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KIEREN FALLON TO RIDE GITANO HERNANDO IN ENGLISH SEASONAL BOW, JOCKEY WILL FLY FROM DUBAI TO PILOT 4YO COLT IN LINGFIELD STAKES, ALL-WEATHER EVENT WILL SERVE AS LONE PREP FOR DUBAI WORLD CUP



Kieren Fallon, who is currently plying his trade in the United Arab Emirates, will return to England to ride Gitano Hernando on February 27 in the Winter Derby Trial. The last time Fallon was aboard the colt he rode him to an upset victory in the Grade 1 Goodwood Stakes at Santa Anita's Oak Tree meeting.

Following the win over some of North America's top seasoned horses and the Kentucky Derby hero Mine That Bird, connections of the colt decided to skip the Breeders' Cup Classic, allow him to recover from a hard race and prepare him for an assault at the brand new Meydan race course.

Marco Botti trains Team Valor International and Gary Barber's 4-year-old son of Hernando at his stable in Newmarket and he plans to use the Derby Trial as his lone prep for the chestnut in advance of the \$10-million Dubai World Cup, which is exactly a month after the Lingfield race. The Derby Trial will be run over the same 10-furlong distance of the Grade 1 extravaganza in the desert.

"Kieren is important to have in this race," said Botti. "He knows the colt, he knows how to ride him and he can tell us where we stand with him in his training. So far, even though the weather has been a bit of a challenge, the colt has not missed any training. He looks and feels good, so we are excited about using the race at Lingfield as his prep for the World Cup."

Botti confirmed he will have Gitano Hernando arrive only days in advance of the March 27 race in the U. A. E., employing the same strategy that was successful with the colt prior to winning the Goodwood in Southern California.



On the recently released world rankings, Gitano Hernando was rated at 120, behind only Summer Bird (123), Mine That Bird (122) and Musket Man (121) among 3-year-old runners last season in the United States, based on his Goodwood effort.

Timeform rated Gitano Hernando at 124 last season, two pounds below Summer Bird and a pound below Mine That Bird.