



# OTI GAZETTE

*The official newsletter of OTI RACING*



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## The Changing Landscape of Trainers

The landscape for Australian trainers has changed significantly over the past decade as younger trainers and assistant trainers make their mark.

While still in his 40's, Australia's top trainer, Chris Waller is the 'old man' of a group of young trainers who now provide Australian racing with a quality talent pool. Ciaran Maher and Dave Eustace (at around 40 and 30) respectively are hot on the heels of Chris, but the quality young trainers do not stop there. James Cummings, Annabel Neasham, the Hayes lads, and many more are under 35.

10 years ago, following years of dominance by senior trainers, Chris Waller was starting to cement his position as New South Wales' top trainer. In Victoria, the likes of Darren Weir, Peter Moody and Robert Smerdon were the top trainers. While Waller and Moody remain at the top of the sport, most of today's top trainers (be they training in partnership or solo) were in their infancy.

One of the key influences on many of the young trainers is their overseas experience, especially in Newmarket, the historical home of thoroughbred racing. Ben Hayes, Michael Kent, Calvin McEvoy and Sam Freedman and others cut their teeth working for the likes of William Haggas, John Gosden and Roger Varian. It's no coincidence that these and many more returned to Australia better equipped to succeed, as we are seeing in the premierships.

When placed alongside UK imports like Eustace, Neasham, Alexander and Cumani and assistants such as Charlie Duckworth (Waller) and Tom Charlton (O'Shea), one can be excused for thinking that as well as supplying quality staying horses, the English are now a prime source of trainers.

The bottom line is that despite very little being spent by our racing jurisdictions on trainers' education, the quality of trainers in Australia is very good. Whether it be guidance from their seniors, the overseas experience in top stables, the introduction of training partnerships, or simply a better educated group of young ambitious horsemen and horsewomen, our horses are in good hands.

# OTI RUNNERS AND WINNERS

The heavy rainfall has meant we'll be focusing our attention on the racing in Victoria this weekend.

## At Caulfield on Saturday

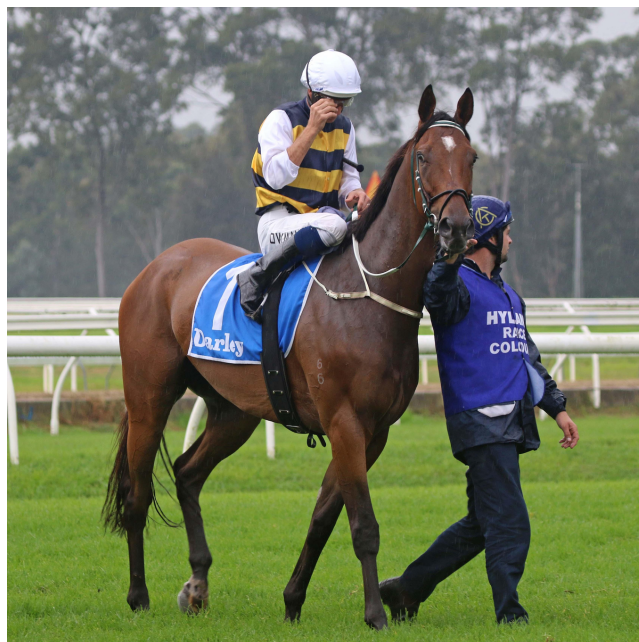
Unfortunately for **DICK WHITTINGTON**, the wet track last Saturday cost him his chance at 2400m for now. He'll step out in the 2000m Benchmark 78, which will hopefully set him up well to back-up into the Flemington Cup a week later, or to Randwick on the 23rd. He is trending the right way and is capable of being in the finish here, should we have some luck in running from the wide alley.

**EAGLEMONT** will feature in the same race after being forced to travel back to Victoria in search of a drier track. Despite starting this racing campaign back in February, he looks better than ever and should be ready for the step back out to 2000m. Jye McNeil knows the gelding well and he maps to get a run near the speed.

**INVERLOCH** has been hampered by a few minor issues this preparation, but is ready to get his campaign underway again in the 1400m Benchmark 100. The seasoned campaigner is sure to need the hit out as he progresses towards more suitable targets over 1600m-2000m. He's a favourite of many and we hope he can find the winner's stall in what may be his last racing preparation.

## At Doomben on Saturday

**STUCK WITH YOU** didn't get many favours in his return over an unsuitable 1200m journey, and is likely to once again need the run in the 1350m Benchmark 85. Third-up out to 1600m is when he should start hitting his straps, but he's showing the right signs at home and does look very healthy leading into the race.



ABOVE: Dick Whittington, 27 April 22

## At Ballarat on Sunday

**SELF WORTH** will rise in trip when she steps out in the 1400m 2yo Maiden, which we feel she'll appreciate. She has been professional in her two starts to date but has lacked the necessary dash over 1100m-1200m.

## At Grafton on Sunday

**ATTORNEY** is likely to make his return in the 1610m South Grafton Cup. A lack of options means he's forced to carry a big weight here first-up on a heavy track. He is sound, looks well and his trials have been up to standard. This run will help set him up to be ready for the early part of the spring.

## HAVE YOUR SAY

Your opinions are always welcome. Should you wish to share your thoughts on anything racing and/or OTI related, please email  
**[alexandra@oti.com.au](mailto:alexandra@oti.com.au)**

# AN INTERVIEW WITH LAURA LAFFERTY

## **What made you decide to become a jockey, considering all of your other talents?**

The obvious one is, above all I loved the horses and always have! I got the “racing bug” as people call it. Also a big reason was actually finances too. I couldn't make a living off athletics or showjumping horses. And I quit uni as I thought I could do that at any age later in life. So I decided to combine my athletics and love for horses and what better way than to be a jockey!

## **What is the process of becoming a jockey like?**

It's a challenging but rewarding process. I filled out a two page application for Racing Victoria. It involved basic questions: such as your highest schooling education, why you love horses, what got you involved into racing, where you work, ect. From there various emails are exchanged with the apprentice coaches who work for Racing Victoria. An interview with apprentice coaches is organised to “get to know you” along with parents and bosses. From there training days including theory, intense fitness testing and practical days every single month for 12 months are arranged and participants are selected and short listed until the list is narrowed down to about the final ten! From there trials and jump outs until you start race riding and the fun begins!

## **What is the most memorable race you've ridden?**

This is an easy question. In Sydney at Rosehill. Winning the feature race of the day. The Rosehill Country Classic. For trainer Johanna Hardy on Real Time Warrior. It's my biggest win to date.

## **What is your most coveted race?**

I'd love to win a race overseas! A race at Royal Ascot would be pretty cool!

## **Who has been the biggest influence on your career?**

I'd have to say Nick Ryan and/or Patrick Payne. They both taught me a lot early on in my career. It really set me up for what was to come in my career. If I didn't have that grounding early on I would have struggled. It put me in good stead and always will. Not only good horse skills and knowledge but life lessons for me to carry through in life.



## **What is the hardest aspect of being a jockey?**

Hardest aspect for me personally would be ‘consistency’.

It's a very full on job and it's easy to want a ‘day off’ or leave a text unread for tomorrow. And it's hard to ride consistently when you're tired from working all morning or sore or sweating. I think consistency is key in all aspects. with communication and riding! and it's something I've struggled with. I've had to work on consistency in regards to my recovery and therefore riding well every day of the week. It's like no job in the world. When you are competing at an elite level every single day and you have to be at your best every single day. Mentally and physically. Consistency is key in my opinion.

## **What do you like to do in your time away from riding?**

Believe it or not, Showjumping. I love riding my showjumpers. I also love reading or walking my dog along the beach. And sleep!

## **What is your favourite thing about racing?**

My favourite thing about racing is winning. I love winning races!

I also love all the friendships I've made. Racing brings people together from all walks of life and it's amazing meeting new owners and riding for different trainers. No day is ever the same. I don't get bored that's for sure!



# TRIAL WATCH - GLENS TOP CAT

Matt Cumani-trained galloper **GLENS TOP CAT** (IRE) put on a good display at the Cranbourne trials on the 4th of July.

His pleasing efforts in the 23rd heat over 1190m can be viewed [HERE](#), where he is in the OTI silks.

Whilst **GLENS TOP CAT** is a horse that is expected to do his best over long, staying distances, the mature temperament and speed that he's demonstrated is certainly enough to suggest that he will prove competitive upon the commencement of his Australian career.

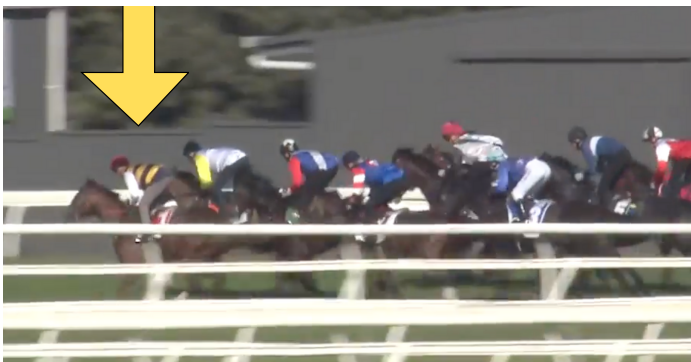
He jumped expertly, being the first out of the gates. Settling just off the pace a fair few lengths back from the leading three horses, he managed to make up a significant amount of ground in the closing stages of the trial without being put under pressure.



Rider Daniel Moor noted that he demonstrated a lovely action and pulled up well despite showing signs of discomfort on the testing surface. Trainer Matt Cumani echoed this view, suggesting that his ideal surface is a dry one.

**GLENS TOP CAT** continues to be an exciting staying prospect and is expected to contest a race in the very near future.

Positive comments from all who work with him make us hopeful that he will relish Australian conditions and be a highly competitive stayer.



## BLUE OCEAN ARRIVES AT NEW HOME

With the help of Racing Hearts director and founder Lisa Coffey, ex-OTI galloper **BLUE OCEAN** has been rehomed and will now reside at Racing Heart's Moorooduc location.

During his time there, he will assist in providing support to Racing Heart's therapy patients. OTI is delighted to see that he has not only found a wonderful new home, but will be providing aid to the wider community in his retirement.



ABOVE: **BLUE OCEAN** wins at Caulfield



# DID YOU KNOW ... THE TOP 3 SIRES IN EUROPE?



**1.** Dubawi (IRE) is Europe's leading sire, producing 71 winners from 161 runners, 17 of which are stakes winners. Dubawi possesses a colossal 44.09% win rate as a sire. Dubawi's talent is certainly recognisable in OTI Racing's dual winner **FUNAMBULIST**, a direct descendant of Dubawi by British sire New Bay. OTI's recent purchase **INTUITU** is an exciting prospect who possesses the blood of Dubawi. Irrecevable, Dubawi's dam, is sired by Dubawi.

**2.** Frankel (GB), undefeated in his career as a racehorse, is Europe's second leading sire. Frankel has produced 58 winners from 156 runners, possessing a runners-to-winners strike rate of 37.17%. OTI's recent acquisition **GREEN FLY** is by Frankel, a most exciting colt who has already demonstrated the characteristics of Frankel's progeny, finishing 3rd in a Listed race overseas. OTI also has a promising Frankel filly in the Price/Kent stable, by the name of **FRETTA**.



**3.** Tailing by a small margin behind Frankel, the 3rd leading sire in Europe is Sea The Stars (IRE), with 71 winners from 149 runners. Sea the Stars himself produced an incredible race record of 9: 8-0-0, evident in many of his progeny. OTI Racing's ex-gallop **SERENADE THE STARS** is demonstrative of the talent that runs through his bloodline, producing memorable wins at Caulfield and Flemington.

*Above: Funambulist, Middle: Frankel, Below: Serenade The Stars*

## OTI QUIZ

1. Which of Australia's racetracks has the shortest straight?
2. OTI dual-winner **LADY LAGUNA** is by which stallion?
3. Who was Australia's busiest stallion in 2021?
4. Name an OTI horse who has won the G1 Ranvet Stakes?
5. OTI's 3yo gelding **KNIGHTLAILA** is trained by which former Irish jockey?



**NAME THE RACECOURSE**

*Hint: Nursery Of Champions*



# THE OTHER GREAT RACING CARNIVAL

Il Palio di Siena may have a different feel to Royal Ascot, Melbourne's Spring Carnival or the Breeder's Cup, but it ranks as one of the oldest and most popular racing events on the planet.

Since the 1400's (but officially from 1633), Contrade (local districts of Siena) have vied for success in a 3 lap race around the dirt which covers *Piazza Del Campo* in the centre of Siena. Success, based on the winning horse randomly allotted to the Contrade, is the cause of great celebrations and bragging rights for the local area.



The race itself is a gala affair with the colours of all the contrade surrounding the Piazza. The horses, mainly mixed breeds, are equally adorned. Needless to say the parochial Italians, infused by visitors from around the globe, provide a combination of noise, excitement and mayhem. There are usually two races each year, one in early July and the other in mid August.



Given the tight racing arena and the (legal) aggression encouraged by competitors, historically the race has been most dangerous for horse and rider. However in recent years, with the assistance of top vets like Newmarket based Dr. Pete Ramzan, a good friend and consultant to OTI, injuries have been reduced. Indeed Pete, in this year's race, was the attending vet to the winning horse, no doubt a cause for further celebrations.



This year, John and Tania Murphy, long time owners with OTI, took their kids to Il Palio. John summed up the experience succinctly, "What a day!". As for those of us back in Australia, it's one to put on the bucket list.



*Thanks very much to John Murphy for providing us with some photos of the unique and fascinating event.*  
*Above (Left): John and Dr. Pete Ramzan*  
*Below (Left): John donning his OTI cap*  
*Right: Photos of the event (middle taken by John)*



# INTRODUCING ELDERBERRY



OTI Racing is pleased to introduce Elderberry, an exciting rising 2yo filly trained by Anthony and Sam Freedman. She joins us from Spendthrift Farm, where OTI's stakes-placed filly Lady Laguna hails from. Elderberry has commenced work under the Freedman stable and has pleased all those who have worked with her thus far.

Elderberry is by Bolt d'Oro, four-time G1 winner and son of Medaglia D'oro. As a result of his success, Bolt d'Oro stands as the most accomplished colt by Medaglia d'Oro in the Northern Hemisphere. Elderberry is the first foal out of Essence Of Terror, a speedy mare successful over 1200m on five occasions.

Elderberry's impressive pedigree, mature temperament, and positive comments from those that have worked with her make us hopeful that she will be a successful and enjoyable horse to race.

For more information, click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#) to view footage of her or email **oti@oti.com.au**

## QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Moonee Valley
2. Overshare
3. Capitalist
4. Gailo Chop OR Manighar
5. Johnny Murtagh

**NAME THE RACECOURSE:** Bendigo  
*Bendigo Racetrack has a "Nursery Of Champions" board, which shows every G1 winner who broke their maiden at Bendigo.*



**GAILO CHOP** wins the G1 Ranvet Stakes

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