



# OTI GAZETTE

*The official newsletter of OTI RACING*



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### Key Indicator of Global Growth of Racing

When we in Australia have \$1 million races each week throughout spring, the significance of an international meeting in Bahrain may seem minor, especially when the feature race of the carnival will only carry a stake of 500,000 pounds sterling.

The Bahrain initiative however is a further reflection of the ongoing expansion of racing throughout the world. For over two centuries, thoroughbred racing, as we know it, was the province of western countries. In the post war era, organisations like Godolphin and race clubs like The Hong Kong Jockey Club changed that.

While the popularity of racing seemed to be waning in some countries like Italy, major players from Asia and Middle Eastern countries took up the void. For the past decade, many in the UK have been concerned for the day when organisations like Godolphin, Juddmonte and Shadwell lost their elderly leaders. Two have now passed away and despite major changes with their organisations, armageddon has not yet followed. In fact, their buying power and racing stocks seemed to have been quickly replaced by either new entrants and or growth in established operations.

Bahrain simply happens to be the latest in a growing line of countries that help fuel the popularity (and markets) for racehorses. The money available from the Dubai World Cup meeting, which only started 25 years ago, is incredible. The Saudi Cup in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, only commenced two years ago. Again, the stakes are in the tens of millions of US dollars. Qatar, while not as financially attractive as a race meeting, continues to gain popularity. Various Qatar based racing organisations are now major sponsor of races, especially in Europe.

Combined with the attractive stake money available in places like Australia and the USA, the global growth of the sport seems assured. The Bahrain initiative is simply the latest indication that the sport will continue to grow in popularity around the globe.

# OTI NEWS

An exciting weekend ahead including Group 1 runners.

## Tonight at The Valley.

**DARVIN** runs in the 3000m BM78 for Matthew Williams and Dean Yendall from barrier 5. Wearing blinkers, we hope to see an improvement in form after working well at home.

**MARCHONS ENSEMBLE** also runs in the 3000m BM78 for Trent Busuttin & Natalie Young from barrier 1 with Craig Newitt riding. With a favourable draw, we are hopeful of a strong effort from this consistent performer.

**MILESTONE** runs in the 2040m BM64 for Trent Busuttin & Natalie Young with apprentice Thomas Stockdale riding from barrier 5. Stepping up in trip, he should run very well.

## Tomorrow at Randwick

**CEPHEUS** will run in the 2000m Group 2 Hill Stakes for Matthew Dunn and Jason Collett from barrier 1. Working nicely at home, he is now up to a more preferred distance, albeit in strong company.

**ATTORNEY** runs in the Group 1 Metropolitan Handicap over 2400m for Matthew Smith and James McDonald in the saddle from barrier 20. After a very good effort last start, we are hopeful of a big run despite the wide alley.

**QUICK THINKER** also lines up in the Group 1 Metropolitan Handicap for Murray Baker & Andrew Forsman with Kerrin McEvoy aboard from barrier 18.

After a fantastic second in the Newcastle Gold Cup, he remains in terrific order as he bids for a second Group 1 victory at this track and distance.

## Tomorrow at Flemington

**SELINO** runs in the 2520m Group 3 The Bart Cummings for Chris Waller and Damian Lane from barrier 4. The reigning Sydney Cup champion has travelled well to Melbourne and is sure to be suited by the open spaces of Flemington.

**AMADE** also lines up in the Group 3 The Bart Cummings for Phillip Stokes and Ben Allen from barrier 10. Enduring an unlucky passage last start, he goes into this race in fine form and we are hopeful of a good performance from the talented galloper.

## Tomorrow at Doomben

**SOUTHERN ROCK** will contest the 2030m BM80 for Matthew Dunn with Ron Stewart riding from barrier 11. Relishing his new environment, we look forward to seeing him build on his positive effort last start when finishing 2nd.

## On Sunday at Bendigo

**SPIRIT OF GAYLARD** returns in the 1500m Maiden for Mitch Freedman and Jordan Childs from barrier 9. The three-year-old colt by Puissance de Lune is running for the first time this prep after an encouraging fifth on his only racecourse start at Flemington as a two-year-old.

## Next Weekend

Another exciting weekend at Caulfield with both **HARBOUR VIEWS** and **I'M THUNDERSTRUCK** being aimed at the Group 1 Toorak Handicap over 1600m, and **BARADE** and **FUTURE SCORE** looking to run in the Group 2 Herbert Power Stakes over 2400m.

## WINNERS



## CHAILLOT

1300m Listed Testa Rossa Stakes, Sandown  
*Trained by Archie Alexander*



## EAGLES CRAG

1606m BM64, Benalla  
*Trained by Archie Alexander*

# A CONVERSATION WITH MATT CUMANI

## On his childhood

I'm pretty sure the 4:20 at Lingfield would have been on in the maternity ward when I was born! Racing has been a part of my life from the very beginning. My father's office was in the middle of our home and everything revolved around it and the stable - My bedroom overlooked the courtyard where horses were hand walked in the morning; it's pretty special waking up every day to the gentle four beat crunch of horses walking on gravel. I loved being a part of that family of 150 horses, 70 staff and a great group of owners. My father's two Epsom Derby's were the most significant early racing memories. As a seven year old I watched from the kitchen table as Kahyasi won it in '88 and felt the excitement but didn't understand the significance. High Rise's Derby in '99 I was there and both the excitement and the significance was overwhelming. I've been chasing one ever since!

## On training in different countries

Every trainer in the world is walking the same tight-rope: train your horse to be as strong and as fit as possible without getting injured. Each trainer has a slightly different approach to maintaining that balance and some prefer to lean one way more than the other. My experiences have shown me what happens if you go too far one way or the other. Each trainer has to adapt to the environment they are training and racing in and the more experience you have as a budding trainer the more you understand and the more tools you develop in order to be able to adapt to your own training and racing environment.

## On his father travelling horses

While he wasn't the first to travel horses internationally he certainly perfected it and over the span of his career won stakes races in 13 different countries. I will never be able to match that training from Victoria but it is certainly an ambition of mine to train winners internationally. In order to be able to travel horses long distances (and this most definitely applies to interstate travel as well) you firstly need to understand your horse and understand what effect long journeys might have on him or her. It then comes down being meticulous in your efforts to mitigate the potential problems and to being attentive enough to pick up on the smallest of changes to the horses attitude and identify the cause quickly before it becomes a performance affecting problem.



## On the mentors in his career

Naturally my father and mother have had the most influence on how I train. And both still influence me in different ways. Since coming to Australia however I have leaned on Terry Henderson a significant amount and he has been a mentor to me in many different ways, particularly when it comes to how to set-up and run a training operation.

## On the new veterinary requirements for International runners for the Melbourne Cup

Sadly I think the aggressive and dogmatic approach RV have taken was needed given the issues Australia's greatest race has had in the past decade. It's a shame it has come to this and it would have been better if the issues had been identified earlier and the measures had been put in place in a more graded manner over a number of years. But, I don't think this will diminish the appeal of the race - so long as the prize money stays high it will always be a sought after trophy.

## On the work / life balance for trainers

The working hours for a trainer are pretty time full on - it's a way of life rather than a job. I try to keep Sunday's free to spend a bit of time with Sarah and our two boys. I have the advantage of living on the track so while I'm time poor I do get to see the family for lunch when I'm not racing and that's something not a lot of people can say. I think the racing free week was worth trying but I don't think it's the answer.



## A CONVERSATION WITH MATT CUMANI

### On whether racing can survive without the whip

Absolutely it can. I don't have a problem with the whip when used within reason and when the horse is given time to respond but there's no doubt it limits racing's potential appeal. I am convinced whip-free racing is part of our future. We need to decide how we get there. We need to take control of the narrative, discuss and explore the idea of whip free races within racing because the alternative is a continued and ugly debate that pits racing against "animal welfare" and will only do our image harm and inevitably lead to us losing a whole swathe of potential fans.

The whip currently has an important place in racing not only when considering control and safety but also for the spectacle. It helps build excitement by animating jockeys as the race reaches its climax. But this doesn't mean racing can't survive without it; in fact I believe the opposite is true. Jockeys will find new ways to encourage their horse which will increase the diversity between jockey styles. It could also be argued that it will promote the more genuine racehorse.

Racing is about pitting the best racehorses against each other to find a champion. We try to breed the next champion by selecting certain traits and crossing them. Some of the traits we value are speed, endurance, temperament and soundness; taking the whip away will promote another important trait: the will to win. Horses that are naturally competitive and don't need the whip for encouragement will rise to the top and that can only be a good thing.



### On the use of data and sport science in training

We are exploring various different technologies but at the moment the hardware used to collect data is costly and impractical. It is evolving fast though and will soon play an essential part in training a racehorse. However, its use should not be over stated and too much data can be blinding; I think it will be a very useful tool (rather than a method in itself) that will compliment traditional training methods.

### On the horses he looks forward to running this spring

Apart from our promising stayers (Future Score, Nobel Heights, Sous Les Nuages and Taramansour), I think we have a top class group of two year olds in particular two Guineas and Derby hopes by Pierro and Dundee (x Bengal Angel). The latter reminds me of Hit the Shot (another Dundee who came second in last year's Victoria Derby before being sold to HK) although I have a feeling that he's going to have more speed and be ready a little earlier – hopefully for a two year old campaign.

## OTI QUIZ

1. How many Group 1 winners in Australia has jockey Daniel Moor ridden?
2. Which horse has the record for winning two Epsom's and Doncaster's in 1990 and 1991?
3. Who trains Johnny Get Angry?

### NAME THE RACECOURSE



*Hint - opened in 2000*

# MATT STEWART

For most of my career in racing at the Sporting Globe and Herald Sun, there was no such phenomenon as AFL trade week.

It was an off-field bartering thing that went on behind the scenes with a few pars in the paper if some gun recruit was snapped up by Carlton or Collingwood.

But the bigger the AFL became in the Herald Sun and other papers, the bigger trade week became. It grew tentacles.

Football had always retreated after the AFL Grand Final and returned with the summer competition. It handed the sporting mantle and the back page to racing, starting with the Turnbull Stakes meeting at Flemington.

Back in the day, before trade week became a giant octopus, racing was afforded six weeks in the sun – seven if you included the big Sandown meeting which had been on the fade for at least a decade before the Melbourne Racing Club dismantled it all together and took the meeting to Caulfield. Trade week has been stealing the first two weeks of racing's spring for over a decade.

Right up to the Caulfield Cup, it had become increasingly difficult to shift footy from the prime sport pages.

A pimple-faced teenager gets traded for a small fortune – there's your back page lead.

A champion horse wins the Turnbull or Caulfield Stakes, skim to the "back of the book", the last pages of sport before the sport results and obituaries.

It takes a mighty racing story or an easily-absorbed racing story to bump trade week. Black Caviar pulled it off. Winx's four Cox Plates were won just as the last embers of trade week were disappearing.

We were chatting on RSN this week about how racing could "reinvent the story" to attract interest at a time when the AFL has become a monster rival.



Racing people mostly – and passionately – disagreed with my idea that the Cox Plate should become a possibly hand-picked race for the super elite. It's called the race of champions, so make it so.

I suggested ratings that have elevated so-so competitors into the field should be scrapped, as should the field limit of 14 plus four emergencies. If there are only six elite horses, run just six horses. If there are eight, run eight; 10, run 10.

The recent Irish Champion Stakes was another wonderful example of how epic a small field can be when they're all good, and all aggressive competitors. St Mark's Basilica won but only after a brutal struggle with Tarnawa and Co.

Back in the day, the US match races – War Admiral/Seabiscuit etc – captured imaginations beyond the racing bubble.

The ill-fated Ruffian/Foolish Pleasure match-race at Belmont in July 1975, girl versus boy, captured a huge audience, even beyond sport. The selling points were irresistible.

It would be similar with a Cox Plate only for the elite. Sporting fans accustomed to one-on-one contests, whether boxing, tennis or team grudge matches, understand the simple allure of this. So do sport's editors.

A 14-horse Cox Plate with only a handful of runners familiar to sport's fans is not back page material. Six household names, horse celebrities, heroes, very much is.

# OTI PURCHASE VINA SENA WITH HENRY DE BROMHEAD

*~ Vadamos colt due to run in October after impressive trial ~*



After purchasing Group 3 and four-time winner **OTTOMAN EMPEROR** last year from Irish barrier trials, OTI continue to follow the batches held at Dundalk.

This year, **VINA SENA** caught our attention after finishing third, with one of the quickest closing sectionals of the day under minimal riding.

The athletic son of Vadamos, out of a very well regarded European family, is trained by Henry de Bromhead in County Waterford, Ireland. He will stay in training in Ireland until the end of the 2022 season before travelling to Australia.

Henry de Bromhead is one of Ireland's leading trainers, with 2021 being one of his best seasons yet winning all of the major races at the Cheltenham Festival, as well as winning Group races on the flat including the Henry II Stakes at Sandown.

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

## OTI QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Two
2. Super Impose
3. Denis Pagan

### NAME THE RACECOURSE

Kranji, Singapore.  
The Singapore Turf Club was founded in 1842, with the previous racetrack being at Bukit Time since 1933.

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