



Elusive Fort

Fort Wood – Ever Seeking by Secret Prospector

The magnificent E-Family.

For decades now supplier of Graded stakes performers in South Africa and the family's country of origin, Argentina.

Undisputed head of the dynasty is multiple champion Empress Club, perhaps the best filly ever to grace the South African tracks. The illustrious Empress followed in the footsteps of two Gr1 winning older half sisters, Ecurie and Epoque. The latter is grandam of our subject sire, Elusive Fort.

The most remarkable aspect of the family's pedigree background is the low level of 'general' inbreeding, meaning fewer duplications of names of ancestors than are normally found in pedigrees. For the E-Family, the strength appears to come through the interaction of ancestors from one specific source, generation after generation, with little other 'noise' to spoil its effect. This is illustrated by looking at the foundation and build-up of the bottom female line, starting with the sixth dam Havoc. Here's how it goes:

Havoc is by Hunter's Moon, a leading sire in Argentina, consistently in the top-ten. He's by Hurry On out of famous mare Selene.

The fifth dam Empress is by British Empire, twice champion sire in Argentina, twice runner-up, and consistently in the top-ten during his productive years. He's a son of Colombo, whose dam Lady Nairne is close kin to Selene.

Fourth dam Empiric by Voodoo, whose damsire Cairngorm is by Hyperion (Gainsborough x Selene) out of a mare by Hurry On. That makes Cairngorm very close kin to Havoc (the sixth dam, above).

Third dam Elysee is by El Gran Capitan, whose fourth dam Nina Chole is by Hunter's Moon and close kin to Havoc (the sixth dam, above).

Second dam Epoque by Oak Dancer, whose damsire Sheshoon is by a son of Hurry On, out of the mare Noorani who is close kin to Empress (the fifth dam, above).

On to Ever Seeking, who is by Secret Prospector, whose dam is kin-bred 2x3 Flower Bowl x Swaps (both Hyperion x Hyperion's equivalent

Beau Pere). Flower Bowl is close kin to Empress (the fifth dam, above).

Finally, Elusive Fort, by Fort Wood, whose dam Fall Aspen is by Pretense out of a mare by Swaps. Pretense is by Endeavour out of a mare by Hyperion. Endeavour is by British Empire out of a mare by Hunter's Moon, making him very close kin to Empress. As a result, Pretense and Empress are very close kin. To top it, Fort Wood is by Sadler's Wells, who has Nearctic (close kin to Empress) in his male line and has Forli (close kin to Havoc) as his second damsire.

From this it seems that Havoc and her daughter Empress are the significant bottom female line ancestors.

This is further highlighted by the kin-breeding found in other family members.

Empress Club is kin-bred 3x3 la Dogana x Empress (for the notebook, la Dogana is a full sister to the dam of Forli, while Empress' dam Havoc is close kin to Forli).

Ecurie is kin-bred 5x3 Bel Agnes x Empress. A full sister to Empress Club, Esmerada, produced two Argentinian Gr1 winners (including Champion 2yo Esperada) by Equalize, who makes for kin-breeding Queen of Shiraz x Havoc.

The sire of Elusive Fort, Fort Wood, appears to have an affinity for Hyperion, or more precisely, Hyperion's dam Selene. This would certainly fit the pattern found in Elusive Fort female line background. The logical extension of this is that what has worked for Fort Wood is also likely to work with Elusive Fort.

A look at lines that appear in Fort Wood's best progeny.

Horse Chestnut's 3rd dam Antalya is by Acropolis (who links to Imitation and Khaled in Fort Wood's female line – the Hyperion connection). Acropolis is out of Hyperion-mare Aurora, also dam of Alycidon, Borealis, etc.

Antalya has Hyperion 3x4, her grandam Sanlinea is by Precipitation (Hurry On) out of an Hyperion mare. The Hurry On & Selene combo again, as in Elusive Fort's Hunter's Moon.

Dynasty's dam is by Commodore Blake, who has Hyperion 4x4x5 (Hornbeam, Libra, Barley Corn – the latter 3x3 to Selene's dam), while Dynasty's 3rd dam is by Abernant (by Hyperion's son Owen Tudor). Abernant is interesting, as he's damsire of Golden Thatch (whose sire Thatch is a son of Forli and full brother to Special in Sadler's Wells).

Celtic Grove's dam is by Welsh Saint (3x4 Hyperion, one through Owen Tudor, the other through Aureole who is equivalent to Acropolis) and gets another Owen Tudor from her dam.

Fort Defiance' dam is by Home Guard (son of Forli) out of Miss Lily, whose sire Regent Street is 3x4 Hyperion (Gulf Stream and Owen Tudor) and whose dam Lily is out of a mare by Hyperion's son Herald.

Royal Chalice, Foveros and Harry Hotspur can be found close up in some of Fort Wood's good runners, all carry Owen Tudor.

A look at some other Selene carriers.

Selene is dam of Hyperion, Pharamond (sire of Menow, who got Tom Fool and is damsire of Red God),

PICK OF THE BUNCH

Suitable mares for Elusive Fort could include

1. Sources of Aurora – as in Acropolis, Alycidon, Borealis (Counter Action, Right Approach, Kahal, Tara's Halls, Count duBois)
2. Sources of Owen Tudor (Abernant, Golden Thatch, Royal Chalice, Harry Hotspur, Foveros, London News, National Emblem, etc)
3. Sources of Forli (Home Guard, Golden Thatch, Special/Sadler's Wells/Nureyev)
4. Sources of Pharamond (Menow as in Tom Fool/Buckpasser – widespread, but notably Al Mufti, Northern Guest, National Assembly, AP Indy/Seattle Slew, Seeking The Gold)
5. Sources of Sickle (Damascus – with Buckpasser in Captain AI, with Borealis in Counter Action; Rollins/Jet Master; Mecca Road)
6. Sources of All Moonshine (Mossborough – notably Saumarez, Kabool, Spectrum, Casey Tibbs)
7. Sources of Miss Lily/Lily
8. Sources of Swaps/Khaled, Pretense, Flower Bowl (Jallad, Badger Land/Badger's Drift, Parade Leader (!), Danehill, Caesour)

Sickle (grandsire of Polynesian, 2nd damsire of Damascus, etc), Hunter's Moon, All Moonshine (dam of Mossborough and 3rd dam of Sir Tristram).

In this context Tom Fool's son Buckpasser could be interesting, as he's significant in Elusive Fort's damsire Secret Prospector. Buckpasser is widespread, and significant also in Al Mufti, Northern Guest, National Assembly.

“Return to a sire the best from his dam” said Olin Gentry.

The future for Elusive Fort seems likely to be with mares who have Selene (and kin-lines) in abundance.

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