



# OTI GAZETTE

*The official newsletter of OTI RACING*



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It has been a year since the sport of horse racing as we know it changed in Australia. Race meetings without owners and crowds, trainers and jockeys separated, and Group 1 presentations made virtually.

Concerns that the sport may have to stop were unfounded, but naively we thought the pandemic would be short-lived. How wrong we were!

Syndicators and trainers have embraced the challenges head on, and tried as much as they can to ensure owners have continued to enjoy the ownership experience from their homes.

The OTI Gazette was created to fill a little of the void and was just seen initially as a short term necessity, but now is a fixture in owner communications and read by many around the world. The views offered in various articles by differing columnists may not always be universally popular, but a healthy debate can create great discussions that throw up initiatives that enhance the sport. Long may discussion and debate continue from politics to sport.

This week saw the passing of Sheik Hamdan al Maktoum, who has been a passionate, knowledgeable and incredibly important supporter of the horse racing industry worldwide. A loyal supporter of many, his void will be deeply felt, and with the passing of Prince Khalid Abdullah of Juddmonte earlier in the year, there is certainly a changing of the guard at the top level of ownership across the world.

What it means for the future is unknown, but what is apparent is that the sport needs to ensure that the next wave of owners are well catered for. From what we've seen in the last year, we are on the right track!

# OTI NEWS

Eight runners step out in Australia and Ireland for OTI this weekend.

## Tonight at Warrnambool

**MISS CHANG'E** will be looking for back-to-back victories for Archie Alexander when she contests a 1700m Benchmark 58 (Race 8 - 5:00 pm). She has trained on well since her Hamilton win and we expect her to run well with John Allen aboard.

## Tonight at Dundalk, Ireland

**OTTOMAN EMPEROR** launches his racing career in a 2000m 3yo Maiden event (Race 2 – 3:55 am AEDT) for Johnny Murtagh. The Excelebration colt has impressed Murtagh and we're hoping to see him put in a strong showing with Ben Coen riding.

**CATENA ZAPATA** also runs in a 3yo Handicap over 1600m (Race 5 - 5:30 am AEDT) on the all-weather track at Dundalk, a track where he won impressively last year. He's been working well for trainer Henry de Bromhead and should be very competitive under Wayne Lordan.

## Tomorrow at Rosehill

**QUICK THINKER** races in the Group 3 NE Manion Cup over 2400m (Race 2 – 1:10 pm) for Murray Baker & Andrew Forsman with James McDonald riding. While he will need to overcome barrier 13, he is in good form and will relish the heavy ground.

**SELINO** also runs in the Group 3 event for Chris Waller with Brenton Avdulla in the saddle. He is third-up at a more suitable distance and we expect him to run a strong race.

## Tomorrow at Bendigo

**GALLIC CHIEFTAIN** runs in the 1600m Listed Bendigo Mile (Race 8 - 4:50 pm) for Archie Alexander. The 8yo has been sharp in his recent work and we're looking forward to seeing him return to the track. Declan Bates takes the ride.

**INVERLOCH** also resumes in the Listed event. The Trent Busuttin and Natalie Young- trained 7yo is in good shape ahead of the race and we're hoping he will put in a bold effort under Michael Dee.

## On Sunday at Sale

**BLUE ANGEL** is second-up in a 1400m Maiden (Race 3 - 1:25 pm) after an impressive debut where she finished second. The Trent Busuttin and Natalie Young trained filly should find the distance more suitable and the wider track at Sale should be to her liking. We're expecting her to run a big race with Daniel Moor in the saddle.

## OTI SPORT

Today saw the end of a thoroughly enjoyable four day, three-night tour starting in Warrnambool and finishing in Ballarat. The weather was not kind in Warrnambool, but that didn't deter us, and we had a fascinating morning at Lady Bay beach, followed by seeing the training stables of Symon Wilde and Matthew Williams. A visit to Grampians Racing and the new training set up of Andrew Bobbin was fascinating and allowed us to see a very different property to train and pre-train horses. In Ballarat, an enjoyable night was held with trainers Archie Alexander, Matt Cumani and David Eustace being interviewed by Matt Stewart on their training experiences around the world and the positive outlook for Australian racing.

Plans are now in place for further OTI Sport tours to the Hunter Valley, The Barossa and New Zealand.



# A CONVERSATION WITH SYMON WILDE

## On his childhood

I drove my parent's crazy with all the animals I had as a young boy, I had everything from calf's, sheep, ponies, dogs and ferrets. I also had a huge poultry obsession, which included chickens, ducks and even doves that I bred at one stage. When I was a young fella, I was a bit of a dreamer. I thought I'd be a drover or breaker of horses. In my final year of school I thought if I wanted to make a career out of working with horses, that training was the best option to make a decent living.

## On his overseas training experiences

When I left school, I went to England and worked for William Huntington and that was just wonderful. It is so different from the way that we train in Australia. I then moved to Nicky Henderson's National Hunt yard which was a wonderful experience, I'd never seen 200 horses all in work jumping. I was just in heaven. I took a lot away from working at Nicky's. After that, I moved to America and worked for Laura De Seroux. I gained a lot from my foreign experiences and it's definitely helped me train in Australia. I got some great ideas over there and we've tried to set our place up with some of those ideas in mind.

## On his mentors

My father has been a great mentor. I learnt a lot about training horses from him and my mother as well, she's been my biggest supporter throughout my entire life. William Huntington gave me such a great start, he introduced me to some wonderful people, I was lucky enough to even meet the Queen when I was over there with him. Also, Dr Andrew McLean, who was an animal behavioural expert that specialised in horses. I worked with him at Lindsay Park on the horses that were barrier rogues and I ended up spending time with him at this property after that. I took a lot from Andrew and I thought he was one of the best horsemen I ever worked with.

## On his career goals

The one thing left that we would love to achieve is to win a Group 1, we've won plenty of Group 2s and 3s but never that Group 1.



## On the highs and lows of racing

Racing is a real rollercoaster; the highs are high, and the lows can be very low. Working with animals there's always injuries and sometimes even death which is very hard to deal with as everyone involved gets so attached to the horses and it can be really gut wrenching. However, I will never get tired of the look on the faces of owners and staff when the horses are running well.

## On using the Warrnambool beach

I'm a second-generation Warrnambool trainer and we've always used the beach. It's a really great asset and the most important thing is the recovery. You can't emulate that anywhere else. The cold water and the movement is just wonderful for the horses physically and mentally. It's the same feeling as people get when they go walking along the beach.

It's a privilege and not a right that we are able to use it and able to access the beach in harmony with the public. We really enjoy the public being able to see what we do, and you'd be surprised to see how many people stop, ask questions and are really intrigued by the horses using the beach.

## On life outside of racing

Stef and I have got two young girls and one on the way. It's very tough trying to commit to giving racing and the stable, and the family the proper attention they all deserve. I do make sure I have plenty of time with the kids. We've got a small property about 10 minutes from the stables with 10 acres that has sheep, chooks and lots of animals. I love bringing my girls up there.

# MATT STEWART

I think I've worked it out.

Sydney racing is suffering from its very own version of Stockholm Syndrome.

Just as hostages develop psychological bonds with captors, Sydney has formed a psychological bond with wet tracks.

These tracks are the knee-deep normal, a fact of life for so long that most up there in "Atlantis" are barely bothered by them and don't believe they are a problem than can, and should, be fixed.

Peter V'landys appears to have a more advanced case of Stockholm than most. It has made him say weird, scattered things, even by his standards, proving Stockholm is a syndrome with severe side effects.

In a Racenet article this week, the Racing NSW chief executive blasted Mexicans (Victorians) for their "vile" jab that the Golden Slipper was washed away last Saturday because Sydney's tracks were hopelessly outdated and required bulldozers and a cheat sheet from Mexico's principal tracks Flemington and Caulfield, which are positively waterproof compared to Rosehill and Randwick.

PVL frothed that "reports from Victoria regarding our tracks are the greatest act of desperation that I have seen, and it does not border on the ridiculous but has gone completely past it.

"To use a once in a 100-year natural disaster as a platform to question our tracks is using opportunism to a level that is vile. There is no track in Australia that could have raced safely under those extreme conditions (Rosehill on Saturday)."

V'landys claimed Sydney's tracks were "perfectly fine" even though Sydney's monsoonal autumn weather means they race mostly as bogs during Sydney racing's time in the sun (so to speak).



V'landys said it would be a waste of money to rip up and water-shield these tracks.

The problem with V'landys' response to slanging from Victoria about Rosehill and the Slipper was that there was no slanging from Victoria. Not one line, one sentence, from anyone. Zippo.

There wasn't a fair-minded soul in Australia who believed there was a single track in the world that could have survived the horror monsoon that submerged Sydney for over a week.

But that's not to say Sydney doesn't have a fair dinkum problem with outdated tracks that simply don't handle wet weather in one of the wettest capital cities – especially in autumn – in the world.

Everyone can see it bar most Sydneysiders.

Sydney tipsters rarely bemoan the muddy surfaces that confront them and their 1800 numbers. They are so accustomed to it that they just plough on. Sydney horses have become so accustomed to it that their standard form is actually wet track form.

Melbourne trainers used to competing on much firmer going at our four big city tracks seem far more vocal about Sydney's wet tracks than Sydney trainers.

The difference between tracks here and there is so extreme week in, week out, that it won't be long before horses start travelling less between the two major jurisdictions. They've just become way too different.

But don't tell Sydney that Sydney has a problem with its soggy old racetracks. They'll think you've got some sort of weird syndrome.



# AESOP WITH JESSIE HARRINGTON

## *Half-Brother to Champion Older miler YOUNMZAIN*



When Jessie Harrington, the legendary Irish trainer, rang Terry Henderson and bluntly said, "I've got a good horse here and don't want to lose him - you should buy him," he listened.

When asked to comment on the horse, agent Hubie de Burgh said  
"This is a genuinely nice type of bay, full of quality, strong standing 16HH approx. He is also a particularly good mover on the gallops"

From a proven family, his dam Sadima, by Saddler's Wells was herself a winner and is a dam of nine foals to race, all of whom have won, including three Group winners and champion Youmzain, who was a multiple Group 1 winner, and winner of over £3,300,000. His sire, Make Believe's progeny excel over 2000m-2200m, with a 20% winning strike rate at those distances including Mishriff, winner of the \$20million Saudi Cup in February.

Ready to race imminently, with a first-up target being on the 3rd of April. Royal Ascot is on the agenda before flying Australia in time for the Spring Carnival.

### **WATCH VIDEO**

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

## QUIZ

### **WHO IS THIS?**

1. In what years and aboard which horses did recently retired jockey Corey Brown win his two Melbourne Cups?
2. What was the name of the first female jockey to win the Champion Hurdle at last week's Cheltenham festival?
3. Seven out of the eight past Golden Slipper winners have not won a race since. Who was the exception?



# EQUINE WELFARE UPDATE

## FASTNET TEMPEST & PENS HurST



An eight-time winner on the track, Fastnet Tempest appears to be thriving in his retirement under the care of Jessi Smith. After recently relocating to a 40 acre property in country Victoria, the gelding has enjoyed a long summer break ahead of his return to showjumping training.

After taking out the Ballina Cup in emphatic style just two months ago, Penshurst now finds himself enjoying retirement on the Sunshine Coast. New owner Tracey Young was thrilled to report that the 7-year-old 'arrived safe and sound, appears very settled and is a gorgeous type.' We look forward to following his progress at his new home in the months to come.

For more information on our equine welfare programme visit our website [here](#)

## QUIZ RESULTS

1. Shocking in 2009, and Rekindling in 2017
2. Racheal Blackmore
3. She Will Reign

### Who is this?

Ron Quinton, four-time Golden Slipper winning jockey and trainer.

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