



Spate of smart winners signals a big year ahead for King Power Racing

TAKING STOCK

Martin Stevens on the rich vein of form of the late Leicester City owner's operation



SEEDS of success sown by the late Leicester City chairman Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha have sprouted green shoots in recent days, with five promising three-year-old winners having represented his King Power Racing enterprise since Thursday.

The operation's increasingly familiar blue and white silks – already carried to big-race success by the likes of Beat The Bank, Donjuan Triumphant and Morando – were borne by the Andrew Balding-trained Fox Leicester (by Dark Angel) and Rux Power (Kingman) to wide-margin victories at Chelmsford last week.

They were followed by a treble at Doncaster's Lincoln meeting at the weekend, with Bangkok (Australia) impressing in a 1m2f maiden, Fox Champion (Kodiac) making all in a 7f novice stakes and Good Birthday (Dabirsim) catching the eye with a stylish win in a 1m2f handicap.

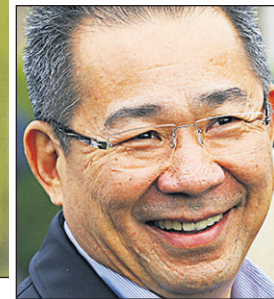
"It's certainly a good start to the season," said Alastair Donald yesterday. The bloodstock agent oversaw the racing interests of Thai businessman Srivaddhanaprabha, who died in a helicopter crash at Leicester's King Power Stadium last October.

"It's the intention of Vichai's son Aiyawatt to carry on his father's legacy and maintain what he had put in place,"



GETTY IMAGES

Doncaster scorer Bangkok is set to run in a Derby trial; (right) the late Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha



Donald added. "We're kicking on as we were before."

All five of King Power's recent winners on the track were partnered by the operation's newly retained jockey Silvestre de Sousa, and Donald added: "The retainer was something Aiyawatt's father had started to put in place, and he's come in and carried out his wishes.

"Silvestre has made an excellent start and rode the horses extremely well. It should be an exciting year for the new relationship – he'll have the opportunity to get on some very nice horses for us.

"Last year was very much all

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about development for King Power, we had two-year-olds and older horses, but very few three-year-olds. Now, however, the foundations are in place, the structure of the portfolio is much better and things should start rolling."

The past week's five winners have Royal Ascot as their long-range targets, the meeting being "the big focus of the family's attention", according to Donald.

"Rux Power could make up into a Sandringham filly, Fox Leicester perhaps the Britannia, Fox Champion the Britannia or Jersey Stakes and Good Birthday a mile and a half race," he added.

"We always held Bangkok in high regard, and hopefully we'll find out if we've got a Derby horse by running him in a trial. He was a little bit unlucky last year, but we always put him near the top of our lists.

"For most of those recent winners there was a sense of relief, as they produced what we'd been expecting. There are lots of exciting horses who haven't run yet still to come too."

The victory of Good Birthday carried an additional tinge of poignancy as the colt was given his name because he shares his actual birthday – April 4 – with Vichai Srivaddhanaprabha.

Leicester City marked what would have been their owner's 61st birthday by treating fans to free beer, water and cupcakes at the club's home game against Bournemouth last Saturday.

As King Power Racing goes from strength to strength on the track, the operation is also laying down roots as a breeder.

BALDOVINA, the dam of Queen Mary Stakes winner Ceiling Kitty bought for £300,000 when in foal to Le Havre along with her Muhaarar filly foal at the 2017 Goffs London Sale, is due to foal to Frankel this week and will visit Galileo later in the season.

The Muhaarar filly, now two, is in training with Ceiling Kitty's handler Tom Dascombe, while the mare's yearling colt

by Le Havre has been named Possible Man.

Belle Josephine, who was bought by King Power at last year's London Sale in the weeks after her son Mildenerger had won the Feilden Stakes and run second in the Dante, has produced a colt from the Siyouni cover she was carrying at the time of the auction. She now heads for a date with Frankel.

The most recent addition to King Power's nascent broodmare band is the Listed-winning and Group 3-placed Dream Ahead mare Tisbutadream.

The five-year-old was bought for £400,000 at the 2017 London Sale and went on to score in the Listed Coral Distaff and achieve podium finishes in the Valiant Stakes, Prix de Lieurey, Atalanta Stakes and Rosemary Stakes in the following months.

Her value also increased that year when her half-sister Persuasive beat the colts to land the Queen Elizabeth II Stakes.

Now retired, Tisbutadream has been scanned in foal to Coolmore's phenomenal champion sire Galileo.

The nature of the Srivaddhanaprabha family's continued participation in racing has been the subject of speculation since Vichai's death last year as King Power Racing has been a big player in the top end of the bloodstock market, having arrived spectacularly on the scene by splashing out on six horses, including the smart Beat The Bank and Tisbutadream, at the Goffs London Sale in 2017.

HORSE PLAY ANSWERS
Easy as 1-2-3 1. 2 (Manifesto & Red Rum) 2. 1953
3. The Lincoln
In which year? 2011 (Nacarat)
All mixed up Jimmy Frost

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