

Dettori, “Frankie” Lanfranco: Born Dec. 15, 1970. From: Milan, Italy.

He is the son of Gianfranco Dettori, 13 times champion jockey in Italy—and claims his father as the biggest influence on his career; mother was a professional circus performer. Says the Breeders’ Cup is his favorite foreign meeting. Plans to ride successfully until he is 50 years old, at least, and go out on his own terms.

Breeders’ Cup at Santa Anita is especially meaningful to Dettori as he spent some of the early years of his career spending his winters at Santa Anita 1987-1990 (for 4 years) and this is where he had his first opportunity to ride with and learn from some of America’s all time racing greats.

A serious depression came over him in 2012 and nearly ended his career, as he saw longtime employer Godolphin give mounts away and push him from the role of their primary rider to third choice behind Mickael Barzalona and Sylvestre de Sousa. He agreed to ride Camelot for rival Coolmore in the Prix de l’Arc de Triomphe after missing classic rides in 2012, bringing two years of frustration to a head. He was not even allowed to see Sheikh Mohammed to talk to him personally about leaving, and at his nadir, turned to cocaine, resulting in a six-month ban. He has since blamed now-disgraced Godolphin trainer Mahmoud al-Zarooni for pushing him out of the Godolphin fold.

Credits Al Shaqab racing (Sheikh Joaan) with saving his career, but it was Golden Horn and John Gosden that gave him his greatest triumphs of 2015. In addition to the Derby and Feilden Stakes, he won the Eclipse Stakes (G1), Irish Champion Stakes (G1), and Prix de l’Arc de Triomphe with the colt. He also won the Prix de Diane (French Oaks) with Star of Seville (GB), and the Diamond Jubilee Stakes (G1) with Undrafted. ... Of the eight Group 1 wins that Dettori had in 2015 going into the Breeders’ Cup, seven came with Gosden, and they were pointing for another with Foundation in the Racing Post Trophy Stakes (G1).

Suffice to say that between Sheikh Joaan and John Gosden’s support and belief in him, he has risen from the ashes. A career that in 2013 looked like it was doomed to die unceremoniously has reignited and in September 2017 Dettori scored his record 5th Arc de Triomphe win (on Enable) and back to the top of the world’s standings.

Family: wife Catherine, and five children (ages in 2018): Leo, 18; Mia, 17; Ella, 16; Tallulah, 14; and Rocco, 13.