



OTI GAZETTE

The official newsletter of OTI RACING and Management



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ODE TO GAILO CHOP

Shakespeare's King Richard III said 'A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse'. Well, sorry Your Majesty, if we owners of Gailo Chop were around in your era, you'd be out of luck.

What more could a horse do in racing to satisfy his owners? 3 G1 wins, 3 G1 seconds, 3 G2s, sustained high-level performance over 7 and a half years, \$4.5 million in stakes and racing experiences in 6 countries and 4 Australian states were encapsulated in his 42 race starts.

Unfashionably bred and angular, Gailo, as an athletic 2yo gelding, wasted no time showing his talent on the track in the South West of France. Although only being a licenced trainer for 2 years, Antoine de Watrigant knew that he was a special horse. When Antoine took Gailo to St Cloud in his first race as a 3yo, he trounced a field of bluebloods. In doing so, he attracted the attention of agent Emmanuel de Seroux, who orchestrated a 50% purchase for OTI's owners.

A trip to New York for the Belmont Derby (4th) was then sandwiched between G3 wins at Longchamp and a G2 win in Deauville. Gailo ended his year as the highest rating 3yo male horse in France. With great excitement among his owners, Royal Ascot beckoned as a 4yo. However, the quality in the G1 Prince of Wales (8th) was too strong for him. The race had its upside, however, as OTI was then able to acquire the remaining 50%.

A welcome invitation to the Cox Plate later in the year (8th in Winx's first) preceded a fighting win in the G1 Mackinnon on Derby Day at Flemington. Neither Antoine or Gailo's loyal strapper, Steve Haas, both non-English speaking, modest guys from rural France will ever forget the mounting yard pandemonium as they were attacked by the carnival's press corps.

As a 5yo, Gailo headed to the Sheema Classic (7th) in Dubai, again with his all Australian owner group in tow. No betting, no vino, no VB was a small price to pay for his owners to be among the competitors on World Cup night.

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Back in France, trouble struck in the form of a tendon, the bane of any horse's racing career. Knowing the success of the Australian rehab program for tendons and despite the cost, his owners agreed to bring him to Australia. He was placed under the supervision of Dr Andrew Cust of Ballarat Veterinary Practice. Andrew had cared for Gailo when he was in Australia as a 4yo. He was about to embark on a relationship for another 5 years with a horse who became more than a patient.

18 months after the Sheema, Darren Weir took over as Gailo's new trainer. Jaws dropped as Gailo finished 11th of 11 in his first race back, the G2 Peter Lawrence. Debate followed over the next couple of weeks as the owners felt that his career may be at an end. Weir said, 'he'll be fine' and to the delight and relief of connections, three weeks later he won the Penny Edition in Adelaide. 6 weeks later he won the G1 Caulfield Stakes. He was back!

Multiple Group wins, including the G1 Ranvet followed in Gailo's 2018 autumn campaign before possibly his best career run in the G1 Queen Elizabeth. Climbing the Randwick rise, Mark Zahra, Weir and Gailo's owners were out of their seats. Gailo was low flying. The racing upset of the decade was brewing. Happy Clapper and Humidor, top great horses in their own right, could not catch him. Winx did!

The race took its toll and Gailo again suffered a recurrence of his tendon injury. Although retirement beckoned, a rehab process was recommenced. Eighteen months later and with Darren Weir now out of business, Matt Williams took over as trainer. Matt had been actively involved with Andrew Cust in the rehab process. Competitive runs followed with a 3rd in the G1 Caulfield Stakes, and a second in the G1 Kingston Town, but Gailo was starting to show his age.

In his second Kingston Town last Saturday in Perth, in his typical fashion, Gailo lead the field around the turn before finishing a close 5th behind horses half his age. He ate up Saturday night and trotted up pain-free on Sunday morning. However, it was time. Gailo's owners unanimously decided he had done a wonderful job. His racing career was over.

So, Your Majesty, we'll keep our Gailo and you can keep your kingdom. Horses like our Gailo are priceless.

Next week we will tell you all about his new career.

Gailo Chop's owners thank everyone who helped him throughout his career. They are all part of his special legacy.

WINNER



ATTORNEY

Pakenham Cup Listed 2500m
Trained by Matthew Smith

A number of runners this weekend in Australia, New Zealand and France.

At Doomben tonight

LE JUGE runs in R5 1640m Doomben Mile for Chris Waller with Luke Dittman riding from barrier 3. He has returned in great shape and we hope to see him finish off strongly.

In France at Deauville tonight

DEMETER runs in R5 1300m 3yo Handicap for Edouard Monfort with Marie Velon riding from barrier 10. Back from a break to target the all-weather surfaces, she's expected to run well.

Tomorrow in New Zealand, at Te Rapa

VEE CECE runs in R7 2400m G3 Waikato Cup for Murray Baker and Andrew Forsman. Back in form, we hope her jockey Lynsey Satherley can overcome the tricky barrier of 13, and see her pick up more valuable black type.

Next week

ATYPICAL is nominated in the 2200m Maiden at Bairnsdale on Wednesday for Clinton McDonald.

SEIXAS is nominated to run in a 1400m 2yo Fillies Maiden at Lingfield on Wednesday for Sir Mark Todd.

DARVIN will be nominated for his return in the 1700m BM64 at Warrnambool for Matthew Williams.

ZIPITSWEETIE will have her second-up run at Warrnambool over 2000m for Archie Alexander.

A CONVERSATION WITH MATT HILL

On his childhood

I grew up in the west of Melbourne and was introduced to racing by my grandfather, who would take me on a Saturday. My grandmother would take me to the AFL. My mother's friend was a trainer, Jack Dalton who trained near Ballarat, and I have memories of my brother and I being roped into the back of the horse float to go to various country race tracks. I grew to love the theatre of the sport.

On career ambitions

Since I was about 13 I wanted to be a race caller. I would be one of the last generations to grow up listening to the races on the radio, and I'd sit spellbound listening to the sound of the commentators, and the crowd reactions. There is no school for race calling, and the advice I was given was to go to the track and sit with binoculars and practice calling a race into a tape recorder. I'm sure I'd have looked pretty silly! I then learnt that there were spare commentary boxes, so I'd sit in them and continue to practice. After a couple of years, I picked up a few greyhound meetings and barrier trials.

On Sydney

I was fortunate to receive the John Tapp scholarship, and through that, I spent 16 years in Sydney, and six years race calling for Sky. The Everest has worked very well as a concept, and I always loved commentating the Golden Slipper. It was challenging to call, being a fast-paced minute of a race, and given the stature of it, there was always a lot of pressure to make it word perfect. It is Sydney's version of the Melbourne Cup, and people start talking about the race in November, once the real two year old maiden races are run.

On Flemington and the Melbourne Cup

I have a great love of the Melbourne Cup, and still believe it should be protected. Taking it on is not helpful to the sport. My first memories of racing are of being at Flemington and developing a love of the theatre of the sport, the mystique of it all and the unpredictability, it is for that reason that Flemington remains so close to my heart.

On whom he fashioned his style

Most race callers wouldn't be able to tell you how it is done, but we learn to develop a photographic memory for a period of time, in order to remember the colours and jockeys, but it is soon forgotten. I grew up listening to Greg Miles, and like many of my generation, I idolised Bruce McAvaney, who was able to commentate so fantastically on so many sports. Jim McGrath was someone I always wanted to sound like, and I'm sure I've picked up sayings or phrases from them all.



On English racing

I've always loved English racing, particularly the jumps. It is not a business, but a passion. While I was in England I commentated at Epsom a few weeks prior to the Derby meeting and I could certainly have packed my bags and moved there to work. The tracks are all so very different there and with the large field sizes, it can make it a fun challenge. Because of that, you often need to call the race from the TV monitor, which does make sense as that is what the viewers see.

On commentating the Grand National

I've always loved the Grand National and getting the opportunity to call it for the BBC was a huge honour. I am one of only five people to call the final stages of it since WW1. The Grand National and the Melbourne Cup are similar in that they are races that stop the nation and are very much in the public conscience, though in England there is no public holiday. Similarly, there is a huge passion for the race.

On commentating other sports

It was always an ambition to commentate other sports, and I've been fortunate to commentate in the Olympics and Australian Open. One thing that is always paramount is loving the sport you are commentating on. You can't do it otherwise. Being the caller for the Melbourne Cup has certainly opened doors for me in my career, and away from racing.

Away from racing

On a day off from commentating, I do love to sit down and watch the racing and have a little punt, but only small. Punting certainly wasn't what attracted me to the sport. I do enjoy watching all sports but I do find it hard not to critique the commentary if it is a subject I know well. I adore music, and in a normal year, I go to 10 - 12 concerts a year.

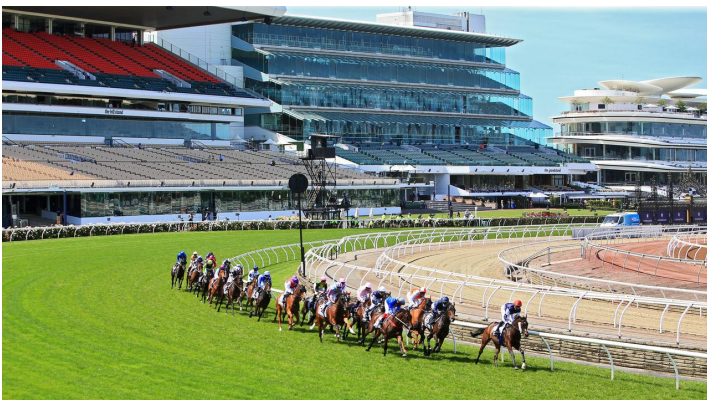
MATT STEWART

Making light of a grating situation, a mate suggested the other day that the races on Saturday should all be called farmer's markets. Homemade jams, crafts, fairy floss and some sneaky horse racing. Or re-name the races "Chadstone", or "St Kilda Beach" – anywhere that can have a crowd without breaking the rules, being capped at a ridiculously low number and whacked with Gulag-like restrictions.

Even the staunchest #IstandwithDan types – and I'm one – are getting really shirty about the snail's pace trickle-back of crowds to Victoria's racetracks. It's making no sense, even to those of us who towed along to every baby step out of pandemic shutdown, wore our masks diligently and understood that when crowds did return, it would not be with a reckless flinging open of the gates. But what the hell is going on? The latest news is ... there isn't any.

When Dan released the rules a bit more on Sunday, allowing a tearing off of those horribly oppressive masks and allowing for more people to hang out at the same place at the same time – including a proposed 25,000 at the G on Boxing Day – racing was left sniffing around for a scrap.

Administrators would not put a racing spin on the new set of relaxed rules because they couldn't find one. Racing minister Martin Pakula finally surfaced on Tuesday, via a single tweet, to explain that race-clubs could allow 1000 through the gates this weekend and that they could also apply for "tier 2" status to maybe, just maybe, be allowed to host up to 5000. That's if the state government decides those clubs have a properly COVID-compliant case.



Moonee Valley boss Michael Browell summed up the frustration on RSN on Wednesday, saying he could stand at a pub and have three beers at the bar and almost certainly rock up to the cricket on Boxing Day with 24,999 others – but he could not enjoy a near-normal day at the track.

The crowd cap comes with all sorts of restrictions; no roaming about, no contact with participants, no sitting closer than four metres to someone else when dining and no beer – because the bars and food stalls are shut. The irony, of course, is that farmer's markets can run amok on racetrack precincts, parks and beaches can be chokers and shopping centres can be streaming with customers.

There seem to be rules for every facet of the community, sport and business - who opens up when and how – but racing seems to be in some invisible, indefinable category. At least that's how it feels.

Browell said he was unsure if racing was paying the price for attempting to jump the gun with a crowd on Cox Plate day. Others wonder if the state government regards racing as basically an off-course wagering monster that doesn't require a crowd to make money. Tell that to the many race meetings, from the big country cups, to the Jericho, to the picnics, that hoped they'd have hosted crowds in recent weeks but were not allowed.

Most of our sunniest, big-crowd racing occurs over the Christmas/New Year. Picnic racing without crowds is pointless.

Sometime soon, crowds will be back. But WHEENNNN????!!!!

GET TO KNOW YOUR FELLOW OTI PARTNERS - RICK BOW

Rick Bow was born and bred in the Western Suburbs of Sydney in Blacktown. His father set up the first Chinese restaurant there in the mid 1950s and until last year, it has been part of the area for 65 years. He first became interested in the sport in his teens when his Father bought a share in a horse who won a race at Newcastle.



Who was your first winner and where? A 3 year old called Best Effort was my first winner at Pakenham in 1996.

Most successful horses you've owned? Scherzoso who won approximately \$400k and ran second in the Ballarat Cup. At the time when I purchased the share, OTI donated the proceeds to the children's charity Camp Quality. Out of Bianconi & Café Del Mar the name Scherzoso is translated from Italian to playful, which accurately represents the motif of Camp Quality.

Race you would most like to win? It would have to be the race that stops the nation...The Melbourne Cup.

When you win that special race, how will you celebrate? After celebrating with the team on track, it'll have to be kicking on to Crown Casino for more celebrating.

Favourite racetrack? A toss up between Randwick or Rosehill. I have Derby Day at Flemington on my bucket list!

Black Caviar, Winx or Makybe Diva? I would have to say Winx as I saw her race a couple of times. The atmosphere when she won was electric and since then, I haven't heard any horses with such a reception.

What International races have attended and particularly enjoyed? Despite being passionate about travelling, I haven't had the opportunity to attend an overseas race but Royal Ascot would be high on my list, followed by the Kentucky Derby. There's a certain mystique about that race and also discovering what the fuss is about with the mint julep.

Who introduced you to OTI/how did you get involved? It all started when I saw an article about Simon O'Donnell and his passion for thoroughbreds. I got in touch with him and purchased a share in Best Effort, trained by Lee Freedman. That was in 1995 before the formation of OTI, The beauty about being involved was that Shane Warne was also a part owner and being an absolute cricket tragic, I was euphoric, and got to meet Shane. Since then, I've had small shares in 18 OTI syndicated horses over the years.

What do you enjoy about racehorse ownership? Definitely meeting the fellow owners and dreaming about the elusive Group victory. Whilst previously most of my horses were based in Melbourne, I didn't get the opportunity to fly down to attend the races. Now with two runners with Matthew Smith here in Sydney, I'm fortunate enough to share the thrills with the other owners.

Favourite racing memory? I have several standout favourites. The first being winning the ANZAC Centenary Cup at Flemington on ANZAC Day 2015 with the Archie Alexander trained Martinvast. Winning such a race has significant meaning being the 100th year anniversary on such a solemn event in Australian history. It's special to know that Martinvast will be the only horse to ever win the Cup. The second memorable highlight was in June 2018 where I had my first ever Saturday city winner with the Matthew Smith stayer Plymouth Road at Randwick. This was after 22 years of ownership, which I thought I would never experience. Drinking champagne in the Winners Room was a "pinch me" moment which I'll never forget.

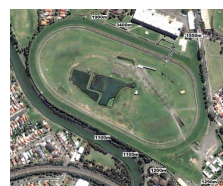
OTI horse you look forward to seeing run in 2021? I have shares in Corncrake and Dick Whittington who are both trained by Matthew Smith, as well as Armasky with Matt Cumani...so I look forward to all three saluting the judge

OTI QUIZ

QUIZ

1. How many days was it between wins for Kementari after his victory last weekend in Perth?
2. Name the International GR1 victory for Better Loosen Up?
3. Andre Fabre celebrated his birthday this week. How old is he?

NAME THE RACEHORSE



Hint - 11kms from Sydney CBD

MARCHONS ENSEMBLE



~ Lightly raced 3yo gelding has touched down in Melbourne ~

MARCHONS ENSEMBLE is in the final leg of his journey to Busuttin Racing. The three-year-old gelding will spend two weeks in quarantine before joining their Cranbourne stables.

The son of Pour Moi will settle into new environment, before he'll look to compete in restricted races in the autumn, and hopefully progress to open class in the spring of 2021.

A winner of two races, he will relish the firmer track conditions and should be an ideal prospect for Australian racing.

[WATCH VIDEO PARADE FROM QUARANTINE](#)

For more information: oti@oti.com.au

OTI QUIZ RESULTS

Quiz

1. 1001 days
2. Japan Cup
3. 75 years old

Name The Racehorse

Canterbury Racecourse.
Racing first took place in 1852 and was home to the Canterbury Guineas until 2005, when the STC and AJC merged in 2011.

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