

## Akeed Mofeed delivers in BMW Hong Kong Derby

**Akeed Mofeed** lived up to the hype that has surrounded his early career in Hong Kong with a determined victory in an exciting climax to the **2013 HKG1 BMW Hong Kong Derby** (2000m) before over 56,500 race fans at Sha Tin Racecourse, Sunday 17 March.

Richard Gibson saddled the winner and third-placed Gold-Fun, both for owner Pan Sutong, in only his second Hong Kong season. Gibson revealed that his third Derby hope Mizani was a withdrawal prior to the race as a result of standing on a stone earlier in the day.



Akeed Mofeed (No 1, yellow silk/yellow cap), ridden by Douglas Whyte and trained by Richard Gibson, holds off Endowing (No 14, red & purple silk / white cap) and Gold-Fun (No 3, yellow silk/red cap) to win the BMW Hong Kong Derby (HKG1, 2000m).

“The Derby is all about Akeed Mofeed, it’s all about horses,” said a delighted Gibson after the Dubawi colt had battled to a half-length verdict over the game runner-up Endowing from the John Size stable in a time of 2m 01.84s.

“I think the racing fans and the professionals will all be happy tonight because the best horse has won the race,” added the Englishman. “He’s a really class act and I don’t think we’ve seen the best of him.”

Akeed Mofeed broke well in the HK\$16 million race and took up an ideal berth in fifth under Douglas Whyte but that early dream run quickly unraveled when leader Jun Gong slowed the pace markedly early in the back stretch.

“I came out the gates beautiful but they slowed it right down around the 1300m and I was in all sorts of bother,” said Whyte, for whom this was a third Hong Kong Derby win in four years (2010 Super Satin, 2012 Fay Fay).

“I had a long rein and I had him galloping beautifully, so when I had to come back on his mouth I didn’t have a short enough rein to get him back – I had to peel off heels and it got a bit messy.”



**Pan Sutong**, Owner of the BMW Hong Kong Derby winner **Akeed Mofeed**, as well as winning trainer **Richard Gibson** and jockey **Douglas Whyte**.

Akeed Mofeed was shuffled back and forced three wide but that inconvenience ultimately proved little hindrance as the Irish import drove determinedly down the home stretch to overhaul HKG1 Hong Kong Classic Mile hero Gold-Fun, who had taken it up 300m out under Olivier Doleuze, and grind out a deserved victory.

“He was the best horse on the day,” added Whyte. “I hadn’t really got to the bottom of him – he was only just finding the line so it was a good effort. I think had it been a genuinely run race we would have seen a prettier win at the end.”

Gibson believes the Derby winner, who had high-class form in Ireland as a juvenile and ran fourth to Camelot in last year’s G1 Irish Derby, has plenty more to offer and is now looking at taking on Hong Kong’s established stars.

“The next stage is to see if he can beat the very best of Hong Kong and that’s a massive challenge, so we’ll see how he takes the race and look at it in a couple of weeks,” he said. “When they’re this good you can have any plan you want in your mind, it’s about forming the right plan at the right time with the owner.

“It’s a great relief to get these two excellent athletes to the races in good shape, allowing them to perform to their natural ability. I don’t think the race was ideal for Gold-Fun but he’s a talented horse too and it was an excellent effort.”

Whyte and jockeys’ championship rival Zac Purton both rode trebles as they divided the day’s two Group 1 showpieces between them, and shared the Jockeys’ Challenge with 40 points after each also rode a third-placed runner.