



# OTI GAZETTE

*The official newsletter of OTI RACING*



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## **Racing Australia's Chairmanship – John Messara's Latest Challenge.**

The appointment of John Messara as Chairman of Racing Australia (RA) will hopefully lead to a unified approach to the way Australian racing is managed and programmed.

Messara has a track record for getting things done. Most notably, he helped drive the amalgamation of the two major Sydney race clubs and the adoption of the Messara recommendations by New Zealand Racing. Many consider him the man who facilitated the early work of Peter V'Landys in New South Wales. Whether you like him or not, V'Landys has done wonders for New South Wales racing and stakes money levels for all states.

RA, established in 1998, is the peak national administration body for Thoroughbred racing in Australia. The lead bodies for racing in each State or Territory, known as the Principal Racing Authorities, set up RA by consensual agreement. This consensus by the States is achieved by agreeing to abide by and enforce the Australian Rules of Racing which are within the authority of the ARB. While national registrations and the Studbook are most valuable roles carried out at RA, the inability of the organisation to address contentious issues, especially between NSW and Victoria, has raised the question – has the organisation got the teeth when important issues need to be addressed?

As a result of both Victoria and NSW each having the major vote (35% each), either state is able to veto any motion that it may not agree to. Understandably this must change if priority is given to Australian racing interests, rather than individual state interests. In the long-term interests of our sport in Australia, let's hope John Messara can facilitate that to happen.

# OTI NEWS

Runners around the world for OTI over the next week.

## Tomorrow at Flemington

**HAKY** runs in the 2500m Quality Handicap for Archie Alexander and Ben Allen from barrier 7. A good second on his last start over 2000m, we are looking forward to seeing him step up in trip.

**PETRUCHIO** lines up in R3 again for Archie Alexander in the BM78 from barrier 11 with Ben Allen aboard. The talented gelding is returning after a spell and will improve for the run.

**ALMSGIVER** is first emergency in R7 2000m 3yo Handicap for Matt Williams and Dean Yendall from barrier 14. He has continued to please since his Geelong run, and if he does not gain a start he will run at Swan Hill on the 13th in the 1600m 2yo/3yo Maiden.

**FURIOSO** is also lining up in R7 2000m 3yo Handicap for Matt Cumani and Damien Oliver from barrier 10. Having suffered from atrial fibrillation on his last start, he has recovered well and has worked nicely leading into this.

## Tomorrow at Rosehill

**INVERLOCH**, the last start Listed Wagga Gold Cup winner will line up in R7 2400m Listed Winter Cup for Trent Busuttin and Natalie Young with Tommy Berry to ride from barrier 14. Though an unfortunate barrier, we hope to see another tough performance.

**MR SATCHMO** will also line up in R7 Listed Winter Cup for Chris Waller and Blake McDougall from Barrier 9. With rain forecast, we hope he receives conditions to suit as he has been pleasing in his work at home.

## On Sunday in France

**SCHWANENSEE** runs at Agen-le Passage in R5 2500m Class 4 for Antoine de Watrigant. In a race that should suit the filly, we are hopeful she can break her maiden.

## On Wednesday at Sale

**I'M THUNDERSTRUCK** is likely to return to the races in a 1200m Class 1 for Mick Price and Michael Kent Jnr. He is returning after a spell and a winning trial. We are hopeful of seeing a very nice run first-up for this talented horse.

## In Ireland on Wednesday

**SPANISH CLASS** will be aiming to break her maiden for Jessica Harrington at Cork in the 1200m Maiden. She will benefit from running down the straight track and we look forward to seeing an improved run.

**AESOP** will also run at Cork in the 2400m Cork Derby, again for Jessica Harrington. It will be an ideal race for the horse to progress through the ratings.

## Next Saturday at Eagle Farm

**QUICK THINKER** will run in the newly created QII Group 2 over 2200m for Murray Baker and Andrew Forsman. A valuable race worth \$1,200,000, we look forward to having him run.

## WINNER



Comme Bella Fille  
2100m Wyong Class 1 & Maiden Plate  
*Trained by John O'Shea*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Is there anyone you would like interviewed or a topic to be discussed?  
Let me know.

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## TWO WARRIORS RETIRE

Two of OTI's most popular horses have ran their last race. Amazingly both horses arrived in Australia together in October 2016 and both were retired within a week of each other.

Grey Lion will go into OTI's welfare program under the care of Matt Cumani's wife, Sarah. Gallic Chieftain (The Chief, as he is affectionally known) will hopefully find a new home at a stud where he can see out his days producing future stayers.



The career of both horses have remarkable similarities. Both arrived in Australia from France in the care of Sara Cumani, Matt's mother. Sara was kind enough to look after them both during the quarantine period in Newmarket, She then joined them for the 2016 quarantine leg at Werribee. From Werribee, Sara helped Matt prepare Grey Lion for his first-up run, a second in the Geelong Cup. She also assisted Darren Weir to prepare Gallic Chieftain for an excellent first-up run on the same day. Terry Henderson remembers her making it clear that Gallic Chieftain was a budding stayer and not a 1600m to 2000m horse, as we originally thought. How right she was!

In his career, The Chief has 59 runs for 9 wins and 8 seconds. His highlights were his wins in the Group Two Chairman's Handicap at Randwick (with Archie Alexander as trainer) and the time-honored Warrnambool Cup (with Darren Weir as trainer). When trained by Archie, he also finished second in the Group One Metropolitan in 2019. As of the end of his career, he'd earned \$1.27m in prize money.

The stunning Grey raced 52 times for 8 wins and 6 seconds. His training career was shared between Matt Cumani at Ballarat and later, when it was considered he'd race better right-handed with Matt Smith in Sydney. He finished his career with \$841,000 in stakes.

Before arriving in Australia, Terry Henderson was on hand in France to inspect and ultimately buy both horses. Gallic Chieftain was trained in Pau in the South West by Francis Rohaut. Francis is a true lover of his horses and Terry fondly remembers Francis parading The Chief with his arm around the horse's neck. His only win before OTI purchased him was in Nice (Cagnes sur Mer).

After winning three of his first four races, Grey Lion was referred to Terry by Andre Fabre, France's champion trainer and long term trainer for OTI. Andre felt that the handsome grey would suit Australia given the horse's liking for firm tracks. On inspection, Terry was highly impressed with the horse's presence and, although then still a colt, his docile temperament.

Both Andre and Francis continued to take a keen interest in the horses once they had moved to new trainers in Australia.

Within the next few weeks, Grey Lion will move back to his old home in Ballarat where Sarah Cumani will use him as her personal horse. His owners can look forward to many photos of Matt and Sarah's two young sons having their first rides on the big Grey.

Gallic Chieftain, on the other hand, will hopefully start a new career as a stallion. Over the next month, OTI will seek a home for him where he can hopefully produce future champions.

OTI and their fellow owners can be very proud of these two great warriors and the many days of excitement they have provided. We also thank their trainers who have toiled to see that the horses reached their potential. It's a credit to their care that they both had such long careers. We wish both horses good health in their future.



# A CONVERSATION WITH CLAYTON DOUGLAS

## On his childhood

I grew up on the Mornington Peninsula and was always surrounded by horses and animals, as we lived on a farm and Dad was a trainer himself. As a kid, I rode, but I was actually pretty handy at footy and played that a lot. When I was about 12, I started riding more, and at 13 I started riding trackwork and it all went from there.

## On training and the advantage being a jockey

I always thought I would eventually train, as I'm quite big and tall. I'm not going to be able to ride forever, and to keep to riding weight is something I struggle with. Training can also be stressful, but also very satisfying when you train winners after all the work that goes in behind the scenes to get horses to the races. I think being a jockey is an advantage as I know how to read a race well, and can work out how horses need to be ridden. This means that at home, we can ride them in a way that will help the horses settle in running. This is where Jamie Kah, my fiancée can really help, as she puts in a lot of work in with the horses at home, and then it means at the races we know how they should be ridden.

## On juggling his riding and training

It is actually not too bad as I have a good support team helping me. Jamie is a great asset to my training business, and I think we are a good team together.

## Proudest moment to date

As a jockey, I'm very happy to have won a couple of Group 3's. Partnering Superseth early in his career, and having been involved in his journey to win the Caulfield Guineas is special. Winning two Grand Annuals on Gold Medals is up there too, he is such an amazing horse, and an unbelievable athlete. As a trainer, I had a huge amount of satisfaction winning with Barocha who with my first runner. There was massive hype including a funny text that was doing the rounds. He had been heavily backed, and to have a 2yo winner up the straight at Flemington was a huge feather in my cap so early in my training career, and with my fiancée riding it was extra special.



## On his training at Mornington

It is a great place to train and we have access to the course proper, treadmills and swimming pool. At home, we have a cantering and trotting track, day yards, and covered turnouts with a quiet atmosphere. We have the ability to take horses to the beach to wade through the water, and through the forests, so there is a wide variety which keeps horses happy and eating well. Because of that, we can run horses on the back-up quickly, as well as keep them going for longer preps.

## On what makes Jamie Kah so good

I'm extremely proud of Jamie and what she is achieving. What makes her so good? Her poise, she reads races so well and gets so much out of horses. A perfect example was her ride on Vega One in the Kingsford-Smith Cup in Queensland. She managed to snag a perfect position from an outside gate and gave the horse a lovely run through the pack. That ride should be shown as an example of the perfect ride at the apprentice school!

## On training Harmysian for OTI

I'm excited to be training **HARMYSIAN** and I cannot wait to have him in the stable. He is a really tough Lope de Vega, with a beautiful action and stride efficiency. He has a good turn of foot, can sit on the speed and quicken, which will be ideal for Australian racing. He is lightly raced and I look forward to working through the grades with him.

I'm delighted to be training for OTI so early in my career and grateful to Terry and the team behind the scenes who have shown me support. I'm really focused on training now and hope that with the likes of **HARMYSIAN** in my stable, I'll be training some really nice winners in the spring.

# MATT STEWART

When Peter Moody poked the Poms last week with his claim that Aussie trainers were the world champs, I was reminded of something Moods said a few years back.

Moody had just returned from Royal Ascot with Magnus. He was astounded by the laconic way babies were trained, saying there was little barrier practice. When the gates sprung, most fell out of the machine like old cows.

Moody mused that a smart Aussie trainer would make a killing in these and other races, especially if they'd liked a punt. He said proper barrier practice and a few sharp gallops would give any horse an edge in these flop out and flash home races.

Over a decade on, Moody still reckons the Poms are caught in time warps where the same script has been used for generations.

Zaaki's ludicrously easy win in the Doomben Cup last month proved yet again that the European horses are a league ahead.

The fact a Group 3 horse like Zaaki can wander in and match "data" akin to Might And Power was deflating but we have become accustomed to such reality checks. At Talaq, Almaarad and Jeune, then Manighar, Glass Harmonium, Hartnell, Reliable Man, those dominant Cups horses as well... irrefutable. The counter attack has been to argue that our trainers have improved these horses



Moody sparked ridicule in the UK by claiming Annabel Neasham may have improved Zaaki from Sir Michael Stoute. He said our trainers had to adapt to weather extremes and injected speed into internationals who had been pigeon-hole to match their pedigrees. If it's bred to stay, it runs in marathon races.

He gained a fairly unlikely ally in locally-based Pom Dave Eustace. Eustace agreed Poms trained one-dimensionally, with large groups galloping up straight hills at each and every workout. Eustace said trainers here had begun using nature's gifts to great effect. Beaches, he said, were terrific training tools. Eustace's brother Harry has just begun training at Newmarket and Dave says Harry had the smarts to adapt.

Maybe Neasham had cajoled Zaaki into finding a few lengths by training him differently, like Moody did with Manighar.

But Maybe Zaaki beat up on a typically-bland local bunch who couldn't run a trip down a well.

## QUIZ

### NAME THE RACECOURSE

1. Who trains Gr1 Kingsford-Smith Cup winner Vega One?
2. Zaaki is by which stallion?
3. What is the name of Black Caviar's daughter, who is running at Flemington this weekend?



*Hint - The Seine*

# MISTA RAZZLEDAZZLE TO LINDSEY SMITH



To be trained by Lindsey Smith from his base in Warrnambool, **MISTA RAZZLEDAZZLE** was secured with the help of Phill Cataldo immediately after the race where he was three wide on a tight track, running home in most impressive sectionals.

Being a well-balanced gelding, he is out of the stakes placed mare Grandissima who won at 1950m and 2000m. She is herself a half-sister to Group 1 winner the The Mighty Lions. The female line of this family is most adept at distances on and over 2000m.

**MISTA RAZZLEDAZZLE** is in the first crop of Contributor, and he is already a producer of black-type performers including Group 1 Randwick Guineas winner, Lion's Roar.

In the hands of trainer Lindsey Smith, **MISTA RAZZLEDAZZLE** is expected to work through his grades quickly up to city class.

Click [here](#) to view the last 600m of his debut.

## QUIZ RESULTS

1. Tony Gollan
2. Leroidesanimaux
3. Invincible Caviar

### NAME THE RACECOURSE

Maisons Laffitte.

In Paris, this recently closed race track had held racing since 1878 and had the longest straight in Europe of 2000m. Hopes remain that the track will reopen in the future.

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