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Harry Herbert is still on cloud nine following Harbinger's scarcely believable display in the King George VI And Queen Elizabeth Stakes at Ascot on Saturday.

The Dansili colt was tackling Group One company for the first time in the Betfair-sponsored contest but barely came off the bridle in breaking the course record and scoring by 11 lengths.

Harbinger's Derby-winning stablemate Workforce and Irish Derby hero Cape Blanco were among those left trailing in his wake and Herbert, racing manager to owners Highclere Thoroughbred Racing, admits the display is still hard to take in.

"I don't think it's really sunk in for any of us and it was one of those rare racecourse performances where it is difficult to believe it actually happened," he said.

"I think it was a once-in-a-lifetime performance and it's hard to understand how horses can improve so rapidly, but he obviously has done and is doing so.

"I find it extraordinary that he's broken the track record when he has really been given an easy time during the entire race. Olivier (Peslier) didn't have to get after him once and watching the replay again I was as amazed and gobsmacked as I was at the time.

"There was that amazing shot where he came by Workforce and Cape Blanco on the bridle and it is just all so exciting."

The four-year-old is now as short as even-money favourite to win the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe at Longchamp in October and Herbert has his eyes very much fixed on the French showpiece.

He continued: "It was a great performance and a great training performance and we will almost certainly look towards the Arc now. I'll talk to Sir Michael (Stoute) and see whether he wants to go straight there or give him a prep race.

"I certainly couldn't rule out the Breeders' Cup and there are other races like the Japan Cup. Then the decision will have to be made about what we do next year. All of the owners will have to decide whether we keep him and race again."

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