

# SEARCH FOR THE NEXT STAR

**Alastair Bond talks to Ed Sackville, one half of the successful SackvilleDonald agency that has enjoyed plenty of Orby Sale triumphs**



**A**T THE age of 33 Ed Sackville has already achieved a huge amount in the bloodstock industry. A Darley Flying Start graduate before a stint under the tutelage of Luke Lillingston and Lincoln Collins at Kern Lillingston led to Sackville and Alastair Donald, who also worked for the operation, forming their own bloodstock agency, SackvilleDonald.

Sackville has tasted success buying yearlings all over the world, but he has been particularly lucky with his Goffs purchases.

The list is topped by Sky Lantern, a €75,000 purchase by Sackville for Ben Keswick at the Orby Sale in 2011 who has become a flag-bearer for the auction due to her four Group 1 wins, headed by a memorable last-gasp victory on the Rowley Mile in the 1,000 Guineas last year.

What attracted Sackville to the grey filly by Red Clubs? "I didn't have a strong opinion on the sire," he says. "At that point he wasn't established but at the same time he wasn't unproven.

"What was really attractive about her was that the client was looking for a filly who could be bred from if she was good enough, and being by Red Clubs she was from the Roberto line, meaning she would be an outcross for all the top sires."

If Keswick was looking for a filly good enough to join his family's Rockcliffe Stud in Gloucestershire, victories in the Moyglare Stud, Coronation and Sun Chariot Stakes added to her Classic success means it was mission accomplished.

Sackville's success with the Orby Sale does not end there, as he was responsible for the purchase of Brown Sugar, who landed a pair of Group 3s last year – the Molecomb Stakes and Sirenia Stakes – for De La Warr Racing, a syndicate headed by Sackville's father Lord De La Warr.

The agent's purchases at last year's Orby Sale included Norfolk Stakes fourth Snap Shots and Red Icon, who finished third in the Listed Woodcote Stakes on Derby day at Epsom, as well as recent Chester winner Spirit Of Xian, who was purchased for Rockcliffe Stud.

Sackville's partner Donald has also struck gold with Goffs graduates. He has purchased in

training the last two horses of the year in Hong Kong, and both were originally sold at the Orby Sale. This year's award winner Designs On Rome is a triple Group 1 winner this year and was bought privately from the yard of Patrick Flynn, who had paid just €10,500 for him at Goffs.

Last year's Hong Kong horse of the year was four-time Group 1 winner Military Attack (known as Rave in Britain), whom Donald bought privately from the late John Hills, who had paid €40,000 for him at the Orby Sale.

**D**URING their bloodstock careers, Sackville and Donald's purchases have achieved 39 Group 1 wins and 100 Group wins.

Due to this success the pair will head back to Goffs hoping to discover more top-level winners.

"Goffs is a great place to buy yearlings," says Sackville. "The way it's laid out means you can get around and see everything quickly and clearly. It may seem minor but that makes our job a lot easier, especially with 450 lots catalogued.

"Irish Thoroughbred Marketing do a great job of welcoming buyers to the sale and are very accommodating. They can help make the trip to Goffs a lot easier. For instance, they can pick people up from the airport, which is very helpful when you're bringing clients to the sale."

Two years ago Goffs revamped the Orby Sale by siding with quality over quantity.



**Sky Lantern: a €75,000 Orby Sale buy in 2011**



"There are plenty of good horses there," says Sackville. "Goffs always provides a broad spectrum of individuals and there's something there for everyone in terms of budget and type of horse."

"You can find a Royal Ascot two-year-old as well as a Classic-type at the sale. And most importantly, not always for big money."

A point highlighted by some of the recent graduates from the auction, including Irish 1,000 Guineas winner Just The

Judge, a €50,000 buy in 2011 who had some memorable clashes with Sky Lantern. She had been preceded into the Orby ring two lots earlier by subsequent dual Group 3 winner Maureen, who was a €20,000 purchase.

The varied types of yearlings available at the sale is highlighted by two recent graduates, 2011 Oaks winner Dancing Rain, who was knocked down to Norris/Huntingdon for €200,000 in 2009, and this year's Phoenix





Ed Sackville: "Goffs is a great place to buy yearlings"

Stakes scorer Dick Whittington, who was picked up by McCalmont Bloodstock for €280,000.

The introduction of the Sportsman's Sale has provided buyers with another avenue for finding new stock and Sackville is a fan of that sale.

"The Sportsman's always features within our thoughts at Goffs," he says. "Like the newly created Silver Sale at DBS and Book 3 at Tattersalls, it provides another option for buyers to get into the market,

especially those with smaller budgets.

"However, although the pedigrees might not be as strong as those found in the select sales, you can still buy a horse capable of running in good races."

The Goffs Orby Sale has been a happy hunting ground for Sackville and you would be wise to follow this year's SackvilleDonald purchases on the racecourse next year, as they will not be far away from the winner's enclosure.

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