



# OTI GAZETTE

*The official newsletter of OTI RACING and Management*



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## Acclimatisation - The Key to Success with Imports

The word 'acclimatisation' barely existed in Australian racing 15 years ago. Today, with over half of the open class races of 2000m and beyond of Northern Hemisphere origin, it's a term as significant as 'breaking in' for those horses.

While there are exceptions, most European horses shipped to Australia need a combination of time and appropriate exercise to adapt to their new environment. As a result of the softer training and racing surfaces, their bones and joints are not designed for Australia's firmer and turning tracks. Their coats are growing when they should be shedding.

Fortunately our better trainers are now well aware on the importance of the need to apply an appropriate mix of exercise and rest to ensure long racing careers of their imports. For owners, this can be a frustrating period as the often expensive imports have short early preparations and don't immediately show the talent seen on the European tracks. We now know however that, as with our locally bred stayers, patience is a key component for success.

There's a strong opinion among many trainers and vets that many of the fatalities and injuries suffered in the spring carnival quarantine shipments were a result of horses not being acclimatised.

Horses are being exposed to race conditions that they are not equipped to handle. On vet inspection in Europe, the horse may be perfectly sound. Indeed they may get through their first run here without issue. However, unless they are exposed to rigorous testing once they have had race pressured applied, the first time the issue is detected is when there is a problem.

# OTI NEWS

A number of exciting runners for the future this weekend, as well as some older OTI favourites.

## This evening at Moonee Valley.

**FURIOSO** runs in R7 2040m BM64 for Matt Cumani and Fred Kersley from barrier 4. Fourth in the Sandown Guineas last start, we look forward to seeing him race.

## Tomorrow at Pakenham

**DOROZA** races in R3 2000m BM78 for Matt Cumani and Fred Kersley from barrier 9. A last start winner over the same distance, we are looking forward to seeing him step up in grade.

**MILESTONE** also races in R3 2000m BM78 for Trent Busuttin and Natalie Young with Nash Rawiller in the saddle from barrier 6. He should benefit from the step up in distance and has been pleasing his trainers at home.

**SOUTHERN ROCK** is also nominated in R3 2000m BM78 for Archie Alexander and Damian Lane from barrier 16 though he is likely to be scratched to race in the Werribee Cup on Sunday.

**NIGHT'S WATCH** races in R5 1600m Handicap for Archie Alexander and Damian Lane from barrier 9. The highest rated horse in the race, he will carry the top weight but we will learn a lot from the run.

**ATTORNEY** races in R7 2500m Listed Pakenham Cup for Matt Smith and Nash Rawiller from barrier 3. Running consistently well this preparation, we look forward to seeing him run.

**HAKY** runs in R7 2500m Listed Pakenham Cup for Archie Alexander and Jamie Kah from barrier 6. Working well at home, we hope the race is suit.

**HASSTOBEGOOD** lines up in R9 3YO Fillies and Mares BM78 over 1400m for Grahame Begg and Jordan Childs from barrier 10. She is in good shape, and we hope to see her have more luck in running.

## Tomorrow at Doomben

**GREY LION** races in R6 Open Quality Handicap over 2000m for Matt Smith and Robbie Fradd from barrier 10. A winner at the track this preparation, we hope to see him put in another strong performance.

## Tomorrow at Ascot

**GAILO CHOP** races in the Kingston Town Classic GR1 over 1800m for Matthew Williams and with Brad Rawiller in the saddle from barrier 4. We hope to see an improved performance from the veteran galloper.

## At Werribee on Sunday.

**ATYPICAL** runs in R1 for Clinton McDonald and Craig Newitt in the 2000m maiden from barrier 1. He should benefit from the step up in distance.

## OTI SPONSORSHIPS



Last Sunday, we were proud to partner with the Warrnambool Racing Club and sponsor the OTI Racing and Bloodstock Jericho Cup Consolation Race. Representing OTI was Dale McCann with MC Greg Kelson. Congratulations to the Club for putting on a wonderful day of racing to commemorate our WWI heroes.

We are also thrilled to announce that OTI is now the major sponsor of the Balnarring Picnic Racing Club and the OTI Balnarring Cup, which will take place on Australia Day 2021. We are looking forward to this exciting partnership!

# A CONVERSATION WITH PHILLIP STOKES

## On his childhood

I grew up on the Birdsville Track on the South Australian / Queensland border. I did school in the air, and we had no TVs so had to make up our own fun, which was often on horses. My dad Ron Stokes managed cattle stations there so I was riding stock horses, and at stock camps from a young age. It was there that I started riding in picnic race meets like Marree and William Creek.

## On the start of his career in racing

I was pretty light, and went to Adelaide to start my apprenticeship with John Hall who was foreman for Bart Cummings. It was a very different experience, I thought Adelaide was a huge city, and I was homesick for a while but got going. I got a little too heavy so went to Alice Springs for two years. It was a brilliant, but eye opening experience where you had to do everything yourself. I learnt a lot, particularly from Viv Oldfield who now races horses with us. He was a brilliant horseman and businessman. I got to ride in Alice Springs, Darwin, Mount Eliza, Katherine and Tennant Creek. It was good fun and we had quite a bit of success.

## On his time abroad

I got too heavy again, so then I went to Japan, and it was there that I was fortunate to meet my wife Ayumi. It was a fantastic experience, where I was working with the best horses, and at the best facilities. It is no surprise to see the success that Japanese bred and trained horses are having over the world. The style of training is a mix between Europe and America, and horses are kept in work a lot longer than they are here. I spent time with Bill Mott in America, and in France I rode for John Hammond. It was horse heaven riding in Chantilly.

## On riding horses

I still ride occasionally but I've given up doing the fast work, and leave that to the jockeys who come in and ride. I ride the lead ponies, and enjoy accessing the horses straight after they have galloped, as you can learn a lot from that.



## On training in two states

I've had the training centre in Pakenham for two years now and it has been going very well. We started with six horses and now have 48. We recently bought the block next door, and are in the process of building day yards. My son Tommy runs the Adelaide stable and is doing a very good job. Prior to Covid-19 I'd go down every second week to see the horses but obviously that hasn't been possible lately, but we do Zoom calls and speak daily, so I'm well aware of what is going on. A benefit of having the stables in Adelaide is that we are able to send horses down there and make the most of the easier grades as it can help boost their confidence. Essentially it just gives us more options when it comes to placing the horses.

## On his proudest moment

It would probably have to be when Hucklebuck won the Emirates, and the time I was leading trainer at the Carnival. We had to do it all from Adelaide which meant shipping horses over to Melbourne two days before, so it was a huge team effort and something I'm very proud of.

## On life away from racing, and career ambitions

I don't really have any hobbies, but I like to be on the farm which is five minutes from the track where we spell the horses. When I have time, I also have a set of golf clubs so I enjoy getting out on the golf course with my wife and youngest son too. I'd like to train more Group 1 winners, and to train a Group 1 winner abroad would be very special, but if I'm honest I'm happy where we are at at the moment and would like to continue in the same vein as we are now.

# JOHN BERRY ON HOLLIE DOYLE

***Newmarket trainer John Berry reflects on the rise of Hollie Doyle in the sporting ranks, and the success of female jockeys around the world.***

This is awards season in the northern hemisphere. In the USA it is easy because there is one over-arching official set of honours: the Eclipse Awards, handed out every January to honour the champions (equine and human) of the previous year. In Europe it is less clear-cut. Great Britain has no official awards, so various organisations hand out their own. Some are more prestigious than others, but all are special. However, they all have one thing in common: each category will throw up a winner from the racing world, irrespective of the strength or weakness of the division.



By comparison, Britain's leading female jockey Hollie Doyle has recently earned an accolade which represents a case scoring in open, rather than restricted, company: she has been honoured as the Sunday Times Sportswoman of the Year for 2020. Unlike any Jockey of the Year Award, it is far from guaranteed that a jockey would be in the running for this accolade. In fact, she is the first jockey ever to figure on the short-list, never mind the first to win it.

Her reaction is worth quoting as she clearly appreciates both the magnitude of her achievement and the significance it has for racing, a sport which in Europe has been struggling to retain the prominent place in the public consciousness which it used to occupy. "I was pretty shocked. I was delighted to even be nominated. When I saw the other competitors I was up against, I thought it was a privilege in itself. When I was called the winner, I was blown away. It's just massive.

"I was really pleased for the racing industry. And as jockeys, we're being seen as sportspeople now because we really are, and it needs to be going that way. Racing can be in its own little bubble as such, so it's really good to open the door to a wider audience maybe."

Besides Doyle, the short-list of nominees had consisted of dartsplayer Fallon Sherrock, cyclist Lizzie Deignan, and triathletes Jessica Learmonth and Georgia Taylor-Brown. By topping the list, Doyle joins some British sporting greats to have been honoured in the award's 33-year history, including Jessica Ennis-Hill, Sally Gunnell, Tanni Grey-Thompson, Denise Lewis, Dame Kelly Holmes, Victoria Pendleton, Christine Ohuruogu and the 2018 and '19 winner Dina Asher-Smith. The only other equestrienne to win it has been eventer Zara Tindall. It is worth pointing out that Doyle and Tindall are the only two who compete on level terms against their male counterparts.

The world is a very different place to the one in which we were born. Gender equality still has some way to go in racing, but it has made massive strides in recent years. One doesn't have to go too far back to find a time when there were no female jockeys. Year by year, their place in the sport has become more secure. Pam O'Neill, Linda Jones, Dianne Moseley, Maree Lyndon, Beverley Buckingham, Clare Lindop and Michelle Payne are some of those who have registered notable Australian firsts in the progression towards woman who race-ride being recognised merely as 'jockeys', rather than 'female jockeys'. Currently, Jamie Kah, Rachel King and Kathy O'Hara are prominent among those shattering the glass ceiling.

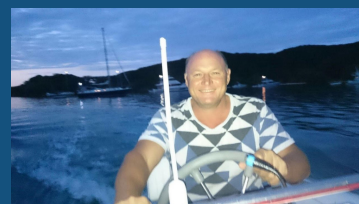
Obviously Hollie Doyle's award is restricted to sportswomen, rather than sportspeople. However, it is hugely to racing's credit that in an era which values the promotion of diversity and gender equality a female jockey can be sufficiently successful against her peers, both male and female, to be hailed as Britain's leading sportswoman of the year.

The perfect post-script to this would be if she were to become Britain's first female champion jockey in 2021. One couldn't rule it out. More immediately, even greater off-track glory potentially awaits as she has made it onto the short-list of six for Britain's most prestigious sporting award, BBC Sports Personality of the Year, alongside World Champion Formula 1 driver Lewis Hamilton, World Heavyweight Champion boxer Tyson Fury, Test cricketer Stuart Broad, Liverpool AFC captain Jordan Henderson and record-breaking snooker-player Ronnie O'Sullivan.



## GET TO KNOW YOUR FELLOW OTI PARTNERS - DAMIAN HONISS

Damian grew up on the family orchard in Keri Keri in the Bay of Islands up in the north of New Zealand. The family were not involved with horses and his upbringing was mainly around the beach or sailing, fishing and diving. About 10-12 years ago, Damian and a group of friends bought a broodmare (Armilla) and foal (out of Bureaucracy) which he had broken in and then trained by Mick Kent, and that was the start of his interest in racing.



**Who was your first winner and where?** It was Rouge Ribbon at Cranbourne.

**Most successful horses you've owned?** It has to be Quick Thinker as his three year old year was a cracker. Winning a Group 1, 2 and 3 as well as a Listed race in one season was very exciting but not being there to celebrate on track with the rest of the owners, trainers and jockeys was a bit of a disappointment as you do not get those opportunities every year.

**Race you would most like to win?** The Cox Plate in 2021 and 2022 with Quick Thinker would go down a treat!

**When you win that special race, how will you celebrate?** Large and long, hopefully with all the other owners as that is all part of the deal when you have race horses. Always celebrate the wins when they come.

**Favourite racetrack?** Randwick. They have great races and do it well there, and Sydney is a great city.

**What race meeting do you enjoy attending?** Birdsville Races. Flying out there and then attending the races while making sure you hydrate with a few VB or XXXX. Ahead of sleeping in a swag under the wing of the plane and not getting bitten by the locals or snakes. Sounds hilarious and a must with some good mates so it is on the bucket list.

**Black Caviar, Winx or Makybe Diva?** I think we need to stick with a kiwi horse so I will go with Sunline. She was a superstar.

**What international races have you attended and particularly enjoyed?** I did end up one Wednesday evening in Happy Valley with a mate and about 500 other punters watching the Sha Tin races on the big screen from the grandstand. The Tote and Bars open, no horses where we were but everyone enjoying an evening at the track as if normal. That was a strange but fun evening being at the race track with no horses.

**Which international carnivals would you like to attend next?** Dubai World Cup or the Japan Cup are on the bucket list.

**How did you get involved with OTI?** A good friend Geoff McCormack has had a few horses over the years and was in with Armilla and Rouge Ribbon. When OTI offered Vin De Dance (VDD) he suggested we get involved as VDD was here in NZ and the Derby was the plan. So we set up the Kilted Taniwha syndicate, took a share and started travelling around watching VDD run. Geoff, Jayne, Brad, Terry and a few other owners made the trip across to see him win the NZ Derby which was a great day and night. Since that success I have gone on to own a share in several other OTI horses.

**What do you enjoy about racehorse ownership?** The social side is very much the main motivation in ownership and I do like to get in the car or on the plane and go see the horses run. I enjoy the occasion of a race day, which unfortunately some of this has been placed a bit on hold. However we are lucky here in NZ with our racing still very much underway and we are allowed full access on track. We hope that the same can occur in all of Australia soon. However the requirement to quarantine for 2 weeks on return to NZ has placed any overseas travel on hold.

**Favourite jockey?** Jason Waddell for the NZ Derby win with Vin de Dance and now Opie Bosson after he stayed on in NSW this year and did such a great job with Quick Thinker.

**Favourite racing memory?** The NZ Derby win with VDD as being on track and with mates, family and other owners for the run and then the delay in the call, not knowing if we had the win (by a nose hair). That was a special day and from there I have gone on to get involved with a few more horses with OTI and had some great days at the tracks in NZ and Australia with owners and mates.

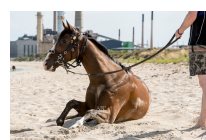
**OTI horse you look forward to seeing run in 2021?** It is hard to pick one but we have a few exciting 2 and 3 year olds who are just coming to the races and it will be great if we can get a few of these to emulate some of the earlier success.

## OTI QUIZ

### QUIZ

1. Who rode and trained Etah James to win the 2019 running of the Pakenham Cup?
2. How much did Russian Camilla, sister to Russian Camelot sell for at this week's Tattersalls December Sales?
3. Castelvechio is by which stallion?

### NAME THE RACEHORSE



*Hint - 3rd in GR1 Railway Stakes*

# ASHIM



## ~ Progressive, lightly-raced French galloper bound for Sydney ~

We are delighted to have acquired the progressive Aga Khan bred French 3yo, Ashim. A late-maturing type, Ashim showed his true form as he matured into an exciting youngster in the second half of this season. He's a well-balanced, athletic mover, he has good, sound feet, which is essential when looking for a horse to suit Australian conditions.

He will be trained in Sydney by Matt Smith who continues to have a lot of success with the European imports purchased by OTI including Attorney, Corncrake and Grey Lion.

Over the years, OTI has had a successful history of buying from the Aga Khan stable, headlined by Manighar and Lidari, and we believe Ashim can follow in similar vein.

For more information: [oti@oti.com.au](mailto:oti@oti.com.au)

## OTI QUIZ RESULTS

### Quiz

1. Fred Kersley and Matt Cumani
2. 300,000 Guineas
3. Dundee

### Name The Racehorse

Tom Melbourne  
Famous for being second, Tom is now enjoying life at Living Legends where he has been since his retirement in April 2020.

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