



OTI GAZETTE

The official newsletter of OTI RACING



IN THIS WEEK'S EDITION

OTI NEWS

A
CONVERSATION
WITH RICHARD
FREEDMAN

MATT STEWART

OWNER PROFILE
- JUSTIN
WILLIAMS

PENSEUR TO
MITCH
FREEDMAN

WEEKLY QUIZ

Frankel – The Ultimate Thoroughbred

Comparing champion racing horses from one jurisdiction to another or from one period to another stimulates little more than a good discussion. Similarly comparing great stallions or broodmares provides the same.

However, when comparing great thoroughbreds, i.e horses that have been champions on the track and in the breeding barn, Frankel is laying claim to being the best of the best.

Frankel's feat in winning all his 14 races is well recorded. He, according to most people in Britain, could rightly claim to be the best horse of the modern era, at least in the Northern Hemisphere.

When retired to stud in 2013, few would have thought that he would quickly be matching it with his illustrious father Galileo, who himself had eclipsed the records of his father Sadler's Wells. In the first six months of 2021 alone, he produced three classic winners amongst the six Group One wins. Amazingly, two Group One winners (Hungry Heart, ATC Oaks and Converge, JJ Atkins) were in Australia – where he doesn't shuttle.

Frankel is still a touch young to enter the 'Sire of Sires' ledger. The likes of Sadler's Wells, Galileo, Sunday Silence and Danehill still feature at the top of the modern era. However, given the quality of the horses winning the Classics, including this year's English and Irish Derbies, he'll soon be there.

In Australasia, we've been blessed with two of the greatest racehorses of all time in Winx and Black Caviar. As mares, they'll have a lesser chance of headlining at stud than their male counterparts. However, we do have one who, for his time, has the credentials to be at least compared with Frankel. Carbine - more about him later.

OTI NEWS

Runners in Ireland and Australia this weekend:

On Saturday at Flemington

HAKY runs in R3 Banjo Paterson Series Final over 2600m for Archie Alexander and Declan Bates from barrier 10. He put in his best piece of work for the preparation on Tuesday, and we look forward to seeing him run.

ROMANCER runs in R8 Listed Victorian Sprint Series Final over 1200m for Grahame Begg and Lachlan Neindorf from barrier 11. A winner last start, he continues to please and we can't fault him going into the race.

On Saturday at Rosehill

SOUND OF CANNONS lines up in R3 2400m BM78 for John O'Shea and Brenton Avdulla from barrier 7. A horse with ample ability, we are hoping a change in training regime will give us a positive result on the track.

On Saturday at Newcastle

AKATINO will run in R4 1880m BM64 for Matthew Smith with Koby Jennings in the saddle from barrier 7. The drop back in trip should be to his advantage after freshening up well at home. We hope to see him figuring in the finish.

On Sunday at Limerick

CATENA ZAPATA is being aimed at the 1600m 3yo+ Handicap for Henry de Bromhead. He is making his return to the races after being gelded before a trip to Australia.

On Sunday at Castera-Verduzan

SCHWANENSEE is likely to run in the 2400m Class 4 for Antoine de Watrigant. Unlucky not to win at her most recent outing, the mare looks well-placed to breakthrough for a patient group of owners.

ROLLET



ROLLET was an impressive trial winner at Dundalk this week. The 3yo colt son of Kingman, in training with Joseph O'Brien is likely to make his racecourse debut at the end of July.

OTI WELFARE UPDATE



Despite winning on five occasions for OTI, **TOM MELBOURNE** became notorious for being a bridesmaid and finishing 2nd 14 times. Always a favourite among the team at OTI; we still check in on him as part of our Equine Welfare program.

Tom is now enjoying his days at Living Legends and showing signs of being a talented showjumper.

The OTI Gazette will become a monthly edition over the winter period, with the next edition on Friday 6th August.

If you have any requests for interviews or topics to discuss, please let us know.

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A CONVERSATION WITH RICHARD FREEDMAN

On his childhood

We grew up in Yass, NSW on a horse stud. Dad was a hobby trainer and we rode plenty of trackwork and did plenty stable work as well as riding showjumpers at country shows, playing rugby, and farm work. It was a pretty all-round horse education. Lee and I were at Uni in Canberra then Dad got sick and died. We had decided to be horse trainers (it looked easy....ha) which wasn't the "plan". Lucky we had just enough early success in Melbourne to put Michael through his last 2 years of school and look after Mum and our eldest brother Mark who is intellectually handicapped.

On the partnership with brother Michael

We have a set of skills – some are the same as each other and some slightly different. We try to combine our skills to give each horse its best opportunity on the track. We have always been able to win the 1000m and the 3200m race on the same card so to speak. There is crossover, but we like to think we have a wide range of skills which we have gathered and honed over four decades as trainers, and all the time in stables before that.

On training tracks and the working hours

We think a public training facility – away from race tracks – should be built for everyone to use. Training horses in little circles inside racetracks is not the best way to do it, but commercially it's very tough to fund your own facility, so everyone uses public facilities at racecourses. The horses and staff would have a better life if we didn't have to do it at a racetrack. The hours that we are all required to work (starting at 04:00) and training horses in the dark is detrimental to staff recruitment and our health (lack of sleep or no social life – you choose). Most major racing jurisdictions shun these hours, and rightfully so. It makes no sense and yet it's very hard to convince other trainers, who have only ever known one way to operate, that there is a better way. We did it at Markdel, but for a variety of commercial and personal reasons we stopped doing it that way, but it sure was better.

On issues affecting the racing industry

Do we need a more unified approach between states? Horse welfare will remain a huge issue. I said to Peter V'Landys many years before all hell broke loose over the ABC expose of the abattoir in Queensland (which was painted as a "Racing issue" when in fact it was an animal cruelty issue at a poorly run non-racing facility) that "the whole future of Racing depends on the way we treat the horses". He agreed and I think we have made great strides in that area, with more to do.



On why he returned to training after 17 years

Initially I came back to training because my son Will wanted to be a trainer. I was in a position to help him so I did. But I did "catch the bug" again, and yes I did miss the horses. Horses are the most beautiful animal on earth IMO. They co-operate with us when they could easily not. They are gentle and willing. I love working with them. I guess I always have. I think it was the training business that became a grind – but I have a better perspective now, age gives that to you, so I'm enjoying it more now even though we had a stellar time in the 80s and 90s before I went to broadcasting.

...and what he noticed

The thing I notice most is that a lot of the fun we had – battlers and stars – has diminished with the "game" becoming more of a business. We try to keep some fun in it for the owners and ourselves. After all, we are in the entertainment business. However, the relentless schedule of racing and hours of work make that harder for many trainers to maintain a sense of fun. There have been some changes in the way the horses are trained. They were probably tougher horses in the past, but the influence of the northern hemisphere breeding may have diminished their toughness somewhat. You just have to adapt.

On appreciation and understanding of different factions of the industry

Yes, I have more sympathy/empathy with owners than I did before. I think I better understand their motives and requirements better from my media work. I have less sympathy for bureaucracy in racing from my stint at the AJC. Too many decisions are made for participants without their input or imprimatur, especially trainers. There are too many licenced trainers, and the working conditions for most trainers are onerous. We have been lucky to do quite well, but we know what it's like to battle. Trainers would have a better business model and lifestyle if they would stick together as a group, but they don't. Trainers run the worst business model in the industry, with largely no one else to blame but ourselves – we have allowed it to happen.

RICHARD FREEDMAN continued...

On prize money levels in Australia

I'm cognisant of the need to have some aspirational prizes – big money races that can change people's lives. I am also a proponent of keeping the right balance between prize money levels at the top and at the bottom. I think the balance has tipped too far towards the top. If every maiden was worth say \$75k, and Class 1 races too, then more owners would be able to recoup more of their outlay sooner. Giving money to the highest class races gives more money to the fewest participants. That's just fine for some, but a poor result for many. I would like the pie to be "adjusted" so smaller players could get a larger slice. I think it would be for the greater good.

The changing fashions in the sport

Older racing folk often yearn for "the good old days" where there were huge crowds at the track all the time. Those days are gone, and despite some politicians making a very good living out of telling people they can turn the clock back – I've never seen it done. Racing is, and has been for quite some time, largely a for-TV sport. Many race club administrators lose sight of their most valuable asset. They'll tell you it's their real estate, grandstands, brand, etc, but the real asset in 2021 is the picture. The vision that goes to air that most of the participants and punters are watching is the asset that really generates the revenue. If that's second rate, the other stuff won't help and won't matter. When you see cars "in-shot" parked between the camera and the starting gates, you know the race club doesn't know what their most valuable asset is.

On advice to anyone wishing to work in the industry

As for advice, I like to think I am a realist, if sometimes brutally. Training is a VERY hard business. I gave Will plenty of other options and never pushed or even encouraged him into training. I know how tough it will be for him. Right now there would be no financial adviser who would encourage a person to take up training. Almost every other role in the racing and breeding industry would be less stressful. If it's your calling then so be it, but I think there will be fewer trainers in the future, each with larger stables, maybe a bit like Formula 1 motorsport – it will be very tough for small privateers to make it pay. Some of course will, most will not. Luckily the racing game is a broad church and there are many roles to be filled, so I have no fear that a person who has a calling to this industry can find a very satisfying position in the game we all love.

On the Freedman family legacy

I guess we underestimate our family "legacy" in this sport. Our great grandfather Billy "Midget" McLachlan rode three Melbourne Cup winners and his son Bill Jnr trained Catalogue to run 2nd in a Melbourne Cup. Both rode for the Royal family in England. Our heritage goes back a way. I think Will and his cousin Sam appreciate that perhaps better than Lee, Anthony, Michael and I did. We have had our share of luck too, but it's nice to see the boys doing well in family business. They have had better educations in the industry than we had, but they are appreciative and making the most of their opportunities, which is all you can ask of children I think.

QUIZ

WHO IS THIS

1. Who is the new trainer of Incentivise?
2. Who is the sire of Irish Derby winner Hurricane Lane?
3. Zayydani was the first stakes winner for which training partnership?



Mare by Testa Rossa out of Mary of Modena

NAME THE RACECOURSE



Hint - located in the de facto capital of the French state during WWII

OWNER PROFILE - JUSTIN WILLIAMS

Where did you grow up?

I was born in Canberra and we moved to Melbourne when I was aged 7. Grew up mostly out at Eltham which felt like a country town back then - my sisters rode horses and I enjoyed trail riding.

When did you first get interested in racing?

Our first horse named "Much" was in a syndicate in early 2000's, he had some success on country tracks but he couldn't step up to city racing. It was fun and our first foray into horse ownership.

Who was your first winner and where?

Think it was at Sale with Much but so long ago. In recent years when I started with OTI, Quick Thinker had his first win in his second outing at Ellerslie NZ where he won the Listed Champagne Stakes.

Most successful horses you've owned?

Quick Thinker - we've had so much fun with him and best part was that I have shared the journey with my father-in-law Peter, who has loved racing for many years and this was his first horse. He thinks horse ownership is easy now!

Race you would most like to win?

Melbourne Cup - that would be the ultimate.

When you win that special race, how will you celebrate?

Hard, and with very good champagne!

Favourite provincial racetrack?

Balnarring - beautiful setting surrounded by bushland and so laid back, we've had some wonderful times there with friends in a marquee by the track.

What racetrack/meeting/carnival do you enjoy attending?

Flemington as we've been going there for many years. Oaks Day is one of my favourite days.

Black Caviar, Winx or Makybe Diva?

All incredible horses with big hearts but I can't go past Makybe Diva - not sure we will ever see her record of 3 Melbourne Cups beaten.

What International races have you attended and particularly enjoyed?

Ripon Races in Yorkshire the only races I have been to offshore and we had a blast. Our daughter Lucy was born over there and we had a wonderful day there with her and my wife's parents. Great memories.



Which Internationals carnivals would you like to attend?

Have to say Royal Ascot, that would be something special.

Who introduced you to OTI/how did you get involved with OTI?

Georgie and I met Terry and his lovely wife Susan through the Chairman's Club in 2018. We were interested in getting back into horse ownership after a long break and the timing was perfect.

What do you enjoy about racehorse ownership?

Celebrating with friends and family. Took my father-in-law Peter up to the Sydney Cup recently where the crew from OTI and the ownership group for Selino welcomed us in and we all celebrated his win together.

Favourite jockey?

Has to be Opie Bosson for his ride in the Derby last year, that was sensational and at a time he was separated from family back home in NZ.

Favourite racing memory?

Watching Quick Thinker win the Australian Derby during lockdown last year at home with my wife and our girls. We were yelling at the TV, the dogs were barking and Georgie jumped into my arms, we couldn't believe it.

MATT STEWART

Even by racing standards, it's been a week of dramatic headlines.

The new Melbourne Cup rules are "horrendous" according to Charlie Fellowes and there are doping "Lance Armstrong's" in Ireland's training ranks according to Jim Bolger.

Locally, things are relatively quiet so the OTI Gazette thought it might be fun to invent some "racing headlines you'd never see."

Some require a dollop of inside knowledge. Example: **"OLLIE WINS GROUP ONE, SHOUTS BAR"**. As Elaine said of George in Seinfeld, Ollie is a tad "careful" with the coins.

Peter Moody is unlikely to wake to UK headlines of **"UK TRAINERS PRAISE MOODY'S INSIGHTS"** given Moody says UK trainers are caught in time warps and Aussie's run rings around them.

"GAI DECLARES SMART COLT CAN'T WIN SLIPPER" is as likely as **"THIS ISN'T THE BEST HORSE I'VE RIDDEN"** from Glen Boss, given Boss seems to rate a dozen horses as the best horse he has ridden.

"I'D LIKE TO THANK NO-ONE" would be as likely from Craig Williams as **"SURE, I'D LOVE TO DO A LENGTHY RADIO INTERVIEW"** from Jamie Kah or Damian Lane. Victoria's track managers are unlikely to declare **"IT'S CLOSER TO FAST TRACK THAN A GOOD 3"** just as Brisbane trainers won't be cock-a-hoop that **"EAGLE FARM WAS PRISTINE TODAY."**



The Melbourne Racing Club won't be announcing **"\$10 MILLION TO BE SPLURGED ON SANDOWN AMENITIES UPGRADE"** just as Racing Victoria will not reveal **"ALL STAR PURSE TO BE CUT IN HALF."**

A vendor at a yearling sale will not describe his colt as **"A BAD WALKER"** and the auctioneer at the same sale won't be hollering **"NOT AN EARLY RUNNER AND MAY NOT STAY".**

One last one: **"V'LANDYS, RACING VICTORIA ARM IN ARM AFTER BOOZY YUM CHA IN RICHMOND."** Ha, that'll be the day.

Got any we can add to the list?

FILM RECOMMENDATION - DREAM HORSE



Toni Collette and Damian Lewis star in the heartwarming film based on the true story of racehorse, Dream Alliance who was bred and owned by a group of friends from a small village in Wales, who with limited funds enjoy the highs and lows of racehorse ownership. Well worth a watch for anyone who loves the game of horse racing and owning racehorses. In cinemas now!

~ Rising 2yo Colt by the sire of Quick Thinker ~



OTI acquired PENSUER as a foal, and the athletic colt has developed and matured into a lovely individual. He will be trained by Mitch Freedman who described him as a *'Nice, athletic mover who has all the makings of a nice stayer'*.

Standing around 15.3 hands, PENSEUR has been given time to develop and mature with expectations that he will debut at the races in the second half of his 2yo year. Naturally, he will be targeted towards the 2022 VRC Derby in the spring, and the various 2023 Autumn Derbies to follow.

The colt is by So You Think, sire of OTI ATC Derby winner QUICK THINKER, and out of Loreto, a winner over 1100m and the half-sister to three winners of black-type races in Australia and Hong Kong. He also descends from the family of ATC Derby winner, Ace High.

For more information: oti@oti.com.au

QUIZ RESULTS

1. Peter Moody
2. Frankel
3. Ben and JD Hayes

WHO AM I
CHAILLOT
Winner of the GR3
Frances Tressady Stakes

NAME THE RACECOURSE
Vichy, host to 40 race meetings on both the flat and jumps through the season, including a seven day meeting in July.

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