



The Qatar Lennox Stakes Sectional Timing Analysis

“If at first you don’t succeed, try, try, try again” might be a suitable epithet for Dutch Connection, the horse who finished second in the Lennox Stakes in 2015, and again in two big races this year, but who got everything right this time round in the Qatar-sponsored highlight of the opening day of Glorious Goodwood 2016.

Any perception of Dutch Connection as just a “nearly” horse would have been unfair. He ran a bang-in-form Toormore to three quarters of a length when a three-year-old 12 months ago and had improved since, despite things not always going his way.

If you could have scripted his perfect conditions beforehand, it would have been a well-run seven furlongs, round a bend and on a sound surface, and that is exactly what he got here.

It meant he could settle in mid-division and come with a steady late run, which took him to victory by a length and three quarters and the same from the more forwardly-ridden pair Home of The Brave and Gifted Master.

The TurfTrax sectionals show that the early stages of this year’s Lennox Stakes were indeed honest.

Gifted Master went through the first two furlongs in 26.49s, compared to leaders’ times of 27.15s in 2015, 27.30s in 2014, 27.05s in 2013 and 27.78s in 2012. Dutch Connection was 0.86s – or nearly six lengths – back at this point and near perfectly placed as it transpired.

Gifted Master kept up the gallop through the middle stages, with his stablemate Home of The Brave on his tail and Dutch Connection still further back. Successive furlongs of 11.93s, 11.22s and 11.21s ensured there was no letting up.

But by the end of the last of those sectionals, between 3f and 2f out, the jockey on Gifted Master was no longer sitting pretty, and the horse’s chief rivals were beginning to close in.

Home of The Brave went on approaching the final furlong but was immediately joined and then passed by an in-full-cry Dutch Connection.

Dutch Connection’s rivals were one paced by this stage, even those who had raced out the back, but the winner sealed the issue with a smart 12.07s final furlong. Only Es Que Love in 2014 (in a much less truly-run race) had run quicker late on among recent winners.

Dutch Connection’s final time was 84.48s, and he would have just about broken the long-standing course-and-distance record of 83.88s were it not for rail movement adding 12 yards to races which came round the lower loop on the home turn.

Fast times and fast sectionals are the product of a number of factors, of course. In addition to being a good horse in a well-run race, Dutch Connection was running on fairly quick ground. The TurfTrax going-

stick reading of 8.1, taken at 9 a.m., was the fastest at the track since the middle of the 2014 Glorious Goodwood meeting.

While Dutch Connection got the perfect set-up, he won decisively enough to suggest he was comfortably the best horse in the race anyway. Home of The Brave might have fared a bit better a little further from the pace, but he was put firmly in his place by the line.

An early indication that conditions were quick, despite artificial watering, had been given in the preceding Qatar Vintage Stakes, which went in similarly decisive style to War Decree. The colt's overall time of 85.75s compares favourably with Dutch Connection's given their respective maturity.

TurfTrax sectionals show that the Vintage was even more quickly run early on, with early leader Repton completing the first 2f in 26.34s. But the pace of the middle of the race was more comfortable than that of the Lennox proved to be, and War Decree came on strongly with closing furlongs of 11.32s (the fastest by any horse in the race) then 12.27s.

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