

It's In The Blood

Ladies Pro

By Trevor Marshallsea

There's another potential star filly rising up in the west who's giving a kick not only to her NSW sire D'Argento (So You Think) but to other facets of an intriguing pedigree.

Ladies Pro, bought for a mere \$45,000 at Magic Millions Adelaide by trainers Grant and Alana Williams and bloodstock agent Suman Hedge, has won five city races from nine starts and is showing impressive versatility.

Debuting as an October three-year-old, she won that first outing over 1000 metres at Belmont, scored over 1200 metres and 1400 metres in the first half of her current preparation, then returned from a let-up to post back-to-back middle-distance stakes wins.

First came the Belmont Oaks (Listed, 2000m) by almost three lengths as a \$2.20 favourite, and last Saturday she took on the boys and added the Belmont Classic (Listed, 2200m), by 0.28 lengths at \$1.55.

She's raced by an all-women syndicate including another star female of the turf - Group 1-winning former jockey Clare Lindop, an old friend of Alana Williams.

And such is her promise, the Wizard of the West, Willie Pike, has latched on, partaking in the filly's past four victories, with a trip east seemingly likely on her horizon.

Ladies Pro came about after the team at D'Argento's home farm, Bowness Stud, bought her dam Il Professionale (Pierro) with a mind to putting her to their grey Rosehill Guineas (Gr 1, 2000m) winner.

Like a duck swimming, there was nothing much to see on the top with Il Professionale, but a bit going on underneath.

A \$61,000 purchase as a two-year-old at Inglis's Melbourne Spring Sale of 2017, Il Professionale had won two of 22 starts, at Canberra and Wagga, over 1200 metres. She



Ladies Pro

WESTERN RACEPIX

was knocked down to Bowness's Joss and James Daly for a commensurate \$7,500.

Her dam, O'Perfect One (Danehill) also won two races, though at least they were Sydney city midweekers and she managed a Listed fourth.

But the greater class to Ladies Pro's pedigree comes in the third and fourth dams.

The former is Biscay Bird (Bluebird), a superb progenitor. She threw seven winners among ten starters including two elite-level-winning yet contrasting full siblings by the same sire in Scenic (Sadler's Wells). They were the quadruple middle-distance top-tier victor Universal Prince and Universal Queen, who won four Group races over sprint trips headed by the SAJC Robert Sangster Stakes (Gr 1, 1200m).

Biscay Bird also left the dams of two more top-level winners in Krone (Eurozone), who took the ATC Coolmore Classic (Gr 1, 1500m) amid five stakes triumphs, and Think It Over

(So You Think), who won five Group races including Randwick's Queen Elizabeth Stakes (Gr 1, 2000m) and Rosehill's Ryder Stakes (Gr 1, 1500m).

It was Think It Over's success that helped convince Joss Daly that putting a mare from the family to a son of So You Think (High Chaparral) in D'Argento made sound reasoning.

Biscay Bird also bore the dams of two more, lower-level, black type victors, one with a strong western flavour in Lucy Mae (Stratum), winner of the Karrakatta Plate (Gr 2, 1200m) and the Magic Millions WA 2YO Classic (RL, 1200m).

Ladies Pro's fourth dam was Blooms (Biscay), who'd shown her capabilities by throwing - among just three foals - another outstanding offspring of Scenic in Blevic, who claimed six Group races capped by what was then the Group 1 VRC Sires' Produce Stakes (1400m) and the VRC Derby (Gr 1, 2500m).

Joss Daly found Il Professionale online as she and James were building the broodmare band for their breeding enterprise, the Watershed Partnership, as Bowness Stud was transitioning into their control from Joss's parents John and Helen North.

"She was a nice, big mare and I thought she'd add some acceleration to the pedigree, which is coming to fruition with Ladies Pro," Joss tells It's In The Blood.

"Plus I saw Think It Over by So You Think in the family, and thought that could also work. It was early days with D'Argento, only his second crop, so there was a bit of trial and error as to what would work with him, but it seems to be working pretty well. Ladies Pro was a very nice foal.

"I thought D'Argento would add some staying capacity and the scope, and the Pierro mare the acceleration and ability to come

home, which is what she's showing so far.

"I think sprinting mares should work quite well with D'Argento for that reason, and he'll bring the ability to step up in distance.

"But also, So You Think had that versatility about him to sire sprinters and stayers," she says of the stallion whose 12 elite victors also include Sydney Cup (Gr 1, 3200m) hero Knights Order, ATC Derby (Gr 1, 2400m) winner Quick Thinker, and The Everest (Gr 1, 1200m) winner Think About It.

Over his years at Bowness, near Young, from where he still breeds from a band of mares in semi-retirement, John North developed his own piece of software to sift through potential matings, taking particular note of the amount of inbreeding versus hybrid vigour. Putting Il Professionale to D'Argento scored well.

It revealed some repetitions, but not too much to weaken the hybrid vigour Joss Daly seeks, scanning the first "seven or eight" generations for repetitions.

"I like a bit of hybrid vigour - just for the toughness and soundness it can bring," Daly says.

"With hybrid vigour, I feel there's a bit of a sweet spot there if you have a bit of inbreeding, so you've got some influence coming through, but just not too close.

"With our system it'll give you a calculation of the outcross. I always aim for a certain amount, but Ladies Pro has just that little bit less. But it's worked, so I'm not worried, although I probably wouldn't go any lower than what she's got."

Daly uses her father's software with every mating "to make sure we're producing a tough, sound horse".

Ladies Pro

Provided by Arion Pedigrees

Brown or Grey filly

Foaled 2022

(SIRE)	So You Think (NZ)	High Chaparral (Ire)	by Sadler's Wells
D'ARGENTO	Triassic	by Tights (USA)	by Tights (USA)
	Fullazz	Redoute's Choice	by Danehill (USA)
		Battonage	by Kenmare (Fr)
(DAM)	Pierro	Lonhro	by Octagonal (NZ)
IL PROFESSIONALE ...	Miss Right Note (Ire)	by Daylami	by Daylami
2015	O'Perfect One	Danehill (USA)	by Danzig
		Biscay Bird	by Bluebird (USA)

D'ARGENTO (AUS) (Grey 2014-Stud 2020). 4 wins-2 at 2-1200m to 2000m, ATC Rosehill Guineas, Gr.1. Sire of 118 mrs, 68 wms, inc. SW Ladies Pro (WATC Belmont Oaks, L), Statuario, SP All Kinds of Folk, Placid Pearl, Silva 'n' Suave, Silver Dagger, Cando Attitude, Pure Silver, Sequista, Rag Queen and of De Ascot, Leading Agility, Leading Dragon, Lontrice, Amira d'Argento, Argento Ocean, Bitten by Barry - Lucky Twin Stars (H.K.), Didn't Miss Many, etc.

1st Dam

IL PROFESSIONALE, by Pierro. 2 wins at 1200m in Aust. Dam of 2 named foals, 1 to race, **1 winner**, inc:-

LADIES PRO (f by D'Argento) 5 wins. See below.

2nd Dam

O'PERFECT ONE, by Danehill (USA). 2 wins at 1400m, 1550m, AJC Dashing Eagle H., CVD Cricket Club H., 2d AJC Perilloc H., VRC Grand Scale H., STC Jacob's Creek Sparkling H., 3d AJC Lawler Partners Chartered Accountants H., STC Australian Bridal Show H., De Bortoli Windy Peak H., MVR Members Equity Bank H., 4th Illawarra TC Keith F Nolan Classic, **L. Three-quarter-sister to Soft Landing (dam of KRONE), half-sister to UNIVERSAL PRINCE, UNIVERSAL QUEEN, Scarlet Tanager (dam of MISHANI SNIPER), Razzia (dam of LUCY MAE), Personal Service (dam of THINK IT OVER).** Dam of 9 foals, 7 to race, **5 winners**, inc:-
Vic Reel. **3 wins** at 2400m, A\$77,205, 2d SAJC Junction P.
Perfect Zed. **Winner** at 1000m, 2d SAJC Terry Howe Printing P.

3rd Dam

BISCAY BIRD, by Bluebird (USA). Winner at 1600m in Aust. Half-sister to **BLEVIC, Cymric.** Dam of 13 foals, 10 to race, **7 winners**, inc:-
UNIVERSAL PRINCE (c Scenic) Joint Champion 3YO Colt in Australia in 2000-01. Joint Head of The 2000-01 Australasian 3YO Classification. 7 wins-2 at 2-from 1200m to 2400m, A\$2,775,900, HK\$800,000, Australian Derby, Gr.1, AJC Spring Champion S., Gr.1, STC Ranvet S., Gr.1, Canterbury Guineas, Gr.1, Newcastle JC Spring S., Gr.3, 2d Victoria Derby, Gr.1, STC BMW S., Gr.1, VATC Underwood S., Gr.1, VRC Turnbull S., Gr.2, STC Tulloch S., Gr.2, MVR AAMI Vase, Gr.2, STC Malvern 2YO H., 3d AJC Chipping Norton S., Gr.1, VRC Craiglee S., Gr.2, NSW Tatt's RC Tramway H., Gr.3, 4th HKJC Queen Elizabeth II Cup, Gr.1, AJC Hobartville S., Gr.2, STC Heritage S., L. Sire.

UNIVERSAL QUEEN (f Scenic) 5 wins-2 at 2-at 1000m, 1200m, A\$605,150, SAJC Robert Sangster S., Gr.1, Yallambee Classic, Gr.2, VRC Vanity S., Gr.3, AJC Sweet Embrace S., Gr.3, 2d MRC WW Cockram S., Gr.3, STC Rosebud Quality H., 3d STC Escape to the Races 2YO H. Producer.

Scarlet Tanager. Winner at 2 in Aust. Dam of 5 winners-

MISHANI SNIPER (g Your Song) 6 wins-1 at 2-to 1200m, A\$565,350, BRC Chief de Beers H., L, Calcutta on Sale H., Bakers Refrigeration H., Sky Racing P., 2d BRC Membership H., 4th BRC Hinkler H., L.

Mishani Bullitt (g Show a Heart) 4 wins-1 at 2-from 1200m to 1800m, A\$419,475, SCTC Evolt P., GCTC Spill the Beans First Weanlings H., BRC Country Music Raceday H., 3d BRC Fred Best Classic, Gr.3, Queensland Day P., L.

Razzia. Placed at 3, 3d SAJC Alanbridge Stud Beautiful Crown H. Dam of 7 winners-

LUCY MAE (f Stratum) 2 wins at 2, A\$545,550, WATC Karrakatta P., Gr.2, Pinjarra RC Magic Millions WA 2YO Classic, **RL**, 2d WATC Sires' Produce S., Gr.3, Gimcrack S., Gr.3, Get the Tabtouch 2YO P. Producer.

Merayaat. Unraced. Dam of 4 winners-

AVERAU (f Stratum) 7 wins from 1400m to 2800m, A\$270,400, VRC Bagot H., L, Doriemus H., MVRC Adapt Australia H., Sweeney Estate Agents H., 2d Werribee Cup, **L. Producer.**

Soft Landing. Raced once. Dam of 2 winners-

KRONE (f Eurozone) 6 wins-1 at 2-to 1500m, A\$1,474,050, ATC Coolmore Classic, Gr.1, Guy Walter S., Gr.2, Darby Munro S., L, SAJC Cinderella S., L, SCTC Glasshouse H., L, GCTC Magic Millions Flies & Mares P., 2d VRC Edward Manifold S., Gr.2, Thoroughbred Breeders S., Gr.3, BRC Sapphire S., Gr.3, Helen Coughlan S., L, 3d BRC Fred Best Classic, Gr.3, SAJC Breeders' S., Gr.3, BRC Just Now H., L, MVRC Atlantic Jewel S., L, 4th ATC Millie Fox S., Gr.2, Moonee Valley Fillies Classic, Gr.2.

Personal Service. Unraced Broodmare of the Year in Australia in 2021-22. Dam of 5 winners-

THINK IT OVER (g So You Think) 14 wins from 1300m to 2000m, A\$8,496,070, ATC Queen Elizabeth S., Gr.1, Chipping Norton S., Gr.1, George Ryder S., Gr.1, Hill S., Gr.2, Apollo S., Gr.2, Chelmsford S., Gr.2, Craven P., Gr.3-twice, Liverpool City Cup, Gr.3, 7 S., Rosehill Gold Cup, Ranvet H., 2d VRC Australian Cup, Gr.1, ATC Ajax S., Gr.2, 3d ATC George Main S., Gr.1, Apollo S., Gr.2, Chelmsford S., Gr.2.

Marokish. Unraced. Dam of 4 winners-

Marocan Diva (f Flying Spur) Winner at 1500m, 3d TRC Strutt S., L.

Race Record: 5 wins from 1000m to 2200m, A\$275,685, in 2025-26, WATC Belmont Oaks, L, Belmont Classic, L, Tour Edge Golf H., Mrs Mac's H., MCA Polytrack H., 2d WATC Swan Draught H., 4th Western Australian Guineas, Gr.2.

"We don't breed purely for the sale ring," she says. "We try to get that balance of commerciality and a tough racehorse."

Ladies Pro has one obvious piece of inbreeding of an oft-discussed variety, being a 4m x 3f of Danehill (Danzig). This makes him the largest contributor of blood to the pedigree, at 18.75 per cent.

Doubling Danehill has a patchy reputation, but that's improving as he recedes deeper into pedigrees, and at least this one is gender-balanced, the statistically superior variety of the three possible.

Up top, Danehill is the sire of D'Argento's damsire Redoute's Choice, while down below he's Ladies Pro's second damsire.

"Danehill was fairly inbred himself, so I tried to keep him back as far as I can," Daly says. "I'd be wary if he was at 3 x 3."

"It'd be different with Redoute's Choice. He's not as inbred so I'd be fine with him at 3 x 3."

Danehill has the blue hen Natalma (Native Dancer) close up at 3 x 3, and Hyperion (Gainsborough) at 5 x 5. Redoute's Choice has Northern Dancer (Nearctic) at 3 x 4, and Natalma at 4,4 x 5.

Ladies Pro likely also takes benefit from a 4m x 5f duplication of the great Sadler's Wells (Northern Dancer), or 9.38 per cent of the blood, the third-highest share. He's D'Argento's third sire and Pierro's (Lonhro) second damsire. As mentioned earlier, we also saw Sadler's Wells blend well with the family with his son Scenic the sire of Universal Prince and Universal Queen.

Northern Dancer is at 5m x 5m, as the fifth sire and as Danehill's grandsire, for 13.67 per cent of the blood.

Perhaps one deeper-in key to Ladies Pro's talent comes with an unusually large spread, for these parts, of the 1950s American super mare Lalun (Djeddah). She's in the pedigree seven times from generations seven to nine, through her most famous sons Never Bend (Nasrullah) five times and Bold Reason (Hail To Reason). And five of her appearances feed into the dam Il Professionale.

That other blue hen Natalma occupies ten spots from rows six to nine, as the most often repeated mare in the pedigree, while Special



D'Argento

BOWNESS STUD

(Forli), Sadler's Wells' granddam, bobs up at 6m x 7f, 8f.

Nearco (Pharos) is the most common stallion, with 19 spots, ahead of the 15 of Hyperion.

Mind you, for all the theories, breeding can of course spring surprises.

"Just when you think you've got it worked out, something will throw a curveball in and you think, 'Well that was interesting!'" Daly says.

"There's so many different variables. You're looking at the genotype and the phenotype and trying to get the right looking animals.

"Il Professionale is a reasonably good sized mare, which at first I would have been a bit wary of. D'Argento is 16.2 [hands], and Il Professionale is about 16.1, but it's crazy the way a mare will have a small foal one year and a bigger foal the next, by the same stallion.

"I don't think there's rules, really, or that you can predict it. I've got one small mare and she has huge foals every year. It just happens."

Daly feels D'Argento - standing this year at an unchanged \$16,500 (inc GST) - is starting to build momentum, with his offspring mostly

hitting the track as three-year-olds, with Ladies Pro his second stakes winner, and with a 57 per cent winners to runners ratio. Among three-year-olds, his figure is 48.4 per cent, but it climbs to 58.7 per cent for his four-year-olds.

"We're really pleased with how he's going. We've always anticipated they would take time, like everyone else has said," says Daly, who's still receiving alerts for D'Argento first-starters from his first crop, aged four.

"He throws such a good type and they're very easy to prep as yearlings - good eaters who do well.

"Over the years, the better stables and trainers have been buying them. We're excited to see what's coming through, with still only his first and second crop on the track effectively.

"We're still very much watching and seeing what they can do, but we're very happy to see every week he's got winners, and that horses are stepping up all the time for better races.

"Ladies Pro, from her first start, her education was outstanding. She's always run like a professional horse."