



# OTI GAZETTE

*The official newsletter of OTI RACING*



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## The Stakes Void Between NSW and Vic Racing

The latest prizemoney announcements by Racing NSW have undoubtedly set the cat amongst the pigeons at Racing Victoria. The increases further widens the void in prizemoney gap between the two states. In doing so, it creates questions from Victorian trainers and owners on why this is happening.

In total, a further \$25m will be distributed in stakes in NSW. In summary, those funds will be directed to:

- Increases to minimum stakes levels for black-type races, minimums for Saturday races up to \$150,000, midweek races to \$55,000, \$40,000 for provincial races as well as increases across the board for country and picnic meetings
- The introduction of two new \$2m races during Melbourne Cup week

The annual reports of both jurisdictions showed that between 2009/10 and 2019/20, stakes returns to owners in NSW grew from \$141m to \$279m, an increase of \$138m (97.9%). Whereas in Victoria it grew from \$160m to \$252m, an increase of \$92m (57.5%). Last week's announcement serves to widen the difference.

The tactic of introducing new races that may interfere with the traditional programming is an important issue, however the more important issue to industry stakeholders is that NSW is now a more attractive proposition from a prize money perspective to race horses than Victoria.

There's no doubt that Peter VLandys is totally focused on the development of NSW racing, irrespective of the impact on racing elsewhere in Australia. He has a business structure, management and the finances that enable him to be ambitious, creative and aggressive in achieving his aims. Clearly, while he is disrupting the status quo, its hard to blame him when NSW racing is thriving.

So rather than question NSW's actions, maybe its Racing Victoria who should be asked why its allowing the void to develop.

A busy weekend of runners for our owners.

## On Friday night at The Valley

Both **DAQIANSWEET JUNIOR** and **FUTURE SCORE** will contest the 2500m Listed Torney Night Cup (Race 6 – 8:45pm). The former is looking to make it five wins in a row and according to Phillip Stokes, has shown no signs of training off since his success at this track and distance last start. With the services of Jamie Kah again, we hope to see him overcome the wide draw and progress to Group level.

The latter, **FUTURE SCORE**, showed encouraging signs at Flemington in December and although he faces an unsuitably long gap between runs, this is an important race in the lead up to a tilt at the Adelaide Cup.

## On Saturday at Flemington

**SCARLET TUFTY** will step to a mile second-up in the 1600m Benchmark 84 (Race 2 – 1:15pm) for the Maher & Eustace camp. Though he is sure to improve again for this run and would be better suited to a staying affair, he will enjoy the open spaces of Flemington.

## On Saturday at Ellerslie (NZ)

Our latest acquisition, **REGAL LION** will take his new connections straight to Group level in the 2100m Group 2 Avondale Guineas (Race 7 – 2:00pm ADST). Expected to peak in the New Zealand Derby in a fortnight's time, Murray Baker & Andrew Forsman are not ruling out a top four showing from our 3yo, who has drawn ideally in barrier 3.

## At Sunshine Coast on Saturday

**HAKY** is the first of our three runners on the Sunshine Coast, as he backs up in the 2200m Benchmark 85 (Race 3 – 2:17pm ADST). Blinkers go on for the first time and Ryan Moloney will be instructed to go forward and put him into the race. Hopefully he can show that he still has the desire to be a racehorse.

Sure to improve out further in trip in time, **GAMBU** will be kept to 1600m in the 3yo Handicap (Race 4 – 2:53pm ADST). Chris Waller expects another good showing from the son of Redwood, whose next campaign will be based around getting to the QLD Derby.

**NEVER NO MORE** faces his best chance of getting his nose in front since moving to Australian shores as he contests the 1400m Benchmark 90 (Race 6 – 4:13pm ADST). Having trained on well in preparation for his third up run, Matt Dunn is expecting the gelding, who has shown he's in a great headspace, to figure in the finish.

## WINNERS



### INVERELL

Sandown, 1400m Class 1  
*Trained by Clayton Douglas*



### CATENA ZAPATA

Dundalk, 1600m 4yo+ Handicap  
*Trained by Henry de Bromhead*

## At Cagnes sur Mer (FR) on Saturday

**KLOSTER** was an impressive last start winner at this track and distance, and is now set to feature in a valuable 1500m Class 2 (Race 4 – 1:15am Sund ADST). Trainer Edouard Monfort can't fault the lead up work of this gelding, who continues to improve with age.

## At Ballarat on Sunday

Provided he takes his place from the wide draw, **EAGLEMONT** is more than capable of featuring on return in the 1600m Benchmark 64 (Race 8 – 4:55pm). The strength of his lead up trials gives confidence he's benefitted from being given the time to acclimatise.

## At Launceston on Sunday

**PROSPETTIVA** will feature in black-type company in the 2100m Listed Tasmanian Oaks (Race 5 – 5:20pm) following an impressive staying performance last start. She obviously takes a big step up in grade, but has always looked a filly who would enjoy getting out to this kind of trip. Hopefully her owners making the trip across the Bass Strait are rewarded!

# A CONVERSATION WITH TOM DABERNIG

## On his early childhood

I was very lucky to live on the property, Lindsay Park. My father, Arthur Dabernig was the stud manager and my mother Jan Dabernig worked in the office. My Grandfather was the leading trainer in Victoria and South Australia and was a very busy man. I had a close relationship with him and my grandmother Betty, and was surrounded by some wonderful horseman.

## On his grandfather, the legendary Colin Hayes

My grandfather was a very disciplined man. A kind horseman and believed in creating a natural environment for his horses to thrive and reach their full potential. He would always drum into me to establish a routine for the horses and staff and for a horse to perform well they have to be happy.

## On his experience working abroad

After my Grandfather passed away (I was 21 at the time) I travelled abroad to the UK and Ireland where I worked in Lambourn and Newmarket and also worked in Ireland. I was an experienced rider and worked for Barry Hills, Peter Chapple-Hyam, Dave Watchman and Charles Egerton. I predominantly rode track work and would attend race meetings when I had the opportunity. I was fascinated in how they trained stayers. Although each trainer had a different style their work on a daily basis was stronger slow work which they call a swinging canter and less galloping which I found to be great for building base fitness. Also, the tempo at which European races are run at is a lot more even than Australia and allows horses to use their action and get into a rhythm, as opposed to Australia where a lot of our races are at a sit and sprint tempo.

## On some of the best horses he was involved with

I was lucky enough to train in partnership Criterion who had an unbelievable constitution and was naturally a very fit horse. Redkirk Warrior was an interesting horse, who started his racing career in the UK and then was sold to Hong Kong. He arrived in Australia out of form and the connections believed he was a 2000m horse. Due to soundness troubles we had to keep his work load relatively light and he ended up a Group 1 sprinter in Australia.



## On training now in his own right

The transition to training in my own name has been relatively smooth. I have been lucky I started training horses at the age of 28 and now at the age of 45 I feel very comfortable in the role. My head man Darren Bell also worked at Lindsay Park and then trained in his own right in QLD. He is a fantastic support to me. Although our team is only small, I have been able to surround myself with some top quality people.

## On choosing to train in Warrnambool

I chose Warrnambool as I like the country environment for the horses. The horses are able to get access to work on turf almost any day of the week, along with the beach which is a fantastic recovery tool and also great for the horses' mental well being.

## On his training ambitions

My ambitions for the future are to train a smaller, but quality team of horses. I feel like I can be more hands on with the horses, more personable with the clients and employees.

## If he were in charge of racing, what would he change

I am a big supporter of country racing. The majority of horses compete on our country tracks and it is the gateway to preparing horses at metro level. I think that country prize money needs to increase so that horses are given the opportunity to pay their way and would result in client retention.

## On life as a trainer

You can not treat racing as a job, it is a way of life. Unfortunately, I have never been able to find the time for hobbies, but I have enjoyed in my new venture being able to bring my family and children into my lifestyle. This has been extremely rewarding.



# MATT STEWART



How many bullets are left in the state versus state shootout?

An insider told me this week that while Sydney has endless rounds, via its TAB wagering model, Victoria has just one bullet left.

Does Racing Victoria aim up one last time to the most recent spring barrage from Peter V'landys? If it does, then what?

As peacemaker, John Messara has all-but given up. Messara returned to the Racing Australia chair some months ago and his almost sole mission was to bring all parties, the state PRA's, to the RA table to thrash out issues of national interest that had been left dangling for years; drug rules, whips, The Pattern, and so on.

Every state bar one has been keen to return to the table. When Messara diplomatically says that it has been difficult to draw everyone to it, he is referring only to V'landys whose blinkered NSW parochialism has not just threatened the protected-status of the Melbourne spring carnival but any hope of cohesion in Australian horse racing.

For me, V'landys' big ticks, his top end achievements, have seduced many into thinking he has, in fact, been a great administrator. "He's done great for NSW," they demand, and skyrocketing prizemoney for pop up races and some minor offerings for grass roots gives a sense that NSW is rocking along.

An announcement last week that Warwick Farm would be given a major overhaul suggested boring stuff, like fixing tracks, was an agenda item for Racing NSW but the fact is they've cared too little for too long about the state of the tracks that host these multi-million dollar pop up races. The state of often rain-soaked NSW city tracks has never been of great concern to Victorian administrators but the creation of races aimed solely at chipping away at our spring certainly has.

The latest assault has seen the creation of a race called The Five Diamonds that makes zero sense other than to entice runners from our Emirates and Mackinnon Stakes. An 1800m race for FIVE-YEAR-OLDS (what the?) run on Stakes Day serves only to damage two Melbourne races in one go, one at 1600m and the other 2000m

.The quantum leap of Spring Champion Stakes prizemoney to \$2 million is aimed solely at teasing the best three-year-old stayers away from the Victoria Derby. For decades, Spring Champion winners have enriched the Derby, but V'landys wants that avenue closed.

Victoria has mostly fought fire with fire to these spring raids; a prizemoney hike here, a bonus there. As yet, there is no return fire to last week's whistling bullets.

Is there a better way?

The problem is almost every response requires spending more money. Tradition is a mighty factor in racing but when push comes to shove, owners and trainers chase the cash.

Will Melbourne turn its sights away from this endless spring shootout?

Racing NSW has given up on the autumn because it's usually wet, crowds have stagnated and the Rugby attracts most of the eyeballs.

It is very likely that Victoria will turn its sights to March and early April and instead of politely parlaying into Sydney, our autumn might collide with it and provide a dry track alternative.

Racing Victoria will now have no option but to search under the couch and find a few million to dramatically boost prizemoney for traditional attractions such as the Newmarket Handicap and Australian Cup, and it might adjust summer/autumn programming to allow these races to be run later.

Could Easter become Grand Final time for the Melbourne autumn carnival?

If Victoria responds to the most recent V'landys salvo with more spring prizemoney or a pop up, it might find it has no more bullets, not even for the autumn, the next time NSW takes aim.

# OTI OWNER PROFILE - KRISTIAN EVANS



**Where did you grow up?** I grew up in Keiraville, a beautiful leafy suburb in Wollongong.

**When did you first get interested in racing?** I'm sports mad, I love playing and watching any form of sport. I played a lot of Rugby and Cricket and in my late teens I was playing with men who enjoyed a punt, so one thing led to another and I started to show interest in racing. It was also around the same time Sunline was very dominant, so I loved watching her at her peak.

**Who was your first winner and where?** My first winner was Raiden on a Wednesday at Warwick Farm. Very memorable day.

**Most successful horses you've owned?** Hopefully the next one. But I would have to say Haky, he has placed twice in a Group 2 and Group 3 race in France, came 3rd in the Geelong Cup. He also won at Flemington on Anzac Day defeating Vow and Declare in the preparation after his Melbourne Cup win.

**Race you would most like to win?** In Australia I would have to say the Cox Plate - probably from my love of Sunline days. Overseas, definitely the Arc.

**When you win that special race, how will you celebrate?** I would be visiting numerous local drinking establishments over numerous days. Maybe a really nice Grange or expensive Scotch as well.

**Favourite provincial racetrack?** I'm probably a bit biased towards Kembla Grange as it's 10 mins from my house, but it's the worst draining track on planet earth. Scone would be right up there too.

**What racetrack/meeting/carnival do you enjoy attending?** We try and head down to Melbourne every year for Cup week. I absolutely love it, Flemington in spring is my happy place. Derby Day is my Christmas Day.

**Black Caviar, Winx or Makybe Diva?** Black Caviar in a sprint, Winx over middle distances and Makybe Diva over distance. But if I had to own one I would choose Winx. She was unbelievable.

**What International races have you attended and particularly enjoyed?** I've never attended overseas races unfortunately, but it's definitely on the bucket list.

**Which International carnivals would you like to attend next?** The Queens Golden Jubilee race week at Ascot would be the ultimate week of racing. You would be hard pressed to beat that carnival.

**Who introduced you to OTI/how did you get involved with OTI?** We were looking to buy a horse and a mate in our syndicate rang OTI to see what was available, we were quite impressed with the information we got and the communication we received so we bought into a horse called Roc De Khaper, who unfortunately ended up being slower than me.

**What do you enjoy about racehorse ownership?** The excitement, and the fact I get to spend time with my best mates enjoying our love for racing. There's no better feeling (non child related) than getting a winner and jumping up and down hugging your nearest and dearest.

**Favourite jockey?** Probably Damian Lane in Melbourne at the moment, he seems to always pull me out of the mud when I need him.

**OTI horse you are most looking forward to seeing run in 2022?** In a non selfish way I'm Thunderstruck but in a selfish way Cloudland. I just bought a share in him!

## OTI QUIZ

1. Which jockey is riding in NSW this weekend after relocating interstate?
2. Victoria's shortest race is being run this weekend. Where, and how far?
3. In what year was Black Caviar born?

### NAME THE RACECOURSE



*Hint - Home to the Gong*

# EXTRA ELUSIVE TO SYMON WILDE

*~ Dual-Group 3 winner and conqueror of Zaaki ~*



As a five-year-old in 2020, Extra Elusive was one of the UK's top 2000m horses. He competed against the best, winning two Group 3 races, including one containing Zaaki. He ended that year rated 115.

After a disappointing 2021 season he was purchased by respected agent Alastair Donald. Alastair felt that there was still plenty to come from the horse. His opinion was shared with the horse's UK trainer Roger Charlton and importantly Symon Wilde, who now trains the gelding from his Warrnambool base.

The gelding is now acclimatising as he trains toward a possible tilt at the Warrnambool Cup. With an Australian rating expected to be in the low 90's, he'll be afforded every chance to give his new owners a quick return.

## **WATCH VIDEO**

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

## OTI QUIZ RESULTS

1. William Pike
2. Woolamai, 888 metres
3. 2006 (18th August)

**NAME THE RACECOURSE**  
Kembla Grange

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