fact that Danzig has the quintessential 'American' pedigree, Rockefella appears in European pedigrees and Bletchingly is a dyed-in-the-wool Aussie, these three trace to the same taproot mare, TWINE THE PLAIDEN.

Permutations of these three influences in pedigrees have had success across the globe.

Primarily, the first opportunity for two of these influences to get together presented itself when sons of Danzig - Danehill and Green Desert - were imported to the U.K. for stud duties.

Over the past eight years in Europe, the Danzig / Rockefella cross has produced stakes winners of the calibre of Erhaab, winner of the Gr. 1 English Derby and Champion 3 Year Old Colt in the U.K.; Danehill Dancer, Tiger Hill, Johan Cruyff, Land Of Dreams, Ardkinglass and Sahara Star.

With limited access to mares carrying Rockefella in the southern hemisphere, Danzig line stallions have produced Sunline, Hut, Monet's Cove and Royal Voyage from mares carrying Rockefella.

'Down Under, Rockefella did get the opportunity to meet up with Bletchingly a little earlier in history. Kingston Town and more recently, Telesto, Bonanova, Fraternity, Showella, Asian Glory, Swift Gun, Wavertree and Czar Hero all carry Bletchingly / Rockefella crosses.

Danzig / Bletchingly crosses appear in the pedigrees of Australasian stakes winners such as Redoute's Choice, Shogun Lodge, Special Dane, Fairy King Prawn, Dansino, Let's Rock Again, West Point, Simigan, Crowned Glory and Coup De Grace.

This impressive line-up of names produced by combinations of Bletchingly, Rockefella and /or Danzig leads me to theorise about the effect of placing a Bletchingly line stallion over Sunline to complete the trio.

As far as Bletchingly line stallions go, first thoughts go to one of Australia's best home grown stallions, Canny Lad. To throw in a 'roughie' however, the mating of Bureaucracy with Sunline rings more bells. A son of Lord Ballina (by Bletchingly), he is very strong in the MARCHETTA family. He carries Alycidon, Sayani and Agricola, reinforcing Hotfoot and Alvaro in Sunline. Lord Ballina is also inbred to Star Kingdom, which compliments the duplication of Northern Dancer in Sunline.

And back to reality – of the $50,000-plus stallions available, what would be my selection for Sunline? Fusaichi Pegasus gets my vote – he creates a sex balanced duplication of Danzig 3 x 4 (a good speed pattern). He also introduces Northern Dancer's close relation Halo and a son of RED SUNSET, Rasper II, to reinforce Crepello and Better Honey.

Sorry Bureaucracy, it's much more likely that there will be a 'Fusaichi Sun' running around in a few years' time than there would be a 'Bureaucratic Sun' – despite the stud fee saving of $103,400.

Ha Ha

The pedigree of Golden Slipper winner Ha Ha combines the precocity of two lines – that of her sire Danehill and her dam's three-quarter brother, Rory's Jester.

Like Sunline, Ha Ha's owners have a very commercial mare on their hands and will no doubt mate her accordingly. That won't stop us from speculating about what could be, especially as she has three full sisters who will inevitably also be future matrons.

Secret Savings has the genetic goods to get the best from Ha Ha. Linebred to SECLUSION via the taproot mare Broadway, this pattern in Secret Savings would receive a boost from fellow Seclusion member Rego (grandsire of Ha Ha's damsire Crown Jester).

Secret Savings is also linebred to PADUA through Native Dancer and also directly down his tail female line. Ha Ha's sire Danehill is inbred to Natalma, whose is by Native Dancer. Not only does this create further linebreeding to Padua, it also creates a sex balanced reinforcement of the great Native Dancer.

Of course Secret Savings' grandsire Mr. Prospector and Ha Ha's grandsire Danzig have already established a positive relationship. Kentucky Derby winner Fusaichi Pegasus, Dubai World Cup winner Almutawakel and in Australia, Golden Slipper and Australian Guineas winner Flying Spur probably head the long list of stakeswinners bred on this cross.

Mr. Prospector traces to FRIZETTE, who happens to also be the ancestress of both Baldric II and Roan Rocket in Ha Ha. In addition, Buckpasser is duplicated in this mating.

There's no saying that Secret Savings won't be among the 'big boys' in the next few seasons – he has gotten off to a promising start, however we'll also have a look at the current top echelon stallions with Ha Ha. With perhaps a wider scope to consider for Ha Ha than Sunline at this stage (in other words, looking at stallions from about $25,000 upwards), there are several that look great on paper.

Working our way down the stud fee list, Fusaichi Pegasus, Zabeel, Red Ransom, Octagonal, King's Best, Woodman, Favorite Trick, Gilded Time, High Yield and Zeditave all appear to be highly compatible, putting the owners into the enviable position of having many suitors from which to choose.

With any luck for connections, Ha Ha will race for as long as Sunline, who shows no signs of wanting to give up work to become a mum. In which case this exercise will have to be updated, when you consider that the shuttle stallion phenomenon creates huge changes to the stallion line-up on an annual basis!