



**PEDIGREE CONSULTANTS**  
THOROUGHBRED CONSULTANCY & MANAGEMENT

**ANALYSIS:**

**ABEL TASMAN**

**PREPARED BY: ALAN PORTER**

**PREPARED FOR: TAYLOR MADE SALES**

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## ABEL TASMAN

An Eclipse Award Champion, and a Hall of Famer in waiting, Abel Tasman has charted a course that has seen her ascend heights scaled only by performers of legendary status. A grade one winner at two, and a champion at three, she returned at four as spectacular performer and a leading candidate for a second championship.

The Kentucky Oaks (G1)/Acorn Stakes (G1) double is an extremely demanding one, requiring fillies that have been prepared for a classic test at Churchill Downs to reappear little more than a month later and face stretching-out sprinters and eight panel specialists over Belmont Park's one-turn mile. Not surprisingly then, this double is one that is rarely achieved. Indeed, prior to Abel Tasman, it had been completed only nine times in the 87 years since the introduction of the Acorn, and none had succeeded in both races since Open Mind in 1989. When we consider those who not only completed this testing double, but then added the storied Coaching Club American Oaks (G1) at Saratoga, we find ourselves with a group that is both far smaller in number and truly exceptional in quality. In fact, from 1931 – the first year all three races were contested – up until Abel Tasman in 2017, we see that this feat was previously achieved by just four horses – Dark Mirage, Davona Dale, Bold 'n Determined and Open Mind – each a sport-transcending performer now enshrined in the Hall of Fame.

Abel Tasman's victories in these three races showcased not only a remarkable range of talents, but also her ruggedness and determination. In the Churchill Downs slop, having been as far as 16 lengths off the pace, she charged from the rear of the 14-horse field to take the Kentucky Oaks by daylight. Abel Tasman's Acorn Stakes saw her inhale her opponents with a dramatic move on the home turn. To capture the Coaching Club Oaks, Abel Tasman swept imperiously from last to first on the backstretch, then defied the challenge of another wonderful filly, Elate, throughout the length of the finishing straight.

The quality of the Coaching Club Oaks form was franked when, on her next two starts, Elate captured the Alabama Stakes (G1) by 5½ lengths, then defeated her elders by 8¼ lengths to take the Beldame Invitational Stakes (G1). Elate was far from the only standout defeated by Abel Tasman in her summer sweep, as these three races also saw her overcome such as the spectacular Santa Anita Oaks (G1) heroine Paradise Woods; other grade one scorers Daddy's Lil Darling, Sweet Loretta, Union Strike and Salty; as well as five-time graded stakes winner

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Farrel, four-time graded stakes winner Miss Sky Warrior, and other grade two winners Mopotism, Tequilita and Benner Island.

Abel Tasman's legacy does not rest on her Kentucky Oaks, Acorn Stakes, Coaching Club American Oaks sequence alone. In the 12 races following her maiden victory, 11 of them graded events, ten of them grade one, contested at seven different racetracks, Abel Tasman would claim first or second 11 times. At two she established her place among the leaders of the division with a victory in the Starlet Stakes (G1), in which she accounted for grade one winners American Gal and Union Strike. At three, following her classic heroics, Abel Tasman placed a seal on an outstanding campaign, unleashing a closing charge that carried her to within a rapidly diminishing half-length of Champion Older Mare Forever Unbridled in the battle for the Breeders' Cup Distaff (G1). Those behind her on this occasion included her old foes Paradise Woods and Elate, as well as champions Champagne Room and Stellar Wind.

At four Abel Tasman returned better than ever, staking her claim to a second Eclipse Award as the only older filly or mare of the year to take back-to-back grade one events over a route on the main track. The first of these contests, the 8½ furlong Ogden Phipps Stakes (G1), saw her cover the second quarter in an astonishing :22.60, then draw off in the stretch under a hand ride to score by 7½ lengths with grade one winner Unbridled Mo, and grade two winners Ivy Bell, Pacific Wind and Unchained Melody, left trailing.

The Personal Ensign Stakes (G1) at Saratoga saw a rematch between Abel Tasman and Elate – herself coming off a breathtaking victory in the Delaware Handicap (G2) – and these two magnificent mares delivered a contest for the ages. Once again Abel Tasman assumed command with an early move, running the second quarter in :22.71, a remarkable fraction in a nine-furlong event. As in the Coaching Club American Oaks, Enabled threw down a ferocious challenge, and as in their previous meeting, Abel Tasman rebuffed that challenge. In the course of their battle, the duo drew nearly ten lengths clear of the third horse, Wow Cat, an undefeated classic winner over males in South America, and destined on her next outing to capture the Beldame Stakes (G1). Abel Tasman's winning time of 1:47.19 for the nine furlongs established a new stakes record; was just 0.55 seconds outside the track-record set by Champion Older Male, Lawyer Ron, 11 years earlier; and generated a Beyer speedfigure of 113.

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Abel Tasman owns a pedigree to match her race-record. Her sire, Quality Road, was a racehorse of prodigious physical ability. Shattering track-records from 6½ to 9 furlongs, Quality Road captured seven graded stakes events, including the Woodward Stakes (G1), by 4¾ lengths; the Donn Handicap (G1), by 12¾ lengths; the Metropolitan Handicap (G1); and the Florida Derby (G1). The Leading Freshman Sire of 2014, Quality Road has continued his meteoric rise through the ranks of the stallion elite, and he has already been represented by 32 stakes winners, 21 of them graded. In addition to Abel Tasman, they also include Champion Two-Year-Old Filly Caledonia Road; dominating 2018 Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile (G1) captor, City of Light; and other grade one scorers Bellafina, Illuminant, Salty, Klimt, Spring Quality and Hootennany. The range of talent displayed by Quality Road's offspring is no less impressive. His grade one winners are equally divided almost equally between males and females; they include horses that have scored at grade one level at two, three, four and five; that have earned grade one victories at distances of 7, 8, 8½, 9 and 10 furlongs; and have accomplished major victories on both dirt and turf.

Vargas Girl, the dam of Abel Tasman, is by Deputy Minister. Champion in the U.S., and Horse of the Year in Canada, Deputy Minister twice took the Leading Sire crown, and also earned honors as Leading Broodmare Sire. Vargas Girl is dam not only of Abel Tasman, but also of the Dogwood Stakes (G3) heroine Sky Girl, and of stakes placed Moonlight Sky, both now exciting young broodmares. Vargas Girl is half-sister to the exceptional juvenile Bevo, whose successes included a vintage renewal of the Futurity Stakes (G1), in which he defeated other two-year-old stars Greenwood Lake and More Than Ready. Vargas Girl is also half-sister to Moonlight Sonata, who captured the Arlington-Washington Lassie Stakes (G3) at two, and who subsequently produced grade two scorers Wilburn and Beethoven, and stakes winner La Appassionata. Abel Tasman's granddam, Wheatly Hall, was another juvenile stakes winner, and is out of the four-time stakes winner Family Way, herself a half-sister to the dam of the grade one winning Twixt.

As far as Abel Tasman's career as a broodmare is concerned, the toughest problem that presents itself is making a choice among a world of exciting options. Starting in the U.S., a mating with **Justify** unites a sire and dam who each captured an historical triple. This mating is strongly suggested when we consider the success enjoyed by Justify's sire, Scat Daddy, when crossed with mares from Abel Tasman's Gone West sire line. This nick has produced six group

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or grade one scorers, including champions Dacita and No Nay Never (out of a mare by Abel Tasman's grandsire, Elusive Quality).

A union between Abel Tasman and three-time Leading Sire **Tapit** also holds much appeal. Tapit has sired eight stakes winners out of Gone West line mares, five of them graded, including the multiple grade one winner Zazu. Tapit is a son of Pulpit, and also the grandsire of Abel Tasman's graded winning half-sister Sky Girl.

Few sires have made a more impressive start than **Uncle Mo**, and he has strong credentials as a candidate here. From only six starters out of Elusive Quality line mares, Uncle Mo has been represented by grade one scorer Gomo and graded winner Lost Raven, with grade two winner Lost Raven and stakes winning and grade one placed Rally Cry also out of Gone West line mares. Another who might enter consideration is the fast-rising **Into Mischief**. He has a tremendous strike-rate with Gone West line mares with five stakes winners, four graded.

**Medaglia d'Oro** is a world-class sire who has sired champions on three continents. He has shown a strong affinity for Gone West line mares, this cross providing five of his stakes winners, including the grade one winning Violence, now an exciting young sire. Abel Tasman is also a representative of the Mr. Prospector/Deputy Minister cross, as is the dam of Medaglia d'Oro's superstar, Songbird.

Abel Tasman's form on dirt was been so exceptional she was never been asked to run on turf, but her sire Quality Road is a superior turf performer, as evidenced by his grade one winning grass horses Illuminant, Spring Quality and Hootenanny. With that in mind, it's very likely that if appropriately mated, Abel Tasman could produce outstanding turf runners.

Looking first to Europe for options in that vein, one of the world's great sires, **Dubawi**, has been excellent when crossed with Mr. Prospector in general, and he has four group winners out of Gone West line mares – as here – among them the group one winners New Bay and Zarak.

The Green Desert branch of Danzig also looks promising here. Green Desert son, **Invincible Spirit** has a strong strike-rate over Gone West line mares, and his six stakes winners on the cross include the brilliant Kingman. An alternative Green Desert line horse would be

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outstanding classicist, **Sea The Stars**. From very limited opportunities with Gone West line mares, he has a trio of stakes horses headlined by Harzand, hero of the English Derby (G1) and Irish Derby (G1) and Vazira, successful in the Prix Saint-Alary (G1). Another proven European classic sire who would appeal here is Galileo's son, **New Approach**, whose stakes winners out of Gone West line mares including the group one winning Sultanina. **Galileo** himself has champion Order of St. George as one of three stakes winners out of Gone West line mares.

Looking further afield Japan's mighty **Deep Impact** has been represented by just six starters out of Elusive Quality line mares, and there are already three stakes performers, among them the grade one winning Shonan Adela and Keiai Nautique. Deep Impact is a son of the wonderful Sunday Silence and Deep Impact's proven affinity for Elusive Quality would also open up the potential for other sons of Sunday Silence such as **Daiwa Major** or **Heart's Cry**.

Quality Road's sire, Elusive Quality shuttled to Australia, where he has had a considerable impact as an outcross for the dominant Danehill line. The current dominant sire in that part of the world, **Snitzel**, a grandson of Danehill currently has a four stakes horses from only three starters out of Elusive Quality line mares, three of them stakes winners.

A wonderful racemare, whose exploits have been matched only by Hall of Fame Champions, Abel Tasman has displayed almost every virtue one might require from a thoroughbred. A champion who has earned grade one laurels at two, three and four, Abel Tasman has proved herself coast-to-coast, over a variety of distances, racetracks and going. She could make a devastating move at almost any point in a race, and although she had the capacity to blow her field away, she was an indomitable foe in a close contest. She is a daughter of a brilliant racehorse who is one of the fastest-rising sires in the world. Her dam is a multiple graded stakes producer who is herself by a champion racehorse, Leading Sire and Leading Broodmare Sire, and is half-sister to a grade one winning two-year-old. In addition to the quality of her pedigree, her bloodlines indicate an exciting potential for an alluring range of the world's top sires. Thus, having carved an historic legacy as a runner, Abel Tasman must surely be on the threshold of achieving the same as a producer.

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