



## **CROSS COUNTER WINS THE G3 QATAR GORDON STAKES FOR GODOLPHIN**

The Godolphin-owned Cross Counter won the Group Three one mile and four furlong Qatar Gordon Stakes in impressive fashion and a track record time of 2m 31.39s. A first Group race success for the three-year-old colt, Cross Counter was the clear four-and-a-half length winner from the Investec Derby runner-up Dee Ex Bee.

Alex Merriam, assistant to winning trainer Charlie Appleby, said: "It was a very nice performance, very impressive. He has done everything right, it is all going the right way and he won a handicap at Ascot last time very nicely. He only started up and had his first run in December, so he's improving all the time. He's a big raw horse and I think there is some more improvement to come.

"He's been gelded - he was a bit of a boy back in the day and Charlie thought it was the best thing to do.

"He's seen out this trip really well, and liked the ground as he is by Teofilo. Speaking just now to Charlie, a trip to Australia might be in his sights."

As regards the lack of cheekpieces fitted on the Godolphin runner Walton Street in the preceding Qatar Summer Handicap leading to the horse's withdrawal at the start, Merriam said: "It was a genuine mistake. Unfortunately, the horse was on his way to the start when it was noticed, and as he had stepped on to the racecourse, it was the only course of action to be taken."