

Spotlight on



Newsells Park Stud

BY James Crispe

Less than two years on from Newsells Park Stud's sale from the Jacobs family to the tech entrepreneur Graham Smith-Bernal, the Hertfordshire nursery is approaching the coming covering season with a good deal of optimism.

This is not just thanks to the strength of a broodmare band that has seen it achieve top consigner status at the world-leading Book 1 of the Tattersalls October Yearling Sale for each of the last five years, but also owing to the prospects of its three stallions, the young bucks **Without Parole** and **A'Ali** and the old hand **Nathaniel**, sire of **Enable** and fresh from producing a superb Gr.1 Derby winner in **Desert Crown**, who stays in training to enhance his race record in the coming months.

That is not to say that the stud's general manager, Julian Dollar, is resting on his laurels. "We are all about our homebreds and we didn't breed a Group 1 winner in 2022, so in that respect last year was somewhat disappointing," he admitted.

"But personally I am hugely proud of **Nathaniel** and feel great fondness and loyalty towards him. He has had his critics, with some saying that he's too much of a middle-distance type who only produces fillies and whose progeny don't come to hand early enough. **Desert Crown** proved that he is just a very good stallion, full stop... and that is very gratifying.

"Any stallion that excelled over a mile and a quarter and a mile and a half and liked soft ground is always going to have appeal to National Hunt breeders, but that is not an insult. Far from it. I see it as a compliment to **Nathaniel**, who sires sound, tough horses.

"He is 15 this year and he will be as busy as ever. In fact, he is already 30 to 40 mares ahead of where he has been at this point in previous years when he ended up covering around 140 mares. That is not to say that he will cover 180 this time because that's not our style, but he is pretty much full already. He is priced right (at £15,000) and although perhaps 50 of his mares might be Jumps mares, that mix means there is no danger of the market being flooded with either his Flat-bred foals or his National Hunt-bred foals, so there will be no complaints about over-supply."

It will be 16 months and more before either of the other two male Newsells Park residents get the chance to prove themselves via their offspring's racecourse exploits, so it is Dollar's job to try to maintain some of the buzz that a new stallion inevitably creates when first setting foot in the covering barn.

"**Without Parole's** first foals last year went down very well; they averaged around 30,000gns in the ring off a £10,000 covering fee, which is not bad given that none of the foals with big pedigrees were on the market," Dollar said.

"They were just a very nice, consistent bunch of foals. I know



Newsells Park Stud's General Manager Julian Dollar

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people tend to be polite, but I was struck by how many sought me out to tell me how much they liked them and **Without Parole** is definitely more popular now, in his third year, than he was in his second.

"I think that he is a stallion who has been largely overlooked, probably because he went off to race in the States. People forget that after winning the St James's Palace Stakes he was one of the most exciting three-year-olds in Europe and that his pedigree combines a beautifully-bred family of American speed with a phenomenal stallion like **Frankel**, who is emerging as a sire of sires. I think he's as cheap as chips, to be honest."

Without Parole's fee is now at £7,000, while **A'Ali**, who kicked off at £7,500, will be covering at £5,000 during his second season. Dollar is keen to point out that any breeder sending their mare to him in 2023 automatically gets their name in the hat for 'The Sporting Chance Raffle', for which the prizes are all-expenses-paid trips to the Rugby World Cup Final and the Dubai World Cup, plus a pair of tickets to the Ladies Singles Final at Wimbledon.

"These are mega sporting prizes and we thought that it was a fun thing to do," Dollar said. "Given that, in conjunction with our ownership partners, we will be sending around 20 mares to **A'Ali** which are not eligible for the Raffle, the chance of winning for anybody else has to be pretty good."

"**A'Ali** has just had his first foals in the last few weeks and we like what we see. Breeders have been very complimentary and it's encouraging to see some sending those mares back to him."

"He's such a nice model of a horse with a great walk on him and being a good walker is essential in the sales ring. Smaller breeders

have to be sensible and don't want to spend too much, but he's very good value and, if he throws himself, his progeny must have a great chance of making money."

One sad episode for Newsells Park in 2022 was the death at the age of 21 of their star mare **Shastye (Danehill)**, whose progeny fetched £15 million at public auction and included two Gr.1 winners.

" *Losing Shastye was very tough, she was one-in-a-million, but we are all so thankful for everything that she did for the stud, as she was a big part of putting us on the map in the 2010s,*" he said. "*Last year she had a Dubawi colt, everything was perfect for 24 hours, then she haemorrhaged and that was that. We were dealing with another haemorrhage last weekend and it only ever seems to happen to the good ones.*"

Shastye's heir apparent as a Newsells Park blue hen is **Shambolic**, a multiple Listed-placed **Shamardal** half-sister to the Gr.1 winners **Viva Pataca (Marju)** and **Laughing (Dansili)**, whose first foal, a yearling filly by **Frankel**, fetched 1,500,000gns at Book 1 last year.

"*We bought her (for 800,000gns at Tattersalls December Sales) in partnership with Craig Bennett of Merry Fox Stud,*" Dollar said. "*She has a Kingman yearling colt and is in foal to Siyouni. Incidentally, Siyouni was our first choice for her as a maiden, but he failed to get her in foal on three covers, so we switched her to Frankel. The plan is to send her back to Frankel off the strength of last year's yearling.*"

The two million mark has twice been exceeded (once in guineas, once in euros) for daughters of the Newsells Park-owned **Monsun** mare **Waldlerche**, whose first foal was the four-time Gr.1 scorer and Arc winner **Waldgeist (Galileo)**.

"*Waldlerche is arguably our best mare and she goes back to visit Dubawi this year, when we'd love her to get another filly that we can keep this time,*" Dollar said. "*She had a lovely Dubawi filly in 2021, but that was the transitional year when Graham [Smith-Bernal] had just bought the farm. If Graham had not come along and bought Newsells Park when he did, we may well have been looking at a complete dispersal of our bloodstock and at one stage that seemed like a very realistic possibility. In those circumstances all the yearling were destined for the sales (Waldlerche's made 1,250,000gns).*"

Waldlerche has produced two more Pattern race victors, including the Gr.2 Prix de Malleret heroine **Waldlied (New Approach)**. "*We were lucky enough to retain Waldlied in a new partnership following our split from Gestüt Ammerland and I've heard nothing but good reports about her first foal, a colt by Kingman, who is in training with Chad Brown and has just turned three,*" Dollar reveals. "*We sold her Siyouni yearling filly to Qatar Racing last year, she has a Kingman yearling filly, is in foal to Dubawi and is booked to go to Baaeed.*"

Mating plans of other leading Newsells Park mares are their Gr.2-winning million guinea acquisition **Aljazzi (Shamardal)** going back to **Frankel** having just produced a filly by the Banstead Manor resident; **Feminism** (also by **Shamardal**), a sibling to three high class Godolphin performers in **Modern Games (Dubawi)**, **Modern News (Shamardal)** and **Mawj (Exceed And Excel)**, returning to **Dubawi** on the back of having a filly by him; and **Secret Gaze (Galileo)**, one of **Shastye's** three daughters and a full-sister to four Group winners, visiting **New Bay** following her colt by **Siyouni** and filly by **Dubawi**.

As for suitors for Newsells's young stallions, the Stud and its partners will be providing plenty of choicely-bred mares of their own. Where **A'Ali** is concerned, the Gr.1 producer **Abhisheka (Sadler's Wells)** will be part of his book, alongside the Group



winners **Maureen (Holy Roman Emperor)** and **My Special J's (Harlan's Holiday)** plus **Corra Linn**, a **Footstepsinthesand** full-sister to the multiple Gr.3 victrix **Sandiva**.

Dollar went on: "*John and Tanya Gunther, the breeders and majority shareholders of Without Parole, are throwing the kitchen sink at making him a success, supporting him with plenty of mares, including the likes of Westover's half-sister Cubit, Loving Dash, who is from a very strong Meon Valley family, and the smart former Darley mare Ballet Romance. In addition, Newsells Park is putting its own weight behind him with mares like Group/Stakes producers, Lady Eclair, whose 2021 Without Parole foal made 52,000gns, Royal Empress and Lady Darshaan. So he's shaping to have a strong book of well over 100 mares.*"

And what about winning the Book 1 top consignor's crown for the eighth time in the last ten years?

"*It's not really something I give a great deal of thought to,*" Dollar replied. "*It's just about individual horses meeting their targets or making a bit more. We have some fantastic guys here on the farm and I feel fortunate to be dealing with such high quality stock. Yes, we're a stud farm first and foremost, but also a commercial business that needs to be profitable*"

"*I started out working for one of the very best breeding operations in Europe in Cheveley Park Stud, where breeding Group winners and ideally Group 1 winners was our motivation. I then went to Kentucky to run Castleton Lyons, where they had a very different way of looking at things and our focus was on being commercial and profitable.*"

"*I think that, especially now with Graham's ownership, our focus is somewhere between the two. It's a challenge and of course I do feel the pressure. When a horse goes above expectation there is a moment of satisfaction, but you're then quickly back to worrying about the next one.*"

"*Being the leading consignor is a bonus, it's not something we focus on or take for granted, and it's certainly not the most important thing. The number one priority is producing good horses to win good races.*"



Nathaniel (Galileo), who has now sired both a Derby and Oaks winner thanks to **Desert Crown** and **Enable**