



OTI GAZETTE

The official newsletter of OTI RACING and Management



IN THIS WEEK'S EDITION

WELCOME

OTI NEWS

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Welcome to this first edition of OTI's newsletter. While it has been decided to introduce the Newsletter during this challenging period, we hope that it proves of sufficient value for it to continue into the longer term. In the short term we propose to distribute it every Saturday AM.

As a result the Newsletter will tend to have a light-hearted flavour as we go through the challenging months ahead. Human history tells us that humour in difficult times is most welcome. That's not to say that we will not include articles of a more serious nature that we think may be interesting to you.

Hermione FitzGerald has kindly volunteered to act as the "editor". I'm sure she will welcome any feedback you may wish to offer. In the meantime enjoy, stay healthy and pray for an early recovery to normality

Terry Henderson

OTI NEWS

Is racing on or off? It is an ever evolving situation, but at the time of writing racing is going ahead in Australia with strict protocols and procedures in place.

Over the weekend at Rosehill:

QUICK THINKER takes his place in R3 Tulloch Stakes Group 2 over 2000m for Murray Baker and Andrew Forsman, with James McDonald in the saddle. He will appreciate the step up in trip after finishing 3rd on his last start at the same track.

NIGHT'S WATCH will run in R4 Neville Sellwood Stakes Group 3 over 2000m for Chris Waller and James McDonald. The horse is well, and from the tricky barrier of 11, we hope to see him finish off strongly through the line.

In R9, the final race of the day **GAILO CHOP** will resume his preparation for Matty Williams and Glen Boss when starting over 1500m in the Doncaster Prelude Group 3, and as we hoped the ground appears to be on the soft side.

In Queensland **LE JUGE** lines in in R3 Open Handicap over 2200m for Chirs Waller and Robbie Fradd. Settling and relaxing early in the race is the aim, so stays the distance and finishes off strongly.

At Bendigo, **HAKY** returns after a spell for Archie Alexander in the Golden Mile over 1600m. The European import has transitioned into the Australian training regime well, and we look forward to seeing him start his campaign.

URBAN LUMBERJACK has a nomination to run on Sunday at Sale in R8 BM70 over 1400m for Mitch Freedman.

DOROZA was a deserved winner at Ballarat on Sunday for Matt Cumani. Matt has always had a lot of faith in the horse, loving how tough he is and the desire to try. He is now being aimed at some BM64 races in the next few weeks.



CORNCRAKE made it two wins on the bounce in his first preparation in Australia for Matt Smith. A brilliantly judged ride by Hugh Bowman saw this horse relax nicely in a steadily run race. He continues to improve and will have some nice assignments looking ahead.



Q & A MATT SMITH

How did you get involved in racing?

I grew up in Wangaratta in Victoria, and my father was President of the local race club. We used to spend our weekends at the races, and Dad had horses in training with Dennis Gray and Hal Hoysted. I grew up around the horses and just loved everything about them, and it went from there.

What do you love most about training?

I love the challenge of each horse as an individual, and learning what makes each one tick, and finding the key to getting the best out of them. I really feel very privileged to be working every day in the stables with these amazing animals.

What is your proudest achievement so far in the business?

Of course the Gr1 winners, but I'm also proud of the business that Mel and I have built, and the jobs we provide. We started out with a few horses at Warwick Farm, and have worked really hard to grow the business, and so to now have a barn of 50 racehorses and the clientele we do, well I that is something I am very proud of.

You worked for Aidan O'Brien, in Ireland. How was that, and how has that experience helped you when training European Imports?

No doubt working in Ireland does give me an advantage when getting the European horses terms of what preparations might or might not suit them. Obviously the way they train in Europe is so different to how we train here and have that knowledge first hand it really useful. Working for Aidan was an incredible experience in terms of the quality of the racehorses I was dealing with day in day out.

You also worked for Bart Cummings, which must have been a fantastic experience too? What do learn from him?

Working for Bart was a brilliant experience, he threw me into the front line and got dealing with the owners, and all the aspects of that including the up and downs. If I compare my two experiences I'd say my experience with Bart was more rounded, as with Aidan I was focused only on the horses as it was a private set up

What similarities in training, or personality do you find both Aidan and Bart had?

The way they both trained was very different, as it is with Australia and Europe, as well as training on the racetrack versus a private property. The things they both had in common was their attention to detail. No stone was left unturned, and their dedication to their jobs was very similar.



Covid 19 has undoubtedly affected us all one way or another. How have you adapted working practices?

We've had to put a lot of rules in place for staff, and checking on their living arrangements to make sure people understood that they really needed to isolate outside of work, and how important it was. We are doing temperature checks before work in the mornings and afternoons too. We've changed routines at the track too, keeping the horses and staff separated as much as possible.

Outside of racing, and if you have time what how do you relax?

I really enjoy getting back to Wangaratta, Bright and the High Plains and getting back to nature, and a bit of fishing and things like that. On Sundays I try and watch my son play football, and my daughter ride. Family time is important. I love to read, I start a lot of books, but not sure how many I've finished! Sounds boring but I really try and rest and relax when I can. In racing the hours are very long, and when things are going well you don't want to take your foot off the gas, and when things are not going so well you feel like you've got to do more and more, but I have learnt being fatigued does not help at all.

FUN & GAMES

1. Who came 1st, 2nd and 3rd in 2020 The Golden Slipper?
2. In which year did Makybe Diva win her first Melbourne Cup?
3. In which state was Bart Cummings born, and where did he first start training?

NAME THE RACECOURSE?



Clue - Close to a Unesco World Heritage Site thought to have been constructed in 3000BC

WHO IS THIS?

- Winner of the Listed Sandown Cup
- By Dansili out of Love Me Hold Me
- Winner of \$473,956 in Australia



REFLECTIONS FROM EUROPE

By John Hammond

For the first time in my memory, maybe since the war, there is a complete shutdown of racing both in France and the UK. It goes without saying that we in racing live in our own little bubble and the effects of the Corona virus are more considerably more dramatic on other areas of society. We are in uncharted territory however. So, for the moment all we can do is to hunker down and ride out the storm.

Our magnificent triviality was the description used by the much missed Hugh McIlvanny, one of English sport's greatest journalists, to describe our occupation/passion of horse racing. Its an apt phrase maybe but our sport can also be seen as a wonderful and fascinating way of spending some time during these brief few years that we individually spend on earth. Racing is never bland, it always touches our senses. We never know what we are about to receive, elation or disappointment but it is not a game of total chance either. Each race is a game of three dimensional chess played out not only by the players on the field but also by the owners, trainers and even breeders too. Every race has a result with a knock on effect to all involved and while we all have our individual views/opinions ultimately we are dealing with nature and one of nature's finest creations at that. Personally, each time I look at a racehorse it engages my mind.

I was fortunate to spend much of my childhood and adolescence in Ireland, the home of the horse. Anyone with more than ten square metres behind their house had a horse. A hunter, a showjumper, a pony or a potential racehorse. Ireland is the largest breeder of thoroughbred horses in Europe with a human population of only 5m. In Ireland racehorses are bred in the bone.



I began riding out for a trainer in my school holidays aged fourteen weighing in at a similar mass to a large family dog! Very small, I grew late. It was, at the time, one of the best jumping stables in Ireland. Only steeplechasers and hurdlers, no flat horses. 'Dreapers' son Jim had just taken over from legendary father Tom, a man of few words and dry wit, he was a stockman as much as trainer. It was a stable bathed in history, often the horses would not be broken in until the end of their four year old season not getting to their best until they were seven or eight. Yes it was a wait but year after year for a couple of decades or more those champions rolled off the production line, the sugar was indeed found in the bottom of the cup.

Continued.

REFLECTIONS FROM EUROPE

It was where the mighty Arkle, universally acknowledged as the best steeplechaser to ever put his head through a bridle (Google him if you think I'm exaggerating), had been trained only a few years earlier. A winner of three Gold Cups this was an animal who gave 16lbs to the second best horse in training Mill House, a champion in his own right and still beat him.



ARKLE

The 'lads' (strappers/workriders) had, at a guess, an average age of 45. Most had been there all of their working lives.

Everyone rode out wearing only cloth caps, helmets were donned only for schooling over fences. A different era, most went to work on bikes, few owned cars but the warmth and banter of morning work was theatre and I felt part of the play.

To me a young Brit these cheerful, humourous, Irish horsemen big hearted if small in stature were my idols. They were kind and the minded me as riding those massive, raw boned, magnificent steeplechasers I was a pea on a drum who spent most of his time 'hanging off one side' as the saying went. That was how I spent eight years of school and university holidays, they were special times, riding memorable horses working with memorable people.

It might seem trite to be writing and reminiscing about our little sport at a time when we appear to be having the perfect storm of a world health crisis and global economic meltdown but maybe at such times it is important to be thankful for what gives us pleasure in life too. Right now, rightly so, racing is stopped here but we miss it. There is still the pleasure of seeing the horses at exercise (some video clips to follow later this week if allowed) but.....no racing no horses. It is the thoroughbred's raison d'être.

OTI SPORT



At this moment in time it is hard to place dates on OTI SPORT tours in 2020, but plans are in motion for a number of tours domestically as well as internationally.

I'd be delighted to assist you with your plans, or if you have any requests for tours in the future, please get in touch. We will all be keen to spread our wings!

hermione@oti.com.au

0404 361587

QUIZ RESULTS

1. Farnham Away Game Mamaragan
2. 2003
3. Bart Cummings was born, and started training in Adelaide

NAME THE RACECOURSE?

Salisbury Racecourse in England, Britain's second oldest racecourse founded in the 16th Century. 10 miles away, just outside of Salisbury is Stonehenge.

WHO IS THIS ?

Renew

OTI Management Pty. Ltd.
204/425 Docklands Drive
Docklands
VIC
3008
Australia
oti@oti.com.au
+61 (0) 3 96700255