



OTI GAZETTE

The official newsletter of OTI RACING



IN THIS WEEK'S EDITION

OTI NEWS

QUIZ

A CONVERSATION WITH JOHNNY MURTAGH

WINNERS

TERRY HENDERSON ON WHERE CHAMPIONS COME FROM

MATT STEWART

PROSPETTIVA - LOVELY 3YO FILLY

EQUINE WELFARE UPDATE - HAPPY PHARRELL

Happy New Racing Season

While July 31 gives us the chance to reflect on the achievements and disappointments of last season, August 1, in the Southern Hemisphere, welcomes in the dreams and excitement on a new one.

The industry in Australia did a marvellous job to keep racing going during a most challenging 20/21. We started the year under the cloud of COVID and we find we are still there as we start 21/22. When that cloud finally lifts, we can look back with pride on the way all parts of our sport managed to 'keep the show on the road'.

Whether you look at it as the 'the racing family' working together, or the more pragmatic view that we could not afford for it to stop, is semantics. The fact remains that we were one of the few sports in Australia that continued to function and one of the few racing jurisdictions in the world that operated without disruption.

At OTI, our partners enjoyed another satisfying year. For the second year running we had over 10 stakes winners, the highlight being Selino's Group 1 Sydney Cup win. We won races in six countries and enjoyed racing with a growing group of internationally based owners.

Going into the new season, our owners are blessed with a level of horse quality that exceeds previous years. Hopefully their dreams will be realised as their horses step forward to campaign for many of the top races in Australasia and Europe.

No doubt, the 21/22 season will be an interesting one. Let's hope there are plenty of winners for our owners to celebrate and that the impact of COVID is minimised. Our team at OTI, who did such a great job last year, will certainly be doing all they can to make our owner's racing involvement as successful and enjoyable as possible. Good luck!

At Flemington tomorrow

SLEEPLESS, should he gain a start, will face his toughest test to date in the 2000m BM78 for Archie Alexander and Declan Bates. The horse is well and heads into this race with winning form.

ROMANCER runs in the 1200m Group 3 Aurie's Star Handicap for Grahame Begg and Jordan Childs. Back to the races after a freshen at the beach, this should set him up well for more suitable targets in the spring.

At Randwick tomorrow

STUCK WITH YOU is likely to kick off his campaign in the 1300m BM78 for Matthew Dunn with Nash Rawiller in the saddle. Although short of his best, he has worked well leading in and looks set for a good campaign.

At Bairnsdale tomorrow

INDENTED HEAD runs in the 1200m 3yo Fillies Maiden for Phillip Stokes and Ben Allen. Sure to take good benefit from her debut, this filly will continue to improve with racing.

At Cork , Ireland tomorrow

CAMPHOR runs in the 2400m Group 3 Give Thanks Stakes for Jessica Harrington. A model of consistency, the mare faces a tough test again but would be deserving of more black-type success.

ROLLET runs in the 2400m 3yo+ Maiden for Joseph O'Brien off the back of a very encouraging debut last month at Dundalk. This son of Kingman looks to have a bright future.

At Deauville, France on Sunday

APOLLO appears set to make his racecourse debut over 1500m in an event for unraced two-year-olds. Trained by Christophe Ferland, he has shown a good deal of potential at home and we hope to see that reproduced on the track by this son of Siyouni.

KLOSTER is a likely runner in the 1600m Class 1 Handicap for Edouard Monfort. Now a more mature horse, he takes a step forward each time he races and should prove very competitive once again.

Next Wednesday, we will likely see the return of **EAGLES CRAG** at Sandown over 1600m. Trained by Archie Alexander, this exciting prospect will have plenty of lofty targets in the spring. **MARCHONS ENSEMBLE** runs over 2400m for Trent Busuttin & Natalie Young and should prove a strong winning chance.

QUIZ

1. Who is the new trainer of Alligator Blood?
2. Alcohol Free, winner of the GR1 Sussex Stakes over 1600m at Goodwood, is a colt or filly?
3. How many Sydney city winners were trained by Chris Waller in the 2020 -2021 season? 124 ,169 or 177

NAME THE RACECOURSE



Hint - Triple Crown

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

"A good jockey doesn't need orders and a bad jockey couldn't carry them out anyway; so best not to give them any!"

- Lester Piggott

A CONVERSATION WITH JOHNNY MURTAGH

On his introduction to racing

My parents didn't have any interest or involvement in racing, but when I was 15 my mother wrote to the Apprentice School in Kildare, Ireland to enquire if there was a place for me. I'd never ridden a horse, but luckily I was accepted for the 10-week course, and as soon as I was there around the horses I knew it was for me. I was always into all sports, and boxed pretty seriously. I had good balance, was light and tenacious and those skills probably helped me when it came to riding.

On the highs and lows of racing

There are plenty of each, and the key is not to get much of either. Whether you've just won a Group 1, or had a bad race, the next one is your most important. It is a tough game, with a lot of hard work. I struggled with my weight and had to make a lot of sacrifices in my career, and there were times I thought I couldn't ride for much longer, but racing is like a drug. It is hard to give up.

On riding in Australia

I went to Australia when I was an apprentice and rode 10 winners. It was hard work with the very early starts but a great experience to be able to ride some very good horses for some of the great trainers like Neville Begg, Bart Cummings, Bobby Thompson and Peter Myer. I also rode trackwork for TJ Smith a couple of times. I think the best horse I rode was Shaftesbury Avenue.

On starting to train

I didn't really know what I would do after I gave up riding, but I always knew it would be in racing in some form, as I didn't know much else since I'd been at the Apprentice School from 15. I had a lot of experience riding for the best trainers around the world and picked up things from them all. Things fell my way, and I'm grateful they did as I love training.

On the benefit of riding experience when training

The experience of being a jockey has helped me as I know what it takes to win big races, what type is needed, as well as the tracks that various horses will handle.



On the nerves, and instructions to jockeys

I'm definitely more nervous now when I have a runner in a big race than when I was riding. I guess I am now far more aware of all the work that goes on behind the scenes and what it all means for the team. We had our first Group 1 winner with Changers Elysees last year, but sadly none of the owners were able to be there as we were in lockdown, but it still gave us all great satisfaction. Early on in my training career I was tougher on jockeys but I've now come to be more relaxed. They should have done their homework and be able to tell me how the race will be ridden.

On training on the Curragh

I believe the training facilities are some of the best and I've been fortunate to ride on many private and public courses around the world. We have 30 miles of gallops including woodchip, sand/fibre and grass. Walsh's Hill has been used by some of the great champions like Sea The Stars. I'm really starting to get a feel for the place from the ground now, as before I knew it from the riding the horses, but now I can really get a gauge on how they are going from watching them going past me on particular pieces of land.

On his role on the television coverage of racing

I've always enjoyed being a part of it. They are a great team from the presenters to all the people behind the camera. I've less time to do it now that I'm far busier training horses, and that is absolutely my number one priority, but I like stepping in when I can.

On the OTI pair Mirann and Ottoman Emperor

MIRANN is a horse on the up and we haven't hit the jackpot yet. He is entered in the Ebor and I believe he is a horse that will run well over the distance.

OTTOMAN EMPEROR, well we just don't know how good he is yet. He is a big baby, who will learn so much from his victory in the Gordon Stakes at Goodwood as that was the first time he was in front of a crowd, and with the travelling experience he gained. He is entered in the English St Leger which is a GR1 Classic over 2800m. He will need to improve but is certainly a very exciting prospect with a great future.

OTI WINNERS IN JULY



OTTOMAN EMPEROR

Goodwood
GR3 Gordon Stakes
Trained by Johnny Murtagh



I'M THUNDERSTUCK

Moonee Valley
1514m 3YO Handicap
Trained by Mick Price & Michael Kent Jnr



I'M THUNDERSTRUCK

Flemington
1400m 3YO Handicap
Trained by Mick Price & Michael Kent Jnr



MISTA RAZZLEDAZZLE

Casterton
1100m Maiden Plate
Trained by Lindsey Smith



SLEEPLESS

Mildura
2000m BM70
Trained by Archie Alexander



TAAFFEITE

Ipswich
1700m 3YO Maiden
Trained by Matthew Dunn



OTTOMAN EMPEROR

Navan
2000m 3YO Conditions
Trained by Johnny Murtagh



SCHWANENSEE

Castara-Verduzan
2400m Class 4 Handicap
Trained by Antoine de Watrigant

CHAMPIONS COME FROM ANYWHERE

by Terry Henderson

Federico Tesio, considered as the only genius ever to operate in the breeding world had a saying, "Good horses breed good horses, but champions can come from anywhere." How true!

As the careers of three prodigious OTI horses feature in these last few weeks, that quote is front of mind.

As a result of a suspensory issue, it appears that Grande Dame of OTI, **TRUE SELF**, has ran her last race. The 8yo mare excelled in Ireland, Saudi Arabia and Melbourne. She also acquitted herself well against the world's best in Hong Kong.

Over the past five seasons when either owned exclusively by the Three Mile Partnership in Ireland, or by OTI and TMP, she gave her all. She finishes her racing days as a much love thoroughbred.



TRUE SELF

Amazing however, that wasn't always the case. When presented for sale at a jumpers auction in Cheltenham in 2016, no one wanted her. She was passed in for only £18,000. Subsequently, she was sold to Neville Eagar and his friends (Three Mile Partnership) and sent to Willie Mullins as a jumper. She soon became dual-code and the rest is history.

When **I'M THUNDERSTRUCK** won at Flemington in mid-July, 'industry experts' quickly labelled him as a future Group 1 horse. Their opinion gained support when he won again at Moonee Valley on July 31. Purchased following an impressive trial win at Te Aroha, the 4yo gelding was not offered for sale as a yearling. He was simply seen as being uncommercial. This view was supported by the original purchase of his dam, who only brought \$2,400 when she was bought as a yearling.

I'M THUNDERSTRUCK is now spelling in readiness for an attack on the \$7.5m Golden Eagle in Sydney in October.

Glorious Goodwood lived up to its name for the Johnny Murtagh trained **OTTOMAN EMPEROR** when he won the Group 3 Gordon Stakes on July 29. This impressive colt now heads to the English St Leger where he is second favourite in pre-post betting.

OTTOMAN EMPEROR attracted the princely sum of €7,500 when sold as an early yearling. Before and after that sale, he was entered in four other sales and subsequently withdrawn. Showing promise in a jumpout at Dundalk, he was bought by OTI.

OTTOMAN EMPEROR'S owners have a very exciting horse. For the next four weeks, they can dream that their colt, who few valued highly in the early part of his career, can now win a Classic.

Despite what price may be put on a youngster, there will always be champions that come from anywhere. Tesio also said, "A horse gallops with his lungs, perseveres with his heart, and wins with his character."

Few judges can assess the last of these qualities before a horse has had a chance to compete.

MATT STEWART

I'd heard bits and pieces of Jacinta Parsons on the ABC but other than a few fuzzy spots through the Otways, I had the pleasure of her company for an uninterrupted couple of hours earlier this week.

On that meandering stretch between Apollo Bay and Port Fairy on Tuesday, Parsons first invited listeners to list Geelong's many attributes, from A to Z. I was reminded of that great town icon "the Sphinx", an Egyptian themed monstrosity of a hotel down by the foreshore. A mystery was also solved. That weird concrete pipe thingy that you see on the bypass on the Colac side of Geelong is actually a disused sewerage aqueduct.

Jacinta then moved on to the topic of "saying sorry". When are apologies warranted, when are they hollow, how damaging is it when "sorry" doesn't come.

Driving through Laver's Hill, fantasised that Gladys had approached that every-damned-morning lectern and said "you know what? I've made a complete hash of this and I'm very sorry. I'm gonna make good."

This, of course, was as likely as a spring carnival full of international horses or a trackman admitting "you know what? I should have watered more. This track is a tarmac."

It's also as unlikely as Racing Victoria fessing up that it botched big time with the race-free week, a concept that fell apart the moment the participants – and not RV, regrettably – realised that little would change (nothing in the case of the trainers) other than that there would be no trials or jump-outs and truckloads of entries and ballots for weeks to come.

Instead, RV issued a statement saying everything but sorry. RV insisted it had consulted, via a poll 18 months ago that attracted responses from only half the trainers. More than half of those voted against it. RV insisted most jockeys had agreed to it. It said trainers had been hollering incessantly that they were tired and "over-raced" and that RV had listened and done something about it, and that the trainers still weren't happy.



But not once did RV say "you know what, this was ill-considered. We should have thought about the ripple effect, but we neglected to. We've learned from this, we're only human, we're sorry and we'll do better." A mate of mine who is not completely honourable once told me his terrible secret.

He said that when you'd done something so despicable that there was nowhere to hide, whether domestically, at work or wherever, there was a line you could use to defuse. He said it was fail-safe.

"You say, "no-one feels as bad about it as I do," he said, adding: "It stops them in their tracks. They suddenly sympathize even though they were coming at you with a carving knife seconds earlier."

Next time, RV should try this, and actually mean it. They'd be better perceived for it.

They should also consult more and get out and about more. Get a feel for their constituents and their concerns.

The trainers could also take a breath. They gripe endlessly about being overworked and use RV as their punching bag.

Maybe they should focus more on managing their time and their businesses, spend time nurturing staff into positions that allow them to duck off to Byron for a week in July, treat the abundance of races put on RV as an opportunity to pick and choose, not come at RV with a carving knife.

PROSPETTIVA TO MATT WILLIAMS

~ Impressive 3yo trial-winning filly ~



Evidently showing good stamina, this filly has the racing credentials, bloodlines as well as the conformation to say she will be best suited to racing middle distances and further, but she also has the speed to be competitive over 1600m.

Our NZ agent, Phill Cataldo has followed the progress of this filly in her trials, and made the purchase on our behalf after she won her second trial, beating a horse who was already placed in a premium two year old race.

Standing at just under 15.3 hands, this bay filly vetted with little comment. She has a wide girth, excellent feet and a Grade 1 scope, and will be trained by Matt Williams from his property in Warrnambool.

To view her trial win, click [here](#).

For more information, contact oti@oti.com.au.

QUIZ RESULTS

1. Billy Healey. Due to be trained by Gai Waterhouse and Adrian Bott, plans have had to change with the NSW covid restrictions and he will now remain in a QLD trainer's care.

2. Filly. By No Nay Never, out of Plying, she was a GR1 winner at two. At three she won the GR1 Coronation against her own sex, before taking on the colts in the GR1 Sussex Stakes at Goodwood.

3. 169 - A 11th straight NSW championship for Waller.

NAME THE RACECOURSE

Belmont, New York, USA.

Home of the third leg of the US Triple Crown. Racing has taken place since 1905, with the main dirt track being known as "The Big Sandy".

EQUINE WELFARE PROGRAM - HAPPY PHARRELL

Equine Welfare Update: Happy Pharrell
Commencing his racing career in the famous Deauville stables of Jean Claude Rouget, before relocating to the astute operation of Ciaron Maher and David Eustace in Ballarat,

Happy Pharrell has experienced an assortment of top-level training environments. However, it appears as though only now, has the striking chestnut found his 'happy place' at Willowbank Equestrian.

After an injury riddled career forced his early retirement, Happy Pharrell was rehomed to Willowbank Equestrian in April, a thoroughbred re-training facility on the banks of Macclesfield, Victoria. The figure at the centre of this fantastic operation is Bianca Austin, a highly experienced horsewoman with a strong love for the animal.

Now known as 'Charlie', the 6-year-old has flourished in his new environment, appreciating the relaxed surroundings of Bianca's property.

"He loves going on happy hacks around the farm, seeing and hearing all the sights and sounds." Bianca said.

"He's got a big beautiful canter and everyone loves him, he tries so hard to please."

In his limited exposure to the showjumping caper, the son of Manduro has already shown glimpses of ability.



"We've only done a small amount with Charlie so far as we gave him a few months off following his injury. Whilst he's still very green, he's showing so much promise and is a pleasure to do anything with." Bianca explained.

As a member of OTI's Equine Welfare Program, we are most excited to follow 'Charlie's' journey, with a successful showjumping career potentially on the cards!

In rehoming our much-loved thoroughbreds following retirement, the need for re-training programs such as Bianca's becomes most apparent. Welfare bodies must ensure continued funding and expansion of these pathways, in order to provide an avenue for all owners to transition their thoroughbreds into a suitable role post-racing.

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