Godolphin Racing LLC (Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum)

Birthdate: July 15, 1949

Occupation: Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates, Ruler of the Emirate of Dubai

Education: Bell School of Languages at Cambridge University, England; Mons Officer Cadet School, England

Breeders’ Cup Record: 91-7-6-11 | $15,061,735

- The global racing and breeding operation is the private enterprise of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the prime minister, 13th emir and ruler of Dubai, and the vice president of the United Arab Emirates. Sheikh Mohammed is the inspiration and driving force behind Godolphin Racing, Darley Stable and Darley Stud. Godolphin also includes his brother HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum—who also races under the Shadwell banner—and his son, HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Crown Prince of Dubai.

- 2020 has been a big year for Godolphin, once again, as it has campaigned the world’s top-rated horse, Ghaiyyath (IRE), as well as reigning champion Pinatubo (IRE) and outstanding juvenile One Ruler (IRE). In the U.S., its quality has risen with standout sophomores in Matt Winn Stakes (G3) winner Maxfield (already a Grade 1 winner in 2019), Indiana Derby (G3) and Oklahoma Derby (G3) winner Shared Sense, Grade 1-placed stakes winner Micheline, Saratoga Oaks winner Antoinette, Del Mar Derby (G2) winner Pixelate and Jim Dandy (G2) winner Mystic Guide. Perhaps the brightest star is 2-year-old Essential Quality, who is undefeated going into the TVG Breeders’ Cup Juvenile (G1) after victories in maiden company and the Breeders’ Futurity (G1)—a race Maxfield won in 2019.

- In 2016, the global racing and breeding operation merged into one seamless operation. The Darley name is now used solely as the stallion brand.

- Godolphin is named in honor of the Godolphin Arabian, one of the three foundation stallions of the modern Thoroughbred.

- Darley, the breeding side, derives its name from the Darley Arabian, another of the three foundation sires to whom all Thoroughbreds trace their lineage. Sheikh Mohammed also
used to race under the Darley banner. The operation had multiple Breeders’ Cup runners in its maroon and white star-capped silks, including standout winners In the Wings (IRE), Barathea (IRE) and Pebbles (GB). It also had such standout runners to place as Swain (IRE) (when running in the 1996 Turf; was Godolphin in 1998’s Classic), Singspiel (IRE), Indian Skimmer, Carnegie (IRE) and Sonic Lady.

- Sheikh Mohammed co-owned the great Arazi with Allen Paulson, ranked by most as the best Juvenile (1991) winner ever.
- Darley, when still functioning as a racing stable in its famous maroon and white-starred silks, had a Breeders’ Cup record of 18-2-1-6 and $3,705,200 in earnings.
- Including Godolphin in his multiple partnerships, Sheikh Mohammed Al Maktoum has had 131 starts at the Breeders’ Cup.
- Godolphin is headquartered in Dubai and operates in the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Australia, Ireland, France, Japan and the United States.
- Darley America is located in Kentucky at Jonabell Farm in Lexington and Jimmy Bell serves as president.
- Godolphin has won seven Breeders’ Cups as an owner from 91 starters: Daylami (IRE) (1999 Turf (G1)); Fantastic Light (2001 Turf (G1)); Tempera (2001 Juvenile Fillies (G1)); and Vale of York (IRE) (2009 Juvenile (G1)); Outstrip (GB) (2013 Juvenile Turf (G1)); Wuheida (GB) (2017 Filly & Mare Turf (G1)), Talismanic (GB) (2017 Turf (G1)), and Line of Duty (GB) (2018, Juvenile Turf (G1)).
- Breeders’ Cup Juvenile (G1) winner Midshipman carried the Darley silks.
- Darley bred 2001 Juvenile Fillies winner Tempera. More than 50 Breeders’ Cup starters were bred by Darley.
- Godolphin holds the record for most starters (15) in a single Breeders’ Cup (2009).
- Eclipse Award champion horses have been Questing (3-year-old filly 2012), Midshipman (2-year-old Male 2008), Tempera (2-year-old Female 2001), Fantastic Light (Turf Male 2001), Daylami (Turf Male 1999), Singspiel (Turf Male 1996) and Pebbles (Turf Female 1985).
- Employs a variety of top trainers in America, including Tom Albertrani, Eoin Harty, Richard Mandella, Bob Baffert, Brad Cox, Brendan Walsh, Bill Mott and Mike Stidham.
- Its three main trainers are Saeed bin Suroor and Charlie Appleby in the UK & Dubai, while James Cummings trains all of its growing Australian team. John Gosden and Mark Johnston train a select bunch for the “Boys in Blue,” while Andre Fabre has the majority of those based in France, with Henri-Alex Pantall having a few, as well. In Ireland, Jim Bolger, Mick Halford and Will McCreery. In Japan, its growing horse population is spread out to more than 30 trainers.
- Its contracted jockeys are William Buick and James Doyle in the UK, who mostly ride for Appleby, while Mickael Barzalona takes the reins in France.
• Sent five runners to the 2018 Breeders' Cup at Churchill Downs, led by Juvenile Turf winner Line of Duty. The Godolphin blue was also represented by Wild Illusion (Filly and Mare Turf, 2nd), Thunder Snow (Classic, 3rd), Talismanic (Turf, 6th), and La Pelosa (Juvenile Fillies Turf, 10th).

• 2006 Preakness Stakes winner Bernardini, who carried the Darley silks, is Godolphin’s only Triple Crown race winner. The homebred also won the Travers Stakes (G1) and Jockey Club Gold Cup (G1) against older horses before running a game second to Invasor (ARG) in the 2006 Breeders’ Cup Classic as the favorite.

• Has won more than 200 Grade 1 and Group 1 races in 12 countries across four continents.

• In 2016, Godolphin actively culled some of its extensive worldwide stable. There were 65 yearlings consigned to the Keeneland September Yearling sale, according to Daily Racing Form, after 72 horses had been sold at the Tattersalls July sale in England and 33 fillies and mares were dispersed at the Inglis sale in Australia. Despite the cutback, in 2017 Godolphin owned more than 5,000 horses, including breeding stock, around the globe.

• Sheikh Mohammed founded what was then the world’s richest race, the $6 million Dubai World Cup (G1), and his horses have won it seven times. It was once again the world’s richest race in 2019, with a $12 million purse and was won by Godolphin’s own Thunder Snow for the second straight year. The race was not run in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

• Godolphin won the Eclipse Award as Outstanding Owner in 2009 and 2012 and Darley was similarly honored in 2006; Darley won the Eclipse Award as Outstanding Breeder in 2012.


• The current Darley America stallion roster includes Alpha, Animal Kingdom, Astern, Bernardini, Frosted, Hard Spun, Medaglia d’Oro, Midshipman, Nyquist, Street Boss and Street Sense.

• The Godolphin Flying Start program, formerly Darley Flying Start, is a unique management and leadership program specializing in the Thoroughbred racing and breeding industry to produce committed leaders. It is accredited by University College Dublin Michael Smurfit Graduate Business School.

• Sheikh Mohammed’s brother, HRH Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, is the owner of the international racing and breeding operation Shadwell (Stable and Stud), which won the 2006 Classic with the Kiaran McLaughlin-trained Invasor. Invasor was North America’s 2006 Horse of the Year.