



GOFFS UK STAGES FIRST GOODWOOD BLOODSTOCK SALE

'Boutique sales' of racehorses are the thing, it seems, nowadays and Goffs UK, which has regular sales at its Doncaster Racecourse venue, is holding the inaugural Goodwood Sale after racing on the second day of the Qatar Goodwood Festival.

The company also stages a similar sale at Aintree during the Grand National meeting, while its sister company, Goffs, stages the London Sale at St James's Palace on the eve of Royal Ascot. Tomorrow's catalogue comprises 13 lots.

A possible sale topper is Lot 4, Marie's Diamond. He is a two-year-old colt by the stallion Footstepsinthesand, and is currently in training at the Middleham yard of Mark Johnston, who has been leading trainer at this meeting 11 times, including three of the last four years. Marie's Diamond is a three-time winner, including the Gr3 Anglesey Stakes at the Curragh last time out.

Learned Friend (Lot 3) is a Seeking The Gold mare, covered by the leading sire Dark Angel. She was placed in France and has bred two winners, including the Gr3 winner Inns Of Court. She hails from the family of Lune D'Or and Luth Enchantee.

Lot 10 is the recent G2 July Stakes third, Charming Kid. Offered from Ricahrd Fahey's Yorkshire stable, the two-year-old son of Charm Spirit has run three times, opening his score with a win at York, finishing a disappointing eighth of 10 in the G2 Norfolk Stakes at Royal Ascot, and then returning to form at Newmarket's July Meeting.

Weeping Wind (Lot 12) is a seven-year-old mare with a Harzand colt foal at foot, and being offered by Luke Lillingston's Mount Coote Stud. She comes from the family of sire Poliglote and the Australian G1 Randwick Stakes winner He's Your Man/I'm Your Man.

Richard Ryan, Goffs UK's Horses-In-Training agent, who has been responsible for sourcing some of the lots, commented: "I think the London Sale sets a benchmark, quite a high benchmark.

"Obviously, a new sale is something you have to put to people, but it has been very well received, with the venue, the Qatar Goodwood Festival, being the central fact in that. There is also the timing of the Australian Autumn Carnival and the new licenses in Hong Kong. It therefore fills a unique spot.

"To a large degree, I see this as an opportunity for international buyers, especially for the horses-in-training section. For the breeding prospects, the dates are not as important, but it stills leaves the opportunity for fillies or mares that are not in foal to be covered to southern hemisphere time in Europe and then shipped out.

"When I have contacted trainers and owners about the sale some doors were very welcoming and some not so, but you have to roll with that. No trainer wants to lose a smart horse from their yard, and you have to be sympathetic to that. But equally you try and guide them to the commercial aspect.

"Owners are grateful to trainers who do that [guide them when to sell], and equally some trainers are welcoming to us. The bigger issue is conveying that to a wider number of trainers, who would rather hang on to their horse and aren't too worried about its profile commercially.

"Obviously, Goffs UK is an established international auctioneer and has a huge client list. We have targeted specific people for some of these horses, and have been keeping them updated about the lots so they know what is here on offer. It also means keeping people aware of ratings and other changes to the lots.

"There are quite a few I like in the sale. Obviously Marie's Diamond is a very smart two-year-old who looks progressive. He could go all the way and could even be a real Guineas horse. That is a rare thing to find in an auction. I would like to think the bigger players internationally would be foolish to ignore him.

"Trainer Jim Bolger was supportive of the idea and likes Goodwood, and he has put in a really handy filly in Sometimesadiamond (Lot 13). She is as tough as teak and progressive as well. I think she will find a good new home.

"We are selling a life-time breeding right in Whitsbury Manor Stud's stallion Showcasing, which shows the flexibility, and diversity of the sale. Ed Harper of Whitsbury Manor is a very forward thinking man, as is his father Chris. They run a very successful farm and they thought it was the perfect moment for their marketing. I can see other following in their footsteps. Showcasing is very well accepted by the industry and it is an easy sell."

Tony Williams, managing director of Goffs UK, added: "Goffs UK is delighted to be working with the Goodwood team. Our first Goodwood Sale catalogue speaks for itself in quality and clearly indicates the vendor support - the international and domestic buying interest in this sale is extremely satisfying and we are looking forward to strong competition at tomorrow evening's sale, which kicks off at 6.30pm, in the winner's enclosure. This sale adds yet another exciting dimension to the Qatar Goodwood Festival."