

THOROUGHBRED FAMILIES DOMINATING THE PEDIGREES OF WINNING HORSES IN THE AUSTRALIAN GROUP 1 COX PLATE 1922-2001

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Lowe (1913) classified thoroughbred families (or direct line of descent in tail female) by number according to winning performances of family members in the English Derby, Oaks and St Leger. This system of family classification of thoroughbreds has survived to this day and is used in the Australian Stud book (Digby, 2001). This study was conducted to identify and highlight the most successful families that have contributed to Australia's premier Group 1, weight for age race, the Cox Plate. Identification of Cox Plate entrants (1922-2001) to Bruce Lowe family numbers were obtained from McFadden (1969) and Digby (2001). Racing performances in the Cox Plate (1922-2001) were obtained from Anon. (1922-1955), Anon (1956-1977) and Anon. (1978-2001).

Table 1. Names of horses of families 1 or 2 and year that they won the Cox Plate (1922-2001) and in a direct line of descent from named female ancestors

Family 1			Family 2		
Year	Horse	Female ancestor	Year	Horse	Female ancestor
1925	Manfred	Pawn GB 1808	1930	Phar Lap	MissKate GB 1873
1926	Heroic	Pawn GB 1808	1931	Phar Lap	Miss Kate GB 1873
1945	Flight	Pawn GB 1808	1968	Rajah Sahib	Miss Kate GB 1873
1946	Flight	Pawn GB 1808	1999	Sunline	Miss Kate GB 1873
1949	Delta	Pawn GB 1808	2000	Sunline	Miss Kate GB 1873
1964	Sir Dane	Pawn GB 1808	1938	Ajax	Atalanta GB 1769
1928	Highland	Morel GB 1805	1947	Chanak	Atalanta GB 1769
1939	Mosaic	Morel GB 1805	1952	Hydrogen	Sandal GB 1861
1954	Rising Fast	Morel GB 1805	1953	Hydrogen	Sandal GB 1861
1950	Alister	Web GB 1808	1997	Dane Ripper	Sandal GB 1861
1959	Noholme	Web GB 1808	1991	Surfer's Paradise	Lullaby NZ 1887
			1993	The Phantom Chance	Lullaby NZ 1887
			1936	Young Idea	Miss Makeless GB1737
			1937	Young Idea	Miss Makeless GB1737

It is shown in Table 1 that family 1 has had eleven winning performances in the Cox Plate with a direct line of descent from either Pawn, Morel or Web. However there have been no winning performances of this family since Noholme in 1959. Representatives of family 2 have had the most frequent winning performances (14) with Sandal present in the pedigree of multiple winner Hydrogen (1952,1953) and Miss Kate present in the pedigrees of multiple winners Phar Lap (1930, 1931) and Sunline (1999 and 2000). Thus families 1 and 2 were represented jointly by 31% of winners of the Cox Plate. The number of losing performances (107 in family 1 and 93 in family 2) as well as winning performances were taken into account in determining if there were significant differences between families 1 and 2 in racing performance (Chi square 0.807 not significant). Other winning families 4, 5 and 14 with five wins each, combine with families 1 and 2 in emphasising the genetic contribution of particular mares and families to Australia's premier Group 1, weight for age race, the Cox Plate.

ANON. (1922-1955). In 'Australasian Turf Register' (Stillwell and Knight, Melbourne).

ANON. (1956-1977) In 'Sunday Mail' Adelaide.

ANON. (1978-2001). In 'Australian Race Results' Eds. Young and Fullarton (Melbourne).

DIGBY J. (2001). In 'Australian Stud Book' <http://www.studbook.aust.com/>

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McFADDEN, W.J. (1969). In 'Thoroughbred families of Australia and New Zealand'. (Angus and Robertson, Sydney).

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