

OWNERS' BULLETIN



NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHBRED RACEHORSE OWNERS FEDERATION

JULY 2018



OUR GOAL

To improve the economics, integrity and pleasure of the sport of thoroughbred racing on behalf of all owners.

PRESIDENT/MEMBERS COUNCILLOR'S MESSAGE

NEIL OLDFIELD

Welcome members and readers to this edition of the Owners' Bulletin. We have begun the last month of the season, with a few outstanding performances to reflect upon. There is much to look forward to also.

The most eagerly awaited report expected is that from the Ministerial request for an industry review from Mr. John Messara. This is due by the end of July. My understanding is that the Racefields' legislation has been deferred awaiting this report. It makes sound sense to have a review and make any amendments to the Racing Act after consideration.

Initially we were of the understanding that the legislation would be operating before the start of the new season on the 1st of August. Funding has been advanced to the industry by the Racing Board with this in mind. The fiscal deficit from this delay will be significant.

The Racing Board, and the respective codes, will be reworking budgets in an effort to accommodate, and achieve the least possible interference to their code.

The codes really in effect only have three potential sources of revenue improvement, either prizemoney increase for club distribution reflecting the management of NZRB or the reduction of NZTR costs. The latter is not realistic.

Hopefully a clear and concise programme and an acceptable timeline will see a smooth adoption of report recommendations, discussion and implementations. The Minister will want to see our industry thrive, not the survive attitude of our previous Government.

All the best for the New Season, Neil Oldfield



MAY/JUNE 2018 NEW ZEALAND RACING BOARD INDUSTRY UPDATE 9 JULY 2018

The New Zealand Racing Board has been progressing a range of priorities that I am pleased to update you and your members on as we approach the end of the current racing calendar.

Over the past couple of months I have met with many trainers, jockeys, drivers, owners, breeders, club members and bettors at several industry forums and race meetings.

The conversations have been wide ranging in topic, challenging and informative in questions and very valuable in content. Not surprisingly the review being pulled together by John Messara has been a topic of interest. Clearly I do not know what will end up in the report, but I am very optimistic that it will provide a real opportunity for the future of racing in New Zealand. There are many parallels with New Zealand when we look at what Mr Messara has delivered in Australia. Tax relief, racefields legislation, investment in racing venues and infrastructure and increased stakes have had a material impact on racing in New South Wales and I imagine similar priorities will be on his horizon here.

We've also had solid conversations in relation to venues and infrastructure with the development of a draft Future Venue Plan well underway. The Joint Working Group managing this exercise is working through various scenarios with the goal of racing in 10 years' time taking place on great tracks, with the right infrastructure and facilities around them and actively supported by the participants and local communities. The codes and the NZRB intend to present the draft plan to clubs in September with a likely deadline for feedback of November.

INCREASING REVENUE TO RACING

We've also spent time discussing NZRB's profitability and our intent to lift total distributions to racing from \$160m this year to more than \$200m in 2020/21. There are several initiatives that are going to get us there.

» **Customer growth** is critical and it's pleasing to report growth of nearly 20% on last year. Overall average monthly customers in May stood at 112,600 (+19.4%) for the 12 months to May 2018 with net deposits up 11.4%. This month the FIFA World Cup acquisition campaign is in full swing with a 'Free Kick at \$5m' promotion competition securing 45,590 entrants, of which, 45% of entrants were

non-existing customers. So far our financial projections for the World Cup are on track. In this financial year to date, all marketing campaigns that are specifically targeted to acquire customers from sporting events have resulted in 27% of those new customers placing a bet on racing.

» **For our TAB App users**, the next product update releases will include Betslip and global design changes, event display enhancements and various bug fixes.

» **The Fixed Odds Betting (FOB)** platform is another key project with multiple benefits. Firstly, our customers will enjoy a world-class betting experience. The number of books available will lift from a few thousand, to up to potentially 100,000. With sports betting, in-play betting options will increase, while the duration that games are suspended (due to adjusting the odds) will decrease significantly. Betting on sport plays an important part of distributions back to racing, with about 40% of betting on sport going straight back to racing.

There is no doubt FOB is a major programme with \$37-39m invested and a projected pay-back of 3.3 years, as well as a significant ongoing lift to profit over the long-term. The value of the programme is significant and a key driver in our positive outlook over the coming years. The investigation to proceed with our partners Openbet and Paddy Power Betfair was robust and we remain absolutely confident it was the right decision for the long-term sustainability of our industry. With the 'build' now nearly complete, the team are working through extensive testing phase and we're on track to launch later this year.

» Another priority for us right now is ensuring the TAB has systems and controls in place to detect and deter **money laundering and terrorism financing**. From 1 August 2019, we will need to comply with the anti money laundering requirements, which requires more precise customer identification as well as more stringent record keeping and transaction monitoring requirements.

SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR SERVICE AWARD

New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR) has launched a plan to recognise long-serving volunteers and contributors.

"Many racing participants have given years of valuable service without any formal recognition from either NZTR or the wider industry and we want to change that," NZTR CEO Bernard Saundry said.

"These people make a substantial contribution to our industry and have often been essential to the survival of clubs and organisations."

Each month, NZTR will recognise an individual who has given at least 20 years of service to

the thoroughbred code. That service can be at a governance level but also at an operational level, at race meetings or other club and stakeholder activities.

They will receive a plaque to mark their achievement and their work will be acknowledged in NZTR publications and on-line.

Nominations are now being sought from clubs and other industry organisations. Those wishing to nominate an individual should email NZTR,

with details of the nominee's service.

While the emphasis will be on volunteers, nominees need not be confined to honorary roles and the awards will encompass lengthy service in a variety of industry roles and positions.

Nominations, with details of the nominee's service, should be sent to tim.barton@nzracing.co.nz

NZRB INDUSTRY UPDATE CONTINUED

This requirement entails understanding who our customer is, and the legitimacy of the money they want to place with us. It also requires monitoring customer transactions and accounts and generating reports about prescribed transactions, as well as suspicious transactions. Over the next year we will work closely with our staff, our customers, racing clubs, tote operators etc to manage these requirements as efficiently as possible.

NZRB BOARD MEETING

Every month the NZRB Board receive detailed updates on our financial performance and organisation's priority projects and provide feedback on our strategies and direction.

We're currently on track to meet our end of year targets, despite challenges we are facing from delays to the expected level of revenue which was forecast for this year from the racefields legislation which we had expected to be in place by now. For May, operating profit was slightly below forecast but 8.5% ahead of last year, with turnover coming in below forecast and lower than last year driven by fewer equine races both domestically and overseas (-5.3%), two domestic race abandonments (-\$0.3m profit impact) and strong margin results adversely impacting betting churn, particularly high value customers. Gross betting revenue was broadly in line with last year due to strong product margins while gaming turnover for the month hit a new record up 17.7% on last year. Total operating expenses were below forecast and lower than last year, including staff expenses.

The Board also considered our **2019/21 Statement of Intent (SOI)**, which we are required to present to the Minister of Racing by the end of July. This was the second time the Board reviewed the document with feedback from the three codes incorporated following consultation. The SOI will be publicly released in August, following its tabling in Parliament by the Minister.

The Board also signed off the **NZRB's budget** for 2018/19, which included an anticipated lift in net profit by more than 20% and distributions to the codes of \$151.6m, aligning with the projections for 2017/18.

The other priority that the Board received an update on was customer safety measures being implemented in the retail network to reflect health and safety considerations. This includes the rollout of new security signage, greater cash management measures, investment in staff training & education and more proactive health & safety communications.

CONTACT

As always, if you have any topics or considerations you'd like me to cover off in these updates please feel free to drop me a line at john.allen@nzrb.co.nz or email our Head of Government and Industry Relations, Ian Long at ian.long@nzrb.co.nz with comments and suggestions you might have.

John Allen,
Chief Executive Officer



EDITORIAL

NEIL MILLER

Another season done and dusted, but not before the Horse of the Year Awards are held, where we honour our notable horses and industry participants. We have printed all of the details available at this stage.

As well as our regional notes (thank you team for another season of great contribution) we have sourced another varied mixture of information.

Deep into the jumping season there is a lot of focus on the leapers. Peter Rubery the principal of Race Images is a jumping enthusiast and a great photographer, and he gets the credit for our cover shot.

There is a piece on starting an Aussie ownership experience as Sally Blyth has taken a share in a horse trained by expat Kiwis the Laming's.

We go to Hong Kong and China and the new soon to be opened HKJC's Conghua facility. We are members of the Asia-Pacific conference and our horses do go up there – and some return to come back here to race with distinction before retirement. We do need to know what is going on outside NZ.

Victoria Carter, the Deputy Chair of the NZTR Board has raised the matter of diversity and we were asked by another party to promote that. Sally Blyth has covered that, and we put that out for your consideration.

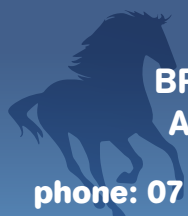
My opinion is that the push for "diversity" has become a "bandwagon to ride" and what is really needed instead is ability and stickability to ensure Racing's future. And as Sally points out the continuing involvement of youth in every facet of the game is the only thing that will guarantee continuance. That is flat out blindingly obvious!

There was "word check" deficiencies in the last issue due to time pressure and my deficiencies. It is hugely annoying when you can't see them in the rough file, but they leap out at you in print. But we do our best with the time we have!

In light of that the cartoon below is apt, don't you think?

Contact me – neilandjeanette@yahoo.com





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REGIONAL ROUNDUP

AUCKLAND/NORTHLAND ADVICE

SALLY BLYTH
& MIKE GETHING

President Mike Gething has been through the mill over recent months and largely out of action.

Thankfully he soldiered his way through it and has managed to come out the other end with a smile on his face. Complications following hip surgery laid him extremely low, but he is now back in business and, in true Mike-fashion, is full steam ahead. We on the Auckland Committee are extremely pleased to have Mike back in the saddle, and his wife Pat must be so happy that a worrying and stressful time is now behind them. Surgery is hard enough to go through, without follow-up problems and added misery.

Over recent months, with Ellerslie also out of action, Aucklanders have enjoyed some great racing at Avondale, including a superb first-up maiden win by Reevederci, a 2YO grey gelding by Reliable Man. Owned by Auckland members Brendan and Jo Lindsay, trained by Lance Noble at Karaka and ridden by Leith Innes, he won by a staggering 8½ lengths. On a gloomy Queens Birthday Monday, that win must have brightened the Lindsay's day immeasurably. Definitely a horse to keep your eye on.

Those of us in Auckland have also trekked south to Pukekohe Park and Te Rapa and headed north to Ruakaka – where surf meets turf, a Dead 5 track is the norm and the Chris Gibbs Stable rules – to get our on-course racing fix while work continues at Ellerslie.

Unfortunately, the journey to the Waikato on Sunday 3rd June for the Auckland Racing Club's meeting was not a rewarding one as races were abandoned after Race 2 when a number of riders expressed concerns with regard to lack of visibility. A decision was made that it was unsafe to continue the meeting. A shame it got to that point, but there are no windscreen wipers on jockey goggles and safety definitely comes first.

At the Whangarei Racing Club's meeting on 16th June, Chris Gibbs produced five winners from ten races, the familiar turquoise and blue checked silks featuring heavily throughout the day. The stable also performed well on Saturday 30th June, with four winners from nine races. They also got a juicy trifecta in Race 3. Having taken sole charge of the Ruakaka training operation following Donna Logan-Woods move to Singapore earlier this year, Chris and his team are continuing the winning formula with plenty of local victories.

We're pleased to be holding our second Members' Spring Raceday on Sunday 23rd September – this will be at Pukekohe Park.

Members will get to enjoy premium racing, great camaraderie, a private room on the winning post, catering, Punters' Club, prizes etc.

It's the Spinal Trust Charity Raceday and the Haunui Farm Karaka Classic will be run. More details to come. Again, do save the date, it'll be another wonderful occasion. Members from all districts are welcome, so if you're not from Auckland but are keen to join in the fun, please let President Mike Gething know and we'll make sure you get all the details. Email: mike@southerlylabradors.co.nz

Racing will resume at Ellerslie on Saturday 27th October; it's sure to be a huge day for the Auckland Racing Club with the new stabling complex operating for the first time on race day. But before that, Auckland Association members will get a chance to have a personal guided tour of the tie-ups as well as an overview of track changes. This special preview will precede the Auckland Association's 2018 AGM on Sunday 14th October. We'll also be having someone from the Racing Integrity Unit along to talk about the positive aspects of a steward's role on race day. Full details to come; meanwhile, save the date in your diary, it's going to be an event to get along to.

Also, in August, it's time for the thoroughbred racing industry to take a moment to celebrate and honour the best of the best! The 2018 New Zealand Thoroughbred Horse of the Year Awards will take place on Sunday 26th August at Ellerslie Racecourse, Auckland and tickets are now on sale for this prestigious event. Check out the Love Racing Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/LoveRacingNZ/>

Sally Blyth, Auckland Assn Vice President

Good to be back on deck. Sincere thanks for the help and support of the Auckland Owners' Committee and specially Sally – just goes to show it is a team game. Our planned social in September is really something to look forward to. Counties have been very supportive which is much appreciated – thanks Greg and Fleur. Those of you who enjoyed the day in the Lady Fisher Room last year, please spread the word as well as join us once again. Sally has given some details above but the 'official invites' will be emailed out in the next few weeks – it will be RSVP to regulate numbers. Big thanks to the Auckland Racing Club and Craig Baker who is going to give us a tour of the new tie-up facilities at Ellerslie in October prior to our AGM.

Look forward to seeing you at the races and at our social event.

Mike Gething, Auckland Assn President

HAWKES BAY HAPPENINGS

TONY LYNDON

Paul Nelson, one of the top jumping trainers in the country started the winter well when The Shackler won the \$50,000 Waikato Hurdles. However, the old adage "the jumps are there to be jumped" certainly applied when it's a Wonder nearly fell at the second to last fence allowing The Shackler to win.

The vagaries of jumps racing were seen later in the day when Paul's Perry Mason had the maiden steeplechase won but fell at the last fence.

No Change continued the run by winning the restricted hurdles at Hastings on May 24th his second hurdle success in 6 starts. Then The Shackler won the K.S. Browne Hurdles at Trentham on 9th June his 5th hurdle win and later in the day Perry Mason won the maiden steeplechase. Kings Deep winding up June by winning the open steeplechase at Te Aroha on the 24th.

Elle Eye Are won her third race from 4 starts at Hawera on 22 June. Raced by the Estate of Laurence Redshaw a former Chairman of the Hawkes Bay Racing Club and a prominent owner and breeder along with Alister and Jeannette Cameron from Napier and Geoff Candy from Gisborne.

The promising jumper Zentangle showed he was well forward for some of the big jumping races this winter by winning the open hurdles at Riverton on 2 May. He then followed this up by winning open handicaps at Manawatu on 16 June and Hastings on 30 June. He is raced by the Estate of Jim Donnelly, his son Jason and former jumps jockey Charlie Gestro.



Zentangle, Saddlecloth 8 wins at Riverton

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HAWKES BAY HAPPENINGS continued

Hawkes Bay Racing CEO Andrew (Butch) Castles was delighted when London Express won the \$10,000 2yo race at New Plymouth and followed this up by annexing the listed \$50,000 Castletown Stakes at Wanganui on June 2nd. Raced by a syndicate that include 4 women, Emma Davies, Anna McKenzie, Anna Milne and Tess Castles. The Shameexpress filly may not be seen again until the spring when the classic filly races will be on her agenda.

Napier couple Buddy and Elizabeth Beachen returned to the winners' circle when the Alamosa colt Kotahi won the maiden 1200 metres at Awapuni on 1 June. The Beachens race him in a syndicate including the horses breeder Hori Gardiner. The Beachens were also in the syndicate that raced Nanjara the 2007 Manawatu Cup winner.

Havelock North couple Dave and Jenny Morison who race the good handicapper Pacorus may have a future handicapper in their home bred filly Rippin, who won the \$22,500 Rating 65 at Te Rapa on 9 June. The Rip Van Winkle filly made it 2 wins from 5 starts. They race Rippin with Dennis and Pip Glenn from Napier, Cheryl Leonard and Kathleen Wright from Havelock North, but they have retained a 40% share for themselves.

Hawkes Bay lost 2 racing identities in June with the passing of Derek Alderman and Dick Lee. The 88 years old Derek was an owner trainer for many years. His best horse probably was Accurate a noted jumper in the sixties. His son Philip rode Chimbu to victory in the Queen Elizabeth Handicap/Auckland Cup double in the 1981/82 season also winning the Waikato Cup on Avago the same season.

Dick Lee a retired farmer and racehorse owner was 92 years old. He raced the handicappers Pennevari who won 6 races including the 1978 A.R.C. Newmarket Handicap and Hassadean who won 16 races.

The Kevin Wood Memorial Trophy for the months of March and April was presented by the Hawkes Bay Owners Association to John Best, Dave Lumsden and Steve Wyman who race Tuigold.

WAIKATO WORDS

JENNY COWAN

The Cambridge Harness Jewels provided much in the way of entertainment on June 2nd. An evening of social and enlightening interest with Peter Moody, with a definite galloping flavour.

He spoke of his way, and the Australian way in training, and answered the inevitable question of – who would be the best – his Black Caviar, or Winx. He covered himself, and all of us, admirably, that over varying distances, and sprinting times of sectionals, as recorded, they weren't comparable.

He spoke of his demise from racing, on denied, cheating charges and the clearing of his name, thereafter. He said the support of his wife Sarah, as to what he would, or could, do, was encouragement to stay with horses in some form. I, and many, remember Sarah's mother, Anne Belcham, from the Thames Paeroa area as always having a life with horses of varying degrees.

Michael Guerin, as the inspirational interviewer, delved into the life of Peter Moody.

I met the owner of Woblee, C Murphy, a visitor from Australia for the 3yr old Ruby Trot. The horse was named as such, as he was born damaged – walking on his 'wrists and elbows' – as in fetlocks and hocks. Never looked like making it – let alone to a racecourse. A lovely outcome, as now, just a three year-old he has had 17 starts for 13 wins, 4 placings, and 5 group one's. Just could not win at Cambridge though. My interest was because we had a horse nicknamed 'Wobbly' too.

We purchased him at the Magic Million sales in Queensland, but 10 days later, was diagnosed as a wobbler, by a Vet. Tried to break him in – wouldn't fight; wouldn't resist; wouldn't turn; wouldn't mouth; wouldn't buck. But ate every morsel in sight.

12 months – long story – later, and by then back, by boat, in NZ – he had overcome this strange disability. As Innisplain, he won 3 (or 4) races for us, including a hurdle, and looking like a bit of fun at last, in the upcoming season, he bowed a tendon. It takes all sorts.

Great to see said Paul Nelson train The Shackler for Shaun Dromgool, to win the Waikato Hurdles – and give a great look and jumping display as well. There would be many of the Dromgool family who loved this too – as in Dad Stuart and Mum Daphne.

Unfortunately, Perry Mason, fell in the next race for Paul when looking a leading chance. But... he won

next up at Trentham with our global star in the saddle. Aaron Kuru, did prove that the track was 'slippery' during his claim to fame, at Awapuni on June 16th. Des De Jeu, will we forget that name. So many descriptions for Aaron's actions that day – humorous, skill, balance, guts, luck, fun, quick thinking, no comparison.

Aaron also rode Dontbreakmyheart for second, for Lynda and Andrew Burton and the Brosnans' in his early jumping career.

Impulsive Habit won at Te Rapa on June 9th for Owners CG and Mrs J. Cowan (unfortunately not me) M. and P. Dobson, Mrs J. Heim and others for Lee Somervell. Nice stakes for a low-key meeting – 2 of \$10,000 and 8 of \$22,500 and 1 of \$50,000.

At Te Aroha on their jumps meeting on June 24th we welcomed back Shaun Phelan by way of a spill in the first. But then a great ride to win on Bay Rocker for Dad Craig. A great achievement for both.

And Simon Rees provided Laekeeper to win the Restricted Open Hurdle for himself. Wonder if his attention to Laekeepers' teeth is the secret to his success. Emily Farr rode him and described the horse as "He's Incredible". A good training effort here, by an almost 'one man band'.

Borninasandpit – the flagship name for Neil and Linda Porritt's mare, ran a great race for second, at her first hurdle race at Te Aroha. Some great teaching from trainers, Graeme Thomas and James Gillies. Ridden by Gary Walsh. And then Raisedinasandpit started in the Maiden Hurdle at Hastings on June 30 for an unblemished first attempt.

Gary Alton, has plenty of history. Maybe that is what his horse Historian relates to. Mum Shirley nee Millen, was a successful Point to Point rider, hunting family, and trainer with husband, Ian. Many remember the imposing, Archie Millen hunting with the Pakuranga Hunt. Gary trains from the original family training land, opposite the Cambridge Training track with many successes. He has just one in the current list, Aongatete Express for Janet and Dave McKerchar, from Tauranga, who bred him. They also have the half-brother Cossack Warrior who won recently.

Gary treats, or rather trains, with the use of a treadmill. A horse can go from go to whoa – and get galloping fitness on the treadmill. Doesn't need the mud to work in, the rider, or the track fees. He is working 8 or 9 at the moment for others to get fit during the wet of the winter.

Biologist is having a working holiday with Harvey and Ann Wilson, in Waverley, jumping anything and everything – in the right atmosphere. Let's assume he will get some horse whispering from Justa Charlie, Venerate or It's A Wonder.

At Doomben on May 26th NZTR Deputy Chairperson, Ms Victoria Carter's Rising Red won the Premier's Cup. The Redwood gelding is trained by Trent Busuttin & Natalie Young.

At Wingatui, Don and Dame Wendy Pye won the Maiden Hurdle with Speedy Jax. Welcome to the jumping world.



From left: Gary Alton, Patrick Campbell and Alexander Fieldes on the recent tour. Meydan Racecourse Dubai.

The Kiwi Lounge



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WANGANUI/TARANAKI ROUNDUP

BRIAN O'DEA

The Waverley Racing Club set out to celebrate their new Grandstand opening on the 27th June, only 27 months after demolition started on the old earthquake prone stand.

A pall was cast on the event by the road deaths of four locals less than a kilometre from the racecourse the previous day.

After President Sam Lennox made introductions, life member Ian Smith spoke of memories of when the main wooden stand was for men only and the demolished stand had a Ladies Room for drinks and the Mill Bar had a distinctly musty smell.

The new stand Lounge needed a name. The present committee considered themselves custodians following many generations of great Presidents, committees, owners, trainers and horses. Some had served for longer, trained more and won more. However it was agreed there was one icon above all to carry the prestigious name "THE KIWILounge."

Sam Lennox and Ian Smith revealed the plaque and Life Member John Scott cut the ribbon to officially open the stand. Although the design appears a bit unusual as it is a "Flat Stand" it works well in practice. It is well appointed with bar and food facilities but you need to exit the room and stand on the tiered steps to watch the races. In addition the Kiwi Lounge gives the Waverley community an alternative venue for weddings and social functions.

On to success for members from the region. After a lean patch, Tony and Denise Dravitzki had duel wins with Razors Edge winning at Hawera after a number of placings and then The Big Opal won the McGregor Grant Steeple with a front running effort.

A new member having a good patch is Judith Hewitt, racking up two wins with home bred Gata—who was threatened with the broodmare paddock prior to the second win and also with Mauna Kea who has won two of his last three.

Peter Sewell, breeder of Mauna Kea—whose dam agists at Judith's—also has shares in Gata. Included in the ownership of Mauna Kea are Wanganui TROF committee members Paul Bardell and Brian O'Dea.

Justa Charlie produced the goods for breeders and recent TROF members Eddie and Dawn Symes and a big group of owners including previous trainer John Boon and family and TROF member Alan Hawkin. As is usual for the stable, the horse was immaculately presented by Ann and Harvey Wilson.

John and Carol Lynskey part owned horse Doiknowyou had a good win at Wanganui and looks forward to the Winter Cup.

A new innovation at the Hawera Racecourse will be that Paul and Dale Moseley will be sponsoring a suitably labelled bottle of wine for the winning owners of each race—this hasn't been done in recent times. 🍷

MANAWATU MATTERS

ALLAN FENWICK

Much has been written about the performance at Awapuni in June of Aaron Kuru and Des De Jeu and rightly so. The superior skills of Aaron in remounting had to be seen to be believed. Then the performance and fitness of Des De Jeu to quickly get back into the field and then to outstay them all was just incredible.

Although the rider and horse were deserving of all the credits they received, behind them were some others steeped in racing. Trainer Mark Oulaghan is a master conditioner as we all know, and it was evident that he appreciated the time that the owners had given him in preparing this young horse for a jumping career.

Des De Jeu was bred by the Auret's Letham Stud and was initially prepared by Hamish Auret who has retained a share in the horse. Also, in the ownership are Dawn and Eddie Symes who raced the dam Desiderata, the winner of five races. Dawn and Eddie have raced a host of horses over the years. They won the 1990 Grand National Steeplechase with Thorley ridden by Graeme Lord. Masterton's John Meyer is a part owner and he has had horses with Mark in the past. The final partner is Palmerston North businessman Len Haydock, another who has had many wins with horses from the Oulaghan stable.

It was very appropriate that Des De Jeu won on this race day for Len. Through his Manawatu ITM business he was the sponsor of the Manawatu ITM Awapuni Hurdles. When the Club needed another sponsor on the day Len stepped up to the mark and agreed for another of his businesses ITM Frame and Truss to sponsor the Maiden Steeplechase. When it came to the presentation after this remarkable race it was son making the presentation to Dad!!



CENTRAL SOUTH ISLAND SAYINGS

FIONA HURST

Winter racing is in full swing with all its surrounding excitement.

Jumps racing is in full swing and the thrill of that was no more evident than Aaron Kuru's spectacular remount to win a steeplechase race. It just goes to show you never know what is around the corner in this game. The highs can be spectacular when racing horses and we should celebrate all the good that comes our way.

A little bit of good within our Association is the Points Series we are currently running, that is due to finish at the end of this month. In the nine years we have been running these series we have never had such a tight finish with four horses able to change

the top three places and only three meetings left.

In relation to the large amounts of money that 'swirl' around this industry our sum of \$3,500 that we give away to the winner and place getters of our points series is seemingly small, but I like to think it puts a big smile on the faces of the owners that receive the cheque in the post!

Due to the tight time frame I have left myself to write this article and major email difficulties that has left a lot of information locked up I am unable to divulge the in-depth details of recent winning owners and their horses.

I would like to say congratulations to all winners and wish them the best of luck for the remaining winter season which I hope includes success for all at

Southern Icon started his current campaign with a strong win at Te Rapa in his second start after a spell. Mighty Solomon ran second giving Michael Collinson the quinella. Mike also had a win with the promising Classy Lane at just her second start. She is raced by The Top Four Syndicate which includes several first-time owners.

The old team of John Roache, Mark and Fay Fearon and John Druce were in the winner's circle with Atenartin at the recent Marton meeting. Matthew Eales trains the Showcasing gelding who led all the way to score easily in the hands of Danielle Hirini. It was only his 5th start. It was a pity that Mark was in Australia at the time especially as the winning odds were very good

Libby and Sam Bleakley have now enjoyed two winning runs with Cornerstone, his latest success being at Awapuni in late May. They bred the Road to Rock gelding who is trained by Gary Vile.

Eepa Neema raced by member Elaine Vine recorded his 2nd win from his last four starts when he was successful at Egmont, again in the hands of Madan Singh. The Captain Rio mare is now trained by Fraser Auret.

Palmerston North owner Wayne Kitching recently bought a share in Platinum Command and has been rewarded with a win at Trentham and two or three placings from a handful of starts. The Red Giant mare has won a total of

nine races now. She is likely to go to stud this season.

Cam Arnott has a share in Rock Island Line a recent maiden winner. The three-year-old Rock'N'Pop gelding is trained by Lisa Latta.

Lady Lira has been a model of consistency in her racing career to date, a win and four placings from five starts. She was purchased by Andrew Forsman at the Ready to Run Sales last year. Member Logan Fenwick has syndicated a share amongst a group of mostly new owners, who are enjoying the experience.

Tim and Peter Gillespie share in the ownership of Ravenhill, who broke through maiden ranks late April after several placings. Peter also has shares in King Cougar and Art Deco both of whom have been to the fore recently. King Cougar, by Alamosa, has now won three of his seven starts from the stable of Mike Breslin. Art Deco, by Road to Rock has now won six races including a first up win this campaign. She was one of two wins for Wiremu Pinn on his first day of race riding.

Nadiasstar, raced by Peter and Christine Algie, was a recent winner at Woodville. They bred the Nadeem mare who is a half sister to their very good stayer Jackstar.

Another recent winner was Belle Canto, who was bred and is raced by the Brook Gilbert Partnership. The lightly raced mare is by Per Incanto and is trained by Roydon Bergerson.

KAMADA PARK 2018/219 POINTS SERIES FOR OWNERS

The Manawatu Thoroughbred Racehorse Owners' and The Central Districts Thoroughbred Breeders' Associations are combining, for the 2018/2019 season, to provide a Points Series for owners of horses that are members of either Association.

The respective Committees of both Associations have been keen to offer members something special, specific and positive as part of their membership. The Central South Island Association have run a similar competition for some years and thanks to their support and encouragement our Associations have agreed to do something similar.

Kamada Park has generously agreed to sponsor this year's competition and the Associations are indebted to Kevin Pratt for his support which has enabled a prize pool of \$5,000 to be offered. The big bonus is that entry is free.

Details have been sent to members of both Associations. Members are encouraged to get their entries in as soon as possible especially if you have a horse, which you intend to nominate, racing early in the new season.

CENTRAL REGIONAL RACING AWARDS

The 2018 Central Regional Awards Evening is likely to be held at Awapuni on Wednesday, 29 August. Keep a note of this in your diary as it is always a good evening.



Happy recent day at Timaru for Vice Marshall and connections.

the Winter Cup meeting at Riccarton next month.

Welcome to new members some of which are familiar faces, none are more familiar to me than Dianne McIntosh. Dianne lives in Waimate and local racegoers will recognise her face when they buy a coffee and sandwich at the races. Dianne owns a small catering business and is a wizard baker!!

Dianne worked for Mr. Richard Langford for many years and now has interests in horses with Steph Clark. Currently she has Skeen and Vice Marshall racing who have provided many a thrill over the last year or two.

Racing is obviously in the genes as Dianne's son Rick has entered the breeding game and has horses with Steph. Best of luck to them both and their charges.

THE OWNERS' FEDERATION WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

We wish to extend a very warm welcome to the new members who have joined the Owner's Federation from May to June 2018. We really appreciate your membership support and look forward to a long and enjoyable association with you.

AUCKLAND

John Newman ..... Ellerslie
Mrs LHM Salvidge ..... Te Atatu South

HAWKES BAY

Rob Kent ..... Ongaonga
Vicki McLean ..... Ongaonga
Mark & Louise Apatu ..... Hastings
Bruce & David Lumsden ..... Napier
Paddy Murphy ..... Napier

MANAWATU

G C Arnott ..... Palmerston North

WANGANUI

Judith Hewitt ..... Waitotara

CENTRAL SOUTH ISLAND

Alistair Eckhoff ..... Otarehua
Dianne McIntosh ..... Waimate



NZB Pearl Series

This season 40 lucky owners have received a significant winning stake increase by winning a NZ Bloodstock Pearl Series race. Next season and the following two seasons that lucky owner could be you, if you nominate your yearling filly for the series by the end of this month.

Any yearling filly bred in the Southern Hemisphere is eligible for the scheme, as long as she is nominated by 31 July 2018. And remember going into the next season only NZ Bloodstock Pearl Series Fillies and Mares races will carry the additional mid-week stake of \$12,500. So, as well as the stake additional bonuses of \$10,000 to the winning owner, \$1,000 to the trainer and \$500 for the nominator are available.

Furthermore, there is an additional \$20,000 worth of bonuses for a few select Saturday meetings.

Make sure you check out the details of the NZ Bloodstock Pearl Bonus Series, on the NZTBA website www.nzthoroughbred.co.nz or call Justine or Corrina on 0508 222 202.

Final Entry \$1200 plus GST closes 31 July 2018.

DON GORDON

*Rugby rep – Stock agent – Farmer –
Racehorse owner – Breeder*

TONY LYNDON

Eighty five years old Don Gordon was born in Greymouth the son of Douglas and Ada Gordon. His father employed by the N.Z. Post and Telegraph. The family shifted to Paeroa when he was 13 and he enrolled at Hamilton Boys High.

One of the boys in his class was Ron Hemi who became an All Black in the mid 50's playing in the position of hooker. A year later Don transferred to Thames High and Don made the 1st 15. The team was unbeaten in 5 years, the highlight was beating the Auckland Secondary School champions Sacred Heart 21-8 at Eden Park in 1953.

Don found employment with the Rangitikei Catchment Board and while there he represented Marton – Rangitikei and Wanganui provincial team. 1954 saw Don shifting north to Pukekohe to work for Loan and Mercantile as a stock clerk, then transferring in 1956 to Coromandel and 3 years later to Dannevirke where he was selected to play for Hawkes Bay. He pulled a muscle in his thigh leaving him on the side line when they played the British Lions.

It was while he was receiving Physiotherapy that he met Wendy Farquarson who he wed in 1961 and they had 4 children. Leaving Loan & Mercantile to join Borthwick's at Waipukurau he then bought a farm of 150 acres at Kaitaia and put a sharemilker on it. Playing for Thames Valley they beat the N.Z. Maoris, the papers reporting that he was the outstanding forward of the day, playing in his customary position at No 8.

Four years later selling the farm up north to buy 93 acres at Maraekakaho in Hawkes Bay, that grew to 220 acres fattening cattle and sheep and growing between 100 -120 acres of Lucerne.

Don entered the world of thoroughbred breeding with the purchase of two broodmares. One was a 16 year old mare by Foxbridge in foal to Landacre named Opuatia for 160 guineas and Installation a mare by Instinct for 65 guineas.

Transferring to Waitakaruru he met the Millar family who introduced him to Seton Otway the owner of the famous Trelawney Stud. Trelawney Stud stood the champion stallion Foxbridge as well as the top stallions

Khorassan and Marco Polo. On informing Seton Otway he owned Opuatia and her daughter Installation Seton made an offer to buy Installation. Don turned down the offer so Seton asked if he might be interested in going into a partnership on 50/50 basis with his wife Ruth.

He would provide the service to any of his stallions free of charge which also included grazing. It proved to be a wonderful partnership for 10 years. Opuatia suffering from old age had to be put down and Installation proved to be a shy breeder. Don was able to purchase Marlotion a daughter of Installation to breed Dornoch who won 6 races.

Don purchased Phareno in foal to Great Wall after she was passed in at the Claudelands Sale. The resulting foal was to become Mun Lee, the 1977-78 filly of the year. Mun Lee Chinese for Big Wall was to win 14 races including the Great Northern Oaks and the Group 1 Lion Brown sprint.

Unfortunately she met with a fatal accident at stud and Don also lost 2 full sisters, but Secrecy and War Cry were to carry on the family. Secrecy was Phareno's foal after Mun Lee and was noted for her speed winning 5 races, including an open sprint at Otaki, setting a new track record carrying the top weight.

War Cry by War Hawk didn't race but left 3 stake winners, Full Noise by Kaapstad was the best winning 7 races including a stakes race at Rosehill and was Group 1 placed. Political won 4 races and mated to the English Derby winner Generous left Liberal who became the dam of Survived.

Survived received his name because he was born, a weak runty foal who was not expected to live. Injury temporarily put his racing career on hold in 2015 but at that time he had won 7 races including the Group 1 Makfi Stakes and The Hawkes Bay Cup. He is now racing in Australia where he has been a winner.

THE BOSTONIAN – a double-hat trick in just two seasons

SALLY BLYTH

Auckland Association Member David Archer's horse The Bostonian has been racing in Australia throughout June and has put together a superb hat trick of wins. Despite some setbacks and bad luck, including getting bitten on the nose by a spider or ant and having to be scratched, The Bostonian started his winning crusade by taking out the Listed Daybreak Lover 3YO Plate on 10th June. The race had been switched from Doomben to Caloundra for weather reasons, but the rains came to the Sunshine Coast. The Heavy 8 track didn't worry The Bostonian who won well and paid a very nice price.

Next up was the QTIS 3YO Plate at Doomben on a Good 3 track on 23rd June. The Bostonian led throughout and won by 1.75L. This time the price reflected his obvious ability and the confidence in him.

Then came the big race, the Group III Sunshine Coast Guineas on 30th June. The Bostonian ran a beauty, cruising to the lead upon turning for home and staying there with relative ease. His favouritism was fully justified, it was a textbook ride. Back to a Heavy 8 track, which he handled well, and guided nicely by jockey Michael Cahill, it would have been thrills all round for trainer Tony Pike and owner David Archer.

Clocking up three wins in a row like that is pretty special. But it's not the first time...

Interestingly, he began his career in similar style, with a hat trick of wins.

First up, after a convincing trial win, was a strong win in his first race, a 2YO maiden race at Avondale (March, 2017). That was followed by an easy win in the Fasttrack Insurance 2YO race at Hastings in April 2017 and then he took out the Listed El Roca – Sir Colin Meads Trophy on 2nd September 2017. The latter race was a very tight fought affair with Bostonian (no "The" on this side of the Tasman) winning a two-horse-war by a mere nose.

There had been thoughts of bringing The Bostonian back home rather than persevering through the challenges that presented themselves in Queensland. Happily, they had been abandoned and the story had a very happy ending. Alas, racing in the Queensland Guineas as initially planned, had not been possible, but The Bostonian may get to run in Sydney or Melbourne when the spring carnivals come around. Exciting times for this highly promising gelding and his connections. We wish them well. ➤





STUD CHAT WITH SAM JULY 2018



Exciting times with **Per Incanto's** seasonal stake earnings topping 5 million and our new stallion **Time Test** (Dubawi-Passage of Time by Dansili) due to arrive on 27 July. He'll be paraded at the farm on Sunday the 5th of August at 2pm. We look forward to you joining us.

It's been a big couple of big months for sire sons of **Dubawi**. For me a sireline must demonstrate that its sons can bred on. Makfi, who sired his 25th stakes winner recently was a great start and another of Dubawi's first sons to go to stud Poet's Voice has been on fire lately capped by his son Poet's Word defeat of the mighty Cracksman in the Group 1 at Royal Ascot. Connections are contemplating a trip down under to take on Winx at Moonee Valley.

The fact that we've got a Dubawi son with an electric turn of foot and a mum who was a Group 1 winning 2YO makes me happier than a mossie at a nudist colony.

Ryder Stakes bound **Lady Lira** (Per Incanto-Miss Moneytree by Pins) was the tenth 2YO winner this season either bred and/or raised off the farm. I haven't deliberately set out to change our winning formula of successfully breeding classic and older horses, it's been simple genetics really.

They've proven this season how good they are as older horses but **Per Incanto's** progeny are generally that naturally athletic they'll run early. We've also injected some Australian blood, mating some mares over there and buying some mares.

New York Minute's black-type victory was double cause for celebration. She was the 10th stakes winner off the farm this season and she was bred by some great clients in the Spyglass Hill Syndicate.

Come and see what all the fuss is about on the 5th. There'll be some of that famous LA mulled wine to warm you up, not that you'll need it when you see the new boy, **Time Test**.



A DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE FUTURE IN RACING BY SALLY BLYTH

The Deputy Chair of New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing, Victoria Carter, in speaking at the 37th Asian Racing Conference in Seoul in May, referred to diversity in racing and called for more involvement of women in the industry.

Traditionally, many sporting codes have been male dominated. As far as racing goes, women have been taking up the reins and becoming more active, visible and vocal at many levels, perhaps more so than in other sports where split male/female codes are the norm. But there is still some way to go to attain true gender balance.

There are plenty of talented female jockeys, trainers, breeders and owners. The racing media is being peppered more and more with female personalities. Women go to the races in droves to enjoy a day out in an environment where the gender of the racehorses may be important but that of the racegoing public is not. Many roles connected with raceday are undertaken by both males and females – tote operators, wait staff, admin staff, strappers etc. Gender is irrelevant, and everyone mucks in together.

Female representation is, however, lacking when it comes to stipendiary stewards and clerks of the course, who are predominantly men. More commentary from women wouldn't go amiss and having more female movers and shakers in leadership roles at executive and board level would be pleasing.

Having said that, the most important thing is that whoever has whatever role also has the knowledge, personality and capability to carry it out effectively, regardless of gender. This is essential, especially in an industry going through such challenges and changes as NZ racing. Taking the leap beyond brainstorming, wish-lists, discussions, planning and self-serving, and actually getting

things done, is paramount. The Messara Report is under way and one can only hope it will provide a platform for positive action.

Initiatives have been introduced recently around the world to involve more women in racing. These include a commitment to inclusion (UK), syndicates aimed at women (USA) and areas and offerings at racecourses dedicated specifically to women (Japan). Some would argue that the latter two are not so much in the interests of diversity but more of exclusivity; then again, it's about building on the local situation and taking into account cultural nuances and traditions.

As far as race callers go, this is an area where there is a distinct lack of women globally. Australia has Victoria Shaw who called her first race in 1998, 50 years after Australia's first female race caller Pamela Knox O'Connor who made her first and final call in 1948. Hayley Moore is the UK's first female commentator. She is also a jockey and form analyst, and sister of world class jockey Ryan Moore. Hayley says that since she's been race calling, she hasn't come across other women who have expressed an interest in it. She loves it and wonders why this is the case. "I don't think it's sexist though, because you can't say something is male-dominated when women don't want to do it." We have great race callers in New Zealand – perhaps one day we'll have a great female race caller.

Racing thrives on tradition, but it can get stuck in the past. Introducing new initiatives and thinking towards the future is imperative for survival.

Beyond the gender issue, a priority is to address how to lure and involve young people, sooner rather than later and with longevity in mind. We need racegoers, race administrators and race visionaries that will take the game into a vibrant future. Enticing and retaining them now is vital.

As a social occasion a day at the races is a great option for young people but often the racing itself is an extra rather than a feature. How many young people spend the entire day on course with friends and yet barely see a horse? How many make a bit of lucky money but have no idea which horse or stable enabled that? How many view the outing as nothing more than a party they may not have much recollection of?

So many layers of this complex sport are largely hidden from the layman and newcomer. It takes time to appreciate the intricacies and racing needs to attract a new generation, both male and female, who can grasp the many elements and take the industry into a successful future.

With strong strategy, fresh ideas and a forward-thinking inclusive approach, a bold and robust base of enthusiastic and capable young men and women can be generated. A compelling and attractive hook will draw them in. It is then up to the industry to embrace them, inform them and retain them beyond the happy punter stage. Young people today understand the value of equality, are well-resourced, aren't afraid to explore opportunities and push boundaries and they are the ones who will facilitate the racing potential of tomorrow. Let's go find them. 🐾



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NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHBRED
**HORSE OF
THE YEAR
AWARDS**

2018 NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHBRED HORSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS **FINALISTS**

THE STRENGTH OF NEW ZEALAND'S TWO LEADING STABLES IS ILLUSTRATED BY THE FIRST BATCH OF FINALISTS FOR THE 2018 NEW ZEALAND THOROUGHBRED HORSE OF THE YEAR AWARDS.

New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR) have announced the finalists for five of the six racehorse categories, with the finalists for Jumper of the Year to be determined later this month.

Half of the 22 flat finalists are trained by either the Cambridge partnership of Murray Baker and Andrew Forsman or the Te Akau team of Stephen Autridge and Jamie Richards.

All finalists are eligible for the Horse of the Year title, which will be announced at a gala dinner in Auckland, at Ellerslie Racecourse, on Sunday, August 26.

Baker and Forsman, who have established a record tally in the trainers' premiership this term, prepare all four finalists in the middle-distance category – reigning Horse of the Year Bonneval, Jon Snow, Lizzie L'Amour and Saint Emilion – and will also be represented by Vodafone New Zealand Derby winner Vin De Dance and Sydney Cup placegetter Zacada.

The Group 1-winning juveniles Advantage and Sword Of Osman give Autridge and Richards a strong presence in the juvenile category and the stable will also be represented by Gingernuts and the three-year-olds Embellish and Age of Fire.

Gingernuts is a finalist in the sprinter-miler category, which has been reintroduced this year.

THE FINALISTS ARE:

Champion Two-Year-Old:

Avantage, Melt, Spanish Whisper, Sword Of Osman.

Champion Three-Year-Old:

Age Of Fire, Dijon Bleu, Embellish, Savvy Coup, Scott Base, Vin De Dance.

Sprinter-Miler (up to 1600m):

Close Up, Gingernuts, Kawi, Start Wondering.

Champion Middle Distance (1601m-2200m):

Bonneval, Jon Snow, Lizzie L'Amour, Saint Emilion.

Champion stayer (2201m and further):

Charles Road, Five To Midnight, Ladies First, Zacada.

LAMING STABLES

Going places in Australia

BY SALLY BLYTH

Laming Racing is a go-ahead operation with an emphasis on excellence. Run by father and son Bevan and Richard Laming, it's a joint effort. Bevan runs the Jacobs Well/Gold Coast operation and Richard is solely in charge of the Clyde/Cranbourne (Victoria) Stables.



The current stables at Clyde will soon be relocating to brand new stables which are under construction and within walking distance from the Cranbourne Training Complex. The 80-acre property at Clyde has been sold to developers for new housing (there is huge development in the surrounding area) and the move, planned for early December, will be the beginning of an exciting new phase for the stables.

The facilities at Clyde were comprehensive but the new complex is a step beyond. In addition to having full use of the state-of-the-art facilities at Cranbourne, the new Laming Racing complex will have two walkers, two treadmills, day yards and five barns (76 boxes). The office will also be located on site.

Bevan and Richard have simple philosophies that resonate with owners: feeding horses well; placing them in the right races; encouraging patience; and ensuring that all the horses are well cared for in a relaxed environment. They are direct, open and honest, giving frank assessments about each horse, which is just what an owner wants. If they think you've got a beauty, they'll let you know. If it's not looking like a prospective champ, they'll let you know that too. A poor result or a below-par ride is disappointing for trainers as well as owners, and Richie is up-front in expressing his thoughts. Standards and expectations are high, reality is acknowledged. Owners will not have to read between the lines.

Each week a video newsletter is sent out to all owners, giving a run-down of the previous week's results, a preview of upcoming runners and their chances, an update on progress at the new facilities and a short get-to-know interview with staff members. These are fun, engaging and enlightening – a must-click when received in the in-box. The website is regularly updated with the day's current runners listed and comprehensive overviews of what's happening in Laming land and the team are active on social media.



Happy owners of Meridian Star celebrating at Merimbula (NSW), February 2018

Bevan and Richie are devoted to raceday success. Bevan has been training horses successfully for 45 years and Richie, having absorbed his father's worldly knowledge, is an outstanding horseman in his own right. Their combined talents and passion are a recipe for success. The pair are extremely selective when purchasing a racehorse or yearling. They regularly have horses available and are happy to share all the info with prospective owners.

Horses are taken far and wide, including recently to Darwin where they had a happy win in the warmth with Folk Tales.

Meanwhile, stable star Jamaican Rain took out the 1500m BM84 handicap under Brian Park at Moonee Valley on 2nd June. This hugely talented 5YO then travelled up to the Sunshine Coast and landed the listed Glasshouse Handicap prize on 30th June at Caloundra. Ridden by Tegan Harrison on a Heavy 8 track, Jamaican Rain scored an easy victory by 3.75L. This win topped off a hat-trick, with an easy 6L win at Cranbourne back on 11th May (1200m, Heavy 10). The Laming's are buzzing and it's not hard to understand why this horse is a stable favourite.

We wish the Laming's well with everything they have going on – talented horses, a winning formula and an exciting future.

www.lamingstables.com.au

NB: Richard Laming has received two separate charges in early July for a prohibited substance – one for triamcinolone and one for cobalt detected in blood samples taken from two horses. Laming Racing advised all owners prior to the news being released and has provided explanation and background, stating that the readings were low. Stewards are investigating.



THE PHOTO OF MONARCH CHIMES ON OUR COVER IS A STUNNER AND LED ME TO ASK PETER RUBERY, THE PRINCIPAL OF RACE IMAGES, HOW IT WAS TAKEN. HERE IS HIS ANSWER...

These are taken with a camera placed under or beside the jumps. I use two camera's for under the jumps photos, one a full frame camera and the other a GoPro. These are wrapped in camouflage tape.

The Monarch Chimes photo to be used on the cover of the Bulletin was on the GoPro. It takes two photos a second, and is left running for the entire race. Later in the day I scroll through over 2500 images to find any that have captured that magic moment... in this case the leap into the sun at Hawke's Bay.

Over the seasons I have loaded hundreds of jumping photos to our website, they really show the moment and the jockeys just love them, especially on our photo blocks. I seem to be caught regularly on Trackside running into the jumps to collect my camera after the horses have past and get lots of questions about what I'm up to!



www.raceimages.co.nz

HONG KONG RACING'S BRAVE NEW WORLD

IS THERE ANYTHING THEY HAVEN'T THOUGHT OF?

The Hong Kong Jockey Club's magnificent new Conghua Training Centre is due to open in mainland China in August. And it looks set to be a gamechanger, elevating the jurisdiction still further in world racing. Kristen Manning reports.

For two decades, the Hong Kong Jockey Club has been keen to expand. It has had the financial means, the motive of a flourishing local racing industry and the support of all those involved. What it did not have was space.

When the Club was formed by a group of enthusiastic racing fans in November 1844, finding a suitable location for a racetrack was not so much of an issue, and Happy Valley was built a year later on what used to be swampland, the first meeting taking place in 1846.

And racing in Hong Kong has not looked back, Sha Tin established on reclaimed land in 1978. It is now home to the Longines Hong Kong International Race Day each December, a day that racegoers Down Under keep a close eye on, with the likes of Sunline, Falvelon, Monopolize, Catalan Opening, Our Grey Invader, Kessem and Romanee Conti proving great representatives for Australasia.

The competition has gotten tougher in recent years, with Australian and New Zealand runners finding it harder to get into the winner's circle, although several of the big day's major stars have carried (AUS) and (NZ) suffixes; such as Silent Witness, Sacred Kingdom, Fairy King Prawn and Vengeance Of Rain.

INITIAL AIM REALISED

December 2017 was dominated by locally trained horses, but the International Sprint winner Mr Stunning, a son of Exceed And Excel, was bred in Australia while Beauty Generation proved too strong for his rivals in the International Mile. The New Zealand-bred son of Road To Rock raced in Australia as Montaigne, winning at Randwick and finishing second to Tazirino in the G1 Rosehill Guineas.

The success of the day is something that the Hong Kong Jockey Club's Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges is extremely proud of, especially as it has realised its initial aim: to enhance the overall quality of Hong Kong racing and horses.

It was 1998 that saw the first Hong Kong-trained horse, Johan Cruyff, make it into the international rankings (now the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings), a figure that increased to eight in 2008, to 21 by 2013 and 26 in 2016. Some eight percent of the world's highest-rated horses call Hong Kong home and all 11 of Sha Tin's major races feature in the world's top 100 G1 races, according to the Longines/IFHA (International Federation of Horseracing Authorities) figures.



But still there are limitations, with the 22 trainers currently working in Hong Kong permitted a maximum of 60 horses each and the current equine population capped at 1,230. The racing is competitive and exciting but there is a lengthy waiting list of owners, who wait four years for a permit, and the Club is keen to increase the numbers.

ALLURING POSSIBILITY

For two decades it wondered how. "We tried for years to source land but it was impossible," Engelbrecht-Bresges said. And then along came the 2010 Asian Games at Guangzhou, two years after Sha Tin was used to house the horses competing in the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

From which an alluring possibility arose. There is plenty of space in China.

And so an agreement was reached to purchase and develop "a major piece of land" in Conghua, 139 km north of Hong Kong.

Known for its hot springs, Conghua is already a popular destination for local tourists, and its Mayor, recognising that the presence of the Hong Kong Jockey Club is only going to increase awareness, has been supportive.

Not that all has been smooth sailing, Engelbrecht-Bresges describing the development of the Conghua Training Centre as "probably the most demanding and significant project the Club has ever undertaken".

"We have overcome many challenges," he said, "from establishing the first equine disease-free zone in China... to obtaining special permission for cross-border transportation of horses, for our veterinarians to practise in China, to be able to import feed and medication and to establish the first comprehensive equine clinic on the mainland."

All the time keeping in mind that gambling is prohibited, the Club worked hard to establish good working links with officials while its overriding aim for a new training centre was to build something perfect for trainers, owners, riders and workers and, most of all, for the horses.

"The horse comes first," said John Ridley, Director Of Capital Racing Projects. "A happy horse gives his best."

And so the Hong Kong Jockey Club has worked to ensure that Conghua is a showpiece Thoroughbred establishment, one that consists of a 2000m turf track (a 400m home straight with a one percent rise and a 674m home bend with transitional curves) with the same grass profile as Sha Tin, as well as large and small all-weather tracks, two trotting rings and an 1100m turf uphill gallop sloped at a continuous 1.5 percent.

Eight single story and one double story stable blocks for horses in training are designed to accommodate two trainers per divided stable, each with 34 stables and eight turn-out yards per wing, as well as two larger-than-usual isolated stallion stalls, inside and outside wash stalls and two covered walking machines.

In total, there are 664 individual CCTV monitored stalls, serviced by an equine clinic, chilled salt-water spas, aqua treadmills, a water walker, a covered and heated 70m long swimming pool and 20 turf paddocks with shelter, feed bins and automatic water.

IDEAL ENVIRONMENT FOR STALLION PROSPECTS

Horses will never come into contact with vehicles, with each having its own access ways, while deliveries will be made away from the stables so as not to cause any disruption.

>>

An 1100m turf uphill gallop sloped at a continuous 1.5 percent is a feature of the complex



The owners' lounge at Conghua will be impressively equipped.



PHOTOS: HONG KONG JOCKEY CLUB

The provision of paddocks in a quiet area beyond the stables and tracks is a significant step for the Hong Kong Jockey Club with Engelbrecht-Bresges recognising that Sha Tin is, particularly for young horses, "an intense environment".

It will enable horses to be imported at a younger age as they can now be given time to develop and mature and to acclimatize and, along with the stallion boxes, it will also be easier to keep promising males entire.

"Our prize money levels are attractive, but we need to keep adding value to the ownership experience," Engelbrecht-Bresges said, noting that Hong Kong is the ideal environment to produce stallion prospects.

"Our racing is of a high quality, it is substance-free and breeders know that a stallion who has raced in Hong Kong is genetically sound and not influenced by medication."

It was a timely discussion given that Archipenko (who sadly died recently), winner at Sha Tin of the G1 Queen Elizabeth II Cup in 2008 was represented by a big winner at this year's International meeting, Time Warp impressively claiming the G1 Hong Kong International Cup.

Meanwhile, winning in Hong Kong in recent years has done plenty to enhance the reputation of such stud prospects of Maurice, Lord Kanaloa and Highland Reel.

Chosen as one of the first trainers to complement his Sha Tin stables with a base at Conghua is Caspar Fownes, who said that he "feels very privileged" to be part of the new establishment.

"It is an outstanding state-of-the-art training complex, with access to several beneficial facilities that we don't normally have access to in Hong Kong, such as spelling paddocks, uphill gallops and water walkers. I am sure that I will be able to use the set up to my advantage."

Conghua is designed, said John Ridley, with "further expansion in mind. We can continue to grow over time"

Not only is there room for more stables and tracks, but space has been allotted for the equine clinic to expand with future plans for MRI, CT and scintigraphy equipment. Such a high standard is the veterinary care that Dr Christopher Riggs, Head Of Veterinary Clinical Services, joked: "If I were a horse, I know where I'd want to live!"

A major challenge in the establishment of Conghua has been assuring that racehorses never come into contact with disease. The welfare of horses is paramount, firstly for their own wellbeing and secondly for the economy of both horse racing and Hong Kong.

"We will not compromise on horse health," Engelbrecht-Bresges said, noting that the Hong Kong Jockey Club pays HK\$12 billion in taxes each year, around four to five percent of Hong Kong's revenue. "And so the government do not want us to take any risks either."

Security at Conghua is exceptionally tight (comings and goings monitored not only by the Club but by government officials) and the training centre is in the midst of a 2000 square km horse-free zone. And there are no horses 1km each side of the freeway en route. "Even if horses have to be unloaded for any reason, there will be no contact with local horses," said Dr Brian Stewart, Head Of Veterinary Regulation and Biosecurity Policy.

ELECTRIFIED FENCING AND BURIED CONCRETE

Mindful that diseases such as rabies are present in China, Dr Stewart added that the 2.3 metre high electrified fencing (supported by 600mm of buried concrete to prevent burrowing) surrounding Conghua is specially designed to make it impossible for a wild animal to penetrate the borders.

"There is just so much at stake," he said, while admitting that "the greatest risk is people". Which is why strict protocols, overseen by quarantine officials from around the world, are in place while everyone involved is highly trained and experienced.

"Hong Kong has safely imported and exported thousands of horses over the past 25 years," Dr Stewart noted, "and we have successfully managed international racing events, temporarily importing up to 40 Thoroughbreds from many countries each year. Our disease surveillance and preventative health measures are second to none."

At present, every horse in Hong Kong has its temperature taken twice daily, with every horse displaying fever symptoms immediately tested. "This is the most effective and sensitive early detection system."

Around 450 people (including strappers, track riders and farriers) have been seconded from Hong Kong to work at Conghua while locals (over 1,500 applied when 100 stable-assistant positions were advertised and there were similar numbers for riders) will be trained at the Huangcun Sports Institute. Twenty five track riders, who also spend time at Sha Tin, have been in training since 2016.

Another challenge for the Hong Kong Jockey Club has been convincing local owners that sending their horses across the border is a good idea.

The typical Hong Kong owner is very involved with his or her horse, and the typical resident rarely has the need to spend much time travelling. Nor are they used to their horses spending much time in floats.

And so the Club is producing a regular newsletter to keep owners up to date, one assurance coming in the form of international comparison. "To take a common English route, the journey is roughly the distance from York to Newmarket," said KL Cheng, Head Of Dual Site Stable Operations and Owners' Services.

Dedicated travel grooms have been trained and each convoy of trucks will be accompanied by a security car, a veterinarian and a mechanic. The journey is monitored with live GPS tracking with CCTV vision (and recording) of each horse and regular reporting to control centres at Sha Tin and Conghua.

MINIMUM BORDER CHECKS

Several successful horse-movement trials have already been undertaken. In total 18 will have taken place, the trip taking just under five hours. There are only minimum border checks with a customs clearing station built at Conghua. Once everything is in full swing there will be return journeys twice a week; up one day, back the next.

The floats are specially designed with the comfort of both grooms and horses paramount. "Each horse will have its own enclosed stall yet will be able to see, hear and smell the horses next to it," Dr Riggs said. "The horses have space to allow them to lower their heads to the ground, which is important for their health. And we want the horses relaxed for the longer distance travel."

Relaxed is also the word to describe how the visiting owner will feel with a customized luxury coach on hand to ferry to Conghua those keen to see their horses, while an impressively equipped owners' lounge is serviced by owners' ambassadors.

Monthly barrier trials will be conducted at Conghua, and owners with runners will be entitled to a free package, consisting of transport, overnight accommodation and meals at a five-star resort, with local sightseeing and golf expeditions arranged.

And so it seems that there has not been a stone left unturned. It has undoubtedly been an enormous project with contributions from a wide variety of experts. Unfortunately, there are ongoing issues with the Australian Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, which has so far refused to grant approval, which led to no Australian representation at the 2017 meeting. Australian horses can go, it is just hard for them to return (a six-month New Zealand stopover required).

In the meantime, the HKJC looks forward to the Conghua opening in August, after which some HK\$1.5 billion will be spent on renovating Sha Tin.

There is no resting on laurels in Hong Kong. "We strive for excellence in everything we do," Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges said.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO FEDERATION MEMBERS ON THEIR RECENT WINS!

We continue to track winning horses owned by Owner's Federation members. As we only have visibility of owner's named in the race book, we know we will have missed members involved in winning syndicates and may have inadvertently missed others. We apologise to any member we have missed and extend our congratulations to all members who have recently experienced the thrill of winning.

Ms J R Alexander	Tauranga	COSSACK WARRIOR	G J Jones	Auckland City	TOMELILLA, MIDNIGHT RUNNER,
P M & Mrs C A Algie	Greytown	NADIASSTAR	P G & Mrs E L Karton	Tauranga	MCCARTNEY
M N Apatu	Hastings	XPRESSION	D W Lake	Ashburton	MCCARTNEY
G C Arnott	Palmerston North	CARNABY	Mrs N M Leicester	Remuera	EASY WALKING
P Bardell	Wanganui	MAUNA KEA	C A Leishman	Ellerslie	SURREY
W H & Mrs E Z Beachen	Napier	KOTAHI	B J & Mrs J E A Lindsay	Karaka	HANGER, REEVEDERCI
Bleakley Bloodstock	Palmerston North	CORNERSTONE	T G Lines	Papakura	CAPTAIN ORANGE
P H & Mrs C J Brown	Matamata	BLUETWENTYTWO	Little Avondale Trust	Masterton	TURFSHAKER
A J & Mrs J W Cameron	Napier	ELLE EYE ARE	P W & Mrs P A Lock	Te Aroha	SHE'S ALL CLANG
F P Campbell	Hastings	SCANDALO	B I Lumsden	Napier	RIPPING
J G Carran	Otautau	SMILING ASSASSIN	D M Lumsden	Napier	TUIGOLD
T P Coffey	Taradale	MYRTLE	D P H & Mrs J M Lunn	Hamilton	IMBLAZE
M A Collinson	Feilding	CARNABY, SOUTHERN ICON	A A Lyndon	Hastings	CARNABY
A B Coombe	Paeroa	SWISS HAZE, ROCKING GOOD TIME	P J & Mrs C J Lynskey	New Plymouth	DOIKNOWYOU
R A & Mrs J DCoupland	Christchurch	COUP DREAMWOOD	Marthas Kitchen	Waihi	MAKDANIFE
Ms F B Crammins	Papakura	SASANOF'S HERO	Ms D A Masters	Palmerston North	SECRET ALLURE
D M Crozier	Christchurch	DAMANAKA	Mrs D J McIntosh	Waimate	VICE MARSHALL
M P Daly	Timaru	OMAR	N D R McKerchar	Tauranga	COSSACK WARRIOR
P G Doughty	Te Aroha	DEFER	J S Mee	Invercargill	SHAKTI
A J & Mrs D I Dravitzki	Inglewood	RAZORS EDGE, THE BIG OPAL	D C & Ms J E Morison	Havelock North	RIPPIN
JRJI Drinkwater	Wellington	ON POINT	P M Murphy	Napier	PETITE MIDAS
F T & Mrs F I Drummond	Pukeatua	EL LUCHADOR	D E & E Y Nakhle	Takanini	NEESON
A Eckhoff	Oturehua	THE QUIET MAN	P S & Mrs C Nelson	Hastings	NO CHANGE, PESO, KINGS DEEP
Emblem Ltd	Papakura	TIPICAL	B G & DG Neville-White	Remuera	SAFFRON LADY
G S & Mrs S A Fausett	Rotorua	BIG MIKE	J Newman Family Trust	Ellerslie	DREAMCRAFTER, KANE
D V & Mrs A M Fea	Queenstown	ANIMATOR	B K O'Dea	Wanganui	MAUNA KEA
W M & Mrs F L Fearon	Palmerston North	LUBAYA, GOLDEN BAY	D A O'Leary	Wanganui	OVERTHERIVER
A R & Mrs S J Fenwick	Marton	CARNABY	S L Painton	Silverdale	LADY PAINTON
J P & Mrs G J Flynn	Hastings	ONAWING	Pee Gee Bloodstock	Palmerston North	KING COUGAR, ART DECO
Ms K Funnell	Wellington	SULIMAN	W K Pomare	Rotorua	DONNA ANNE BILLY
W D Gatland	Hamilton	AZABOY	A J Porter	Foxton	DEUCE COUPE
Gilbert Partnership	Lower Hutt	BELLE CANTO	D N & Dame Wendy Pye	Auckland	SPEEDY JAX
P G Gillespie	Mt Maunganui	RAVENHILL	Ms K A M Remetis	Matamata	SOROC
T P Gillespie	Auckland	RAVENHILL	J A Roache	Marton	LUBAYA, GOLDEN BAY
Go Racing	Herne Bay	BRAHMARAHMA, RAPOSA RAPIDA, BELLE TESTA, BLACK PEARL	L M & Mrs C J Robinson	Christchurch	FIRE LILY
Dame Lowell Goddard	Wellington	LUBAYA	G A Rogerson	Hamilton	WHY ME, SURREY, MCCARTNEY, PIERIAN SPRING
C J Grace	Hamilton	HIGHER AUTHORITY, VEE TWELVE	L H M Salvidge	Te Atatu South	CONTESSA VANESSA
S C & G C Green	Ashburton	MEDIA SENSATION	Sandringham Investments	Matamata	BLUETWENTYTWO
Mrs J H Harley	Brightwater	WAY TOO EASY	G R Shewan	Hamilton	BLUETWENTYTWO
T O Harrison	Parnell	ALL THE TALK	L W Somervell	Cambridge	IMPULSIVE HABIT
Haunui Bloodstock	Papakura	MARZEMINO	J B Struthers	Takapuna	HE'S UNFORGETTABLE
A J Hawken	Waverley	JUSTA CHARLIE	C P & Mrs L J Thompson	Urenui	TUTTA LA CLASSE
G J & Miss L A Hennessy	Timaru	OMAR	J C & Mrs M A Thompson	Howick	TIPICAL
Mrs J C Hewitt	Wanganui	MAUNA KEA	K J Tod	Palmerston North	GOLDEN BAY
K J Hickman	Christchurch	BELLA COURT, JOE CARGO, ZENTESSA	Sir Peter Vela	Hamilton	DEVIL MAY CARE, SLEEPING BEAUTY
R H & Mrs M A Hood	Levin	FLY TO THE SKY	Ms E Vine	Petone	EEPA NEEMA
K E & Mrs D J Hopson	Cambridge	IFFITEL	K R Williams	Napier	GOLDEN BAY
G E Horton	Hastings	CARNABY	R J Wiltshire	Palmerston North	LUBAYA
Dr A T & Mrs C M Jackson	Auckland	DANCILLA	Mrs S L Wood	Napier	ONE PRIZE ONE GOAL
P W Johnstone	Pakowhai	CARNABY	B A Yanko	Havelock North	CARNABY



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