



Mainstream Manifold



De-Su Observer

## New 'ground breaking' sires top the rankings

# All change at the top

We spoke to renowned dairy breeder and former NMR/RABDF Gold Cup finalist Willy Ley to find out which sires caught his eye in the April 2014 bull proof run.

text **Rachael Porter**

There's plenty to get excited about in both the genomic and daughter-proven sires rankings this time around. Not least is the fact that the £300 Profitable Lifetime Index (PLI) barrier has been broken for the first time in the April 2014 DairyCo Breeding+ genomic indexes rankings for young Holstein sires.

Topping the list, with a PLI of £302, is Seagull-Bay Silver, a newcomer by Mogul (himself still a young sire by Dorcy and no longer available in the UK) and out of a Snowman dam from the same family that bred the popular Seagull-Bay Supersire, (who is in fourth place). "We've not used him yet, but we probably will. I need to take a closer look, but with a PLI of more than £300, he can't be ignored," says Devon-based producer Willy Ley. "He's the kind of bull that you could use 10 or 15 straws and be guaranteed a clutch of good heifers."

Predicted to transmit an unprecedented weight of fat (49kg), with good lifespan (+0.4), he is also remarkable as the highest type sire in the genomic top 20 with a Type Merit of +3.81.

Also attaining a PLI of £300 and ranking

second is former number-one sire, De-Su RB Moonray. "We have used this grandson of Planet, but we've no calves on the ground just yet."

### Improved performance

Moonray strengthens his position thanks to an improvement in the index of his sire, Roylane Socra Robust, who has added more daughters in North America to his index. In fact, Robust – a bull that was never sold in the UK – is the sire who is shaping the top of the rankings more than any other, according to DairyCo Breeding+, boasting five sons among the top 10 and even an early grandson, all of which benefit from his own improving performance.

The third ranking young sire is both British housed and owned. Cogent Supershot makes his debut on the official rankings with a PLI of £290, while his Lifespan Index of +0.6 is the equal first in the top 10. A son of Supersire and out of a Charlesdale Superstition dam, Willy says that Supershot brings together solid production, type and fitness. "There's been a fair amount of publicity about him, so I'd heard of him and been



Willy Ley

waiting for him to appear. Yes, I'll probably use him. But I've not bought any semen yet."

### Exciting time

Willy says that this is an exciting time for Holstein breeders and he's fascinated by this next generation of bulls, not least because they're all by sires that have themselves yet to be daughter proven. "It's a lottery really, but so far so good. I've certainly not had my fingers burnt yet. I trust the figures and I've no reason not to. In fact, looking at the daughter-proven rankings, many sires are not only matching their genomic figures once they get a proof, but many are also improving on their genomic proof.

"That's very reassuring and I shall continue to use genomic sires. Many offer different bloodlines and also compliment the cows and heifers that I have in my herd."

Looking to the daughter-proven rankings, Willy says he was pleased to see Ladys-Manor RD Grafeeti take the

name	sire	mat. grandsire	supplier	production						functional traits					conformation			
				rel.	milk	fat kg	prot. kg	fat%	protein%	EPIN	EPLI	SCC	lifespan	fertility ind.	dCE	F&L	udder	TM
Ladys-Manor Rd Grafeeti	Freddie	Goldwyn	Cogent	78	+444	+31.1	+16.9	+0.16	+0.03	42	255	-24	0.5	6.9	0.7	2.34	3.03	3.34
VH Tirsvad Goldwyn Grafit	Goldwyn	O Man	Viking/Nordic Gen.	80	+675	+34.7	+26.6	+0.09	+0.05	55	253	-19	0.3	1.4	1.2	2.34	1.09	1.82
Morningview Levi	Buckeye	O Man	Genus	83	+611	+32.7	+24.0	+0.10	+0.05	51	250	-17	0.4	4.4	2.4	1.86	0.76	1.31
Lynbrook Jancen	O Man	Manat	Bullsemen.com	77	+333	+29.0	+21.3	+0.19	+0.13	51	246	-10	0.4	8.4	1.1	-0.54	-0.13	-0.22
Cogent Twist	Shottle	Major	Cogent	97	+494	+39.6	+22.1	+0.24	+0.07	56	244	-9	0.4	-2.4	-0.1	2.28	0.98	1.57
Ballycairn Oman Pello	O Man	Goldwyn	Genus	95	+1084	+39.3	+31.4	-0.04	-0.04	56	240	-26	0.2	-0.6	1.9	1.47	0.85	1.20
Bakombre	Baxter	Goldwyn	Cogent	83	+718	+38.4	+25.4	+0.12	+0.02	55	238	-10	0.2	2.3	1.7	2.01	1.43	1.79
Kings-Ransom Erdman	Planet	Ramos	Bullsemen.com	83	+662	+30.0	+19.7	+0.05	-0.02	40	237	-20	0.6	5.6	1.5	1.23	1.23	1.40
Welcome Glenton	Planet	Goldwyn	Bullsemen.com	82	+500	+27.1	+20.7	+0.09	+0.05	44	235	-14	0.5	2.3	-0.7	2.58	2.04	2.51
Hammer-Creek O Man Kody	O Man	Goldwyn	Cogent	81	+684	+20.9	+24.8	-0.07	+0.03	41	234	-14	0.4	8.4	1.0	0.90	1.87	1.93
De-Su 521 Bookem	Planet	Ramos	Cogent	85	+800	+21.2	+26.2	-0.12	+0.00	40	233	-11	0.6	2.3	1.5	2.73	2.70	3.09
Mainstream Manifold	O Man	BW Marshall	Semex	99	+688	+31.8	+23.0	+0.05	+0.01	46	232	-9	0.3	7.4	2.2	0.14	1.91	1.47
Regancrest Alta Iota	O Man	Ito	Alta	98	+765	+33.5	+22.3	+0.04	-0.03	44	230	-14	0.4	2.7	1.0	1.29	2.31	2.33
D Mason	Mascol	O Man	Viking/Nordic Gen.	79	+586	+27.8	+21.5	+0.06	+0.03	43	229	-25	0.4	4.5	1.6	1.77	0.44	1.11
Ensenada Taboo Planet	Taboo	Amel	Cogent	98	+1075	+28.6	+30.7	-0.15	-0.05	46	228	-5	0.5	-0.4	1.8	1.90	1.94	2.09
Ufm-Dubs Ellrod	O Man	Lynch	Genus	99	+229	+38.7	+17.4	+0.37	+0.12	55	228	-7	0.2	1.9	1.1	0.49	1.09	1.01
Sherdon Irresistable	Maestro	Zelati	Genus	94	+344	+34.4	+18.9	+0.25	+0.09	51	225	-1	0.3	3.0	0.2	0.96	0.85	1.05
Morningview Legend	O Man	Durham	Genus	99	+373	+28.7	+18.8	+0.17	+0.08	45	222	-11	0.3	4.5	1.5	2.02	0.85	1.38
Ufm-Dubs Alta Esquire	O Man	Mark Sam	Alta	98	+408	+36.9	+20.8	+0.25	+0.09	54	221	-7	0.0	3.9	2.0	1.29	1.28	1.46
D Omar	O Man	Lukas	Viking/Nordic Gen.	80	+416	+30.2	+21.4	+0.17	+0.10	50	219	-20	0.2	3.1	0.6	0.71	0.22	0.52
De-Su Observer	Planet	O Man	Cogent	85	+863	+24.9	+24.8	-0.11	-0.04	39	219	-12	0.5	1.2	1.9	1.56	3.30	3.25

Table 1: Top 21 daughter-proven sires available in the UK ranked on PLI (source: DairyCo breeding+ and Holstein UK)

number-one slot in the Holstein proven sire ranking.

“He succeeded as a genomic young sire – a lot of UK producers have used him, including me. We’ve some calves due and I’m expecting some nice heifers by him.”

The reliability of his index rises to 78%, which means it is still early days for Grafeeti, and his PLI is an impressive £255. A son of Badger-Bluff Fanny Freddie, a bull that was never available in the UK, Willy says that he’s also proved to be a fertile bull. “He’s certainly got a lot of my herd in calf.”

Second ranking Danish-bred VH Tirsvad Goldwyn Grafit is another bull who started his career early based on high genomic predictions. Willy is yet to use

him: “But he’s caught my eye, so I may have a dabble. As I say, with every bull proof run, there are so many good bulls to choose from and it’s not possible to use them all. But I will give him a closer look.”

And so he should, considering his good all-round transmitting pattern, which is typical of his familiar Goldwyn x O Man pedigree, that earns him a PLI of £253.

### British bull

The highest ranked British bred bull is Cogent Twist who adds 149 second-crop daughters to his index and confirms his high butterfat genetics with a massive 39.6kg (+0.24%) fat.

Willy is milking several Twist daughters: “They really are the business. Their fat

and protein yields are amazing,” he says, adding that he has 10 in their first lactation and more to calve. “He’s an ideal match for many of my Planet daughters.” This Shottle son still ranks as the highest butterfat producer of the daughter-proven bulls and weighs in with a PLI of £244.

Regaining his top-ten position is Bakombre, a Baxter son, who increased his PLI by 18 to £238 due to improvements in production and several of his fitness traits. “There aren’t too many Baxter sons around – that’s what attracted me to this sire. I used him when he was a test bull because he’s a bit different and I have heifers by him that are about to come bulling,” says Willy. “He’s proved to be an excellent out cross bull.” |

## Jersey reshuffle and Ayrshire domination

A significant reshuffle has occurred within the Jersey breed where the addition of UK daughter information for DJ Hulk sees this high butterfat bull regain the number one position. He now has a PLI of £221.

Fellow Danishbred DJ Zaga also adds daughter information and climbs up to second position (PLI £220) while former number-one sire, DJ Broiler, now ranks third with a PLI of £219.

A new entry in fourth position is VJ Linx (Legacy x Q Hirse), a bull who transmits

superb daughter fertility (Fertility Index +11) and has a PLI of £218.

DJ Lix rounds off the top five Jersey with a PLI of £212.

The Ayrshire rankings are dominated by newcomer, R Yrite (Ooppium x V Record), a Finnish Ayrshire with a solid all round proof and a PLI of £206.

Swedish-bred Gunnarstorp remains in second position with an unchanged PLI at £184, closely followed by his stable mate, Pel Pers, who increases his PLI to £183.

Gunnarstorp

