



# OTI GAZETTE

*The official newsletter of OTI RACING*



## IN THIS EDITION

### OTI RUNNERS AND WINNERS

### AN INTERVIEW WITH DARREN GAUCI

### TRIAL WATCH

### DERBY CONTENDERS

### REMINISCING RACES

### QUIZ

### RIP VAN WINKLE X HALK BAK '19

## Happy Spring!

It's no secret that spring takes on Christmas-style excitement for those of us infected with the racing bug. This year, more than any in the past, our owners have some wonderful opportunities in our exciting sport. Click [HERE](#) for our 2022 spring contenders. It gives an idea of where horses could be headed over the next 10 weeks.

With a super run by I'm Thunderstruck in the Memsie and a serviceable run by Daqiansweet Junior in the Heatherlie, the team is off to a good start. Over the next month, other spring contenders will lay foundations for the bigger targets to come. We anticipate that our horses return to racing in fine fettle and run as expected. Equally, we also look forward to them pulling up well and will continue their preparations.

With the riches on offer, our international trainers and owners are rightly envious of our racing. While few will visit Melbourne or Sydney, the horses they once trained will play a feature role in both cities. With the exception of 3yo races, most races over 1800m are likely to be won by European or New Zealand bred horses.

In respect of international horses for the Melbourne and Caulfield Cups and Cox Plate, it's clear that there will be few. Indeed, it will be surprising if more than one visitor arrives for the Cox Plate or 3 or 4 for the Cups. For local connections, success, albeit with non-Australian bred horses, becomes far easier to achieve.

Meanwhile in Sydney, there could be as many as 8 horses arriving in mid October. Clearing quarantine at the end of the month, they will be ready for the Golden Eagle, Five Diamonds and Rosehill Gold Cup. Hopefully some may, with Racing Victoria approval, find their way to the Sandown features later in November.

Be it Melbourne or Sydney, the stakes have become even more lucrative this year with the bonuses now on offer for multiple wins in a particular series. This tactic, applied by both Victorian and New South Wales Racing, is designed to keep horses in their respective states. Given the pot of gold available from such bonuses, the programming becomes even more complex for connections.

For OTI owners, most of the big races over 1600m are currently covered with realistic chances. San Huberto and Daqiansweet Junior are our best Melbourne Cup chances, while Hezashocka could also feature in the Caulfield Cup. I'm Thunderstruck is a clear favourite among the OTI team for the Cox Plate as is Cadazio in the Victoria Derby, Big Story and Struck Twice could well join him in the latter race. Comme Bella Fille is Matriarch bound.

With a strong team located in Sydney, Attorney is poised to return to form in a race like the Metropolitan. Coppleson, the winner of his only race and brother to Te Akau Shark, looks to have the class to make it to a Spring Champion Stakes, while Longvillers, due to arrive from France in mid October, is well credentialled for the new Five Diamonds race.

So roll on spring! Let's hope it's a successful and safe three months for our owners and horses!

# OTI RUNNERS AND WINNERS

The first weekend of spring racing is here, and we have a number of important runners both in Australia and overseas.

## On Friday at Kempton Park (UK)

**Mercian Hymn** will step out in the 2419m 3yo+ Class 5. He has mixed his form since a terrific return run earlier this season but Mark Todd believes we're back on track. A return to the all-weather surface is a positive and he appears to strike a suitable race. Hopefully he can bring up his first win in the OTI silks.

## On Saturday at Randwick

**Dick Whittington** may step out in the 1800m Midway Benchmark 72, should the track conditions not deteriorate. He took positive steps last preparation before an under-par performance last start with excuses. He hasn't been seen since early July but resumes with residual fitness on his side, and it's a grade of race we'd expect to see him competitive in.

**Attorney** rises to 2400m third-up in the Listed City Tattersalls Club Cup. His best would see him mightily competitive in this event but his last win came late in 2020. He trialled up well earlier this week and looks in fantastic shape, so we hope to see him bounce back and show he can contend in the spring.

**Regal Lion**, our G1 NZ Derby placegetter resumes in the 1600m Benchmark 94. It will be his first outing for Annabel Neasham, who has been very pleased with how he's prepped up for this event. He is one who will obviously enjoy getting out over a staying journey with some racing under his belt, but it wouldn't surprise to see him running a cheeky race.

## On Saturday at The Valley

**Big Story**, is looking to go back-to-back when he steps out in the 1500m 3yo Handicap. He is a horse who still has a good deal to learn but this is a nice stepping stone towards some loftier spring targets. The Price/Kent team have been happy with how he's progressed between runs and a competitive showing is expected.

**Harmysian** looks likely to take his place in the 2040m Handicap despite a big jump in grade. His win at Sandown last time out was authoritative and he's a gelding that Clayton has always thought quite a lot of. We would hope to see the track improve to aid his chances, but he's a fit and happy horse who is capable of running a race off the minimum weight.

**Lady Laguna** will take her place in the 1200m Listed Atlantic Jewel Stakes. There was plenty of merit to her return effort in a hotly run race and we expect her to have taken good improvement from the outing. With some luck from the draw, she can be fighting out the finish here in what is a competitive Listed event.

## On Sunday at Geelong

**Guido** rises in trip again when he contests the 2400m Maiden. He stayed on very well over 2100m last time out and everything so far suggests he'll appreciate the step up. He has drawn the widest alley but a genuine tempo would bring him right into the race, and the wet ground is of no concern.

**Ossified** makes his debut at Geelong in the 1200m Maiden. The son of Hellbent has shown good ability in his two jump outs and we hope that he can bring that to the races.

## On Sunday at Sunshine Coast

**Gambu** will take his place second-up in the 1600m Benchmark 68. He floundered in deep ground on return, so should appreciate a better surface and big galloping track. He is one who has always looked like a 2000m type, so we'll hopefully be seeing him finding the line well.

## On Sunday at Longchamp (FR)

**Tigrais**, a new addition to the stable, steps into stakes class in the 1400m Group 3 Prix La Rochette. She was an impressive winner last time out but will need to keep improving to be competitive in this grade against the colts. A forward showing here could see her deserving of a shot at the highest level.

## WINNERS



### ZAYNUDIN

*Gowran Park, 2800m  
4yo+ Maiden*

*Trained by Joseph O'Brien*



### STUCK WITH YOU

*Murwillumbah,  
2020m Tygalgah Cup*  
*Trained by Matt Dunn*



### LORNE

*Clairefontaine, 2900m  
3yoF Maiden*  
*Trained by Mario Baratti*

# AN INTERVIEW WITH DARREN GAUCI

*Darren Gauci is one of Australia's most successful jockeys. He has ridden 35 horses to Group 1 victory, including Lonhro, Super Impose and Over. He is currently Apprentice Coach at Racing Victoria.*

## **Where did you grow up?**

Glenroy (suburb in Melbourne's north). My family originally came from Malta.

## **Where did your passion for racing come from?**

My brother Michael and I started working with horses when I was 13.

## **What is your favourite riding memory?**

Winning the Doncaster Handicap on Over (2000).

## **Do you have a favourite horse?**

My favourite horse, and best horse I rode, would have to be Super Impose.

## **What is the most rewarding thing about racing?**

Working with horses, and being able to do something with sport as a career.

## **What, in your opinion, is your greatest skill as a jockey?**

I had very good balance sitting on a horse, so that was a real asset. I also felt that I could judge tempo very well.

## **What was your greatest challenge in coming up through the ranks?**

In those days, we had to start very early and also ride work, so it was really trying to balance my time. I always seemed to be running.

## **Did you ever ride overseas?**

Yes. I had three good years in Hong Kong, but I also rode in Singapore, New Zealand, Mauritius, and South Africa. It was all a great experience as a jockey.



## **Who was the toughest person to ride for?**

Probably Geoff Murphy, but once he had given you his mind, he always moved on. He was a great man.

## **What is the difference in training apprentices now as opposed to when you were doing your apprenticeship?**

In my day, we only had our master and our parents to help us. We also only had to ride five times in front of stewards before getting a licence. Most young jockeys today have had 200 rides in jump outs. They have the benefit of good coaches, dietary advice and physios.

## **What happens during the apprentice coaching stage?**

Apprentices apply through an Expression of Interest and are tested whether they are ready to be accepted into the academy. If so, they will attend apprentice school for a period of 4 years.

During that time the apprentice progresses towards race riding after having to meet certain criteria.

## **What do you like to do in your free time?**

Spend time with my family, and I also have a saddlery business called A1 saddlery.



# TRIAL WATCH - CLOUDLAND

**Cloudland** returned to work in solid fashion, finishing 3rd of 6 in his latest Gosford trial.

Rider Kacie Adams noted that he travelled very well and worked to the line nicely.

You can watch a replay of the trial [\*\*HERE\*\*](#).

The grey gelding is a son of Swiss Ace, sire of Group 1 Railway Stakes winner Julius. His dam, Commiserate, comes from the family of Group 2 winners Sarson Trail and Arinosa.

A combination of his breeding and what he's shown thus far make us confident that he should show his best over 1400m to 2000m.



He returns this preparation with Kris Lees following his intense debut win at Muswellbrook, in which he managed to win despite doing very little right, veering off to the outside rail in the straight.

He has demonstrated positive progress in the leadup to his return and will likely head to the races in the coming fortnight.

## OTI DERBY CONTENDERS

OTI Racing currently has three exciting Derby prospects lined up for the \$2m race at Flemington, set to be run on the 29th of October. Interestingly, all three contenders have quite a lot in common - they all hail from New Zealand and are under the tutelage of Mick Price and Michael Kent Jnr.

**Big Story** won his first race in Australia at Ballarat two weeks ago. He is a lightly raced horse and we've still got a great deal to learn about him, but he has demonstrated above average talent thus far. Big Story will be seen next at The Valley this coming Saturday in the 3yo Handicap over 1500m, a race which he is placed to do well in. The son of What's The Story is the stallion's first winner.



**Struck Twice** demonstrated a lot of talent on his debut run. After a short break he has returned to work and has completed a second jumpout at Cranbourne. Struck Twice is ready to return to the races, and will most likely be featured amongst maiden company. He is a full brother to OTI's G1 winner I'm Thunderstruck, and we hope that he can burgeon in the same manner as his brother.

**Cadazio** dominated his maiden at Geelong, after much excitement surrounding his debut. After his impressive run, he quickly became one of the more favoured runners for the spring feature. Cadazio is expected to return to the races on September 10 in the Listed Exford Plate over 1400m at Flemington. Trainer Michael Kent Jnr noted that *"he is typical of the Tarzino's. He is big, strong, and impressive. He has big nostrils, is very sound and has a good brain."*

Jungle Magnate, another son of Tarzino trained by the Price/Kent team, galloped to victory in the G1 South Australian Derby this year on March 14.

OTI has had great success in Derbies in the last 15 years. Kibbutz in the Victoria Derby, Brambles in the Queensland Derby, Vin de Dance in the New Zealand Derby, and Quick Thinker in the Australian Derby have all been great horses for their owners.

*Pictured: Big Story (above, right) and Cadazio (below, left)*

# REMINISCING RACES - HIGH BRIDGE

Looking back throughout the years, OTI Racing has enjoyed many successes from late August to early September. One in particular stands out - the first Australian start for OTI star **High Bridge**.



4 years ago, High Bridge (GB) won the 1900m BM70 at Canterbury on the 29 August, 2018. It was his first start in Australia for new trainer at the time, Chris Waller.

High Bridge was an unconventional buy, as he was a 7-year-old gelding that had only won jumper's flat races before coming to Australia. He was purchased in partnership with Chris Waller, with whom it was determined that a combination of his high rating, imposing physique, and breeding made him an attractive prospect.

High Bridge is by Monsun, sire of several Melbourne Cup winners including Almandin, Fiorente, and Protectionist. He is out of Ameerat, a filly by Thousand Guineas winner Mark of Esteem.

The career of High Bridge was one of good success, with prize money earnings reaching over \$380,000 and final career form reading 31: 9-5-3.

In his first Australian preparation, he quickly progressed to produce two wins and a 4th in the G1 Metropolitan, beating home G1 winner Nettoyer. Despite his rising age, High Bridge beat a handy field at Flemington and produced several placings at Listed level.



High Bridge now resides at Garvoc, a town in Victoria's western district. Renowned for his gentle yet professional temperament, the long-striding gelding has taken to his newfound role as a showjumper incredibly well. We visited High Bridge, now known affectionately as "Harry", and his new owner Charlotte last year following the Warrnambool May Carnival. It was delightful to see the gelding flourish in his post-racing career following such a successful few years of racing with OTI.

## OTI QUIZ

1. Which horse, sired by Mongolian Khan, is named after the regent of the Mongol Empire?
2. Which G1 weight-for-age race is named after the founder of Moonee Valley Racecourse?
3. Who was Mick Price's first G1 winner?
4. OTI's **Lady Laguna** was born in which country?
5. Who was Bart Cummings' last Melbourne Cup winner?



**NAME THE RACECOURSE**

*Hint: Daqiansweet Junior*

# RIP VAN WINKLE x HALF BAK '19

- *Imposing gelding from successful family* -



OTI Racing is pleased to introduce a striking gelding from the family of Te Akau Shark and Coppleson. Having undergone pre-training in New Zealand, he is now based in Warrnambool with talented trainer Maddie Raymond. He is by Irish G1 producing sire Rip Van Winkle and is out of the NZ mare Half Bak.

OTI knows this family very well. Coppleson, with whom we have already enjoyed success, is a  $\frac{3}{4}$  brother to the gelding. His other  $\frac{3}{4}$  brother, Te Akau Shark, needs little introduction. He was a G1 Champion in Australia and New Zealand, and winner of numerous black-type races.

Rising talent Maddie Raymond plans to bring the gelding along slowly in preparation for the autumn. Given the evidence shown by others of the same breed, it is likely that he will show his best in his 4yo season and beyond.

Despite suffering physical setbacks in his youth, the gelding's hearty nature and strong physique make us hopeful that he will emulate his successful family members.

## QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Toregene.
2. The Cox Plate, named after William S. Cox.
3. Rustic Dream, in the 1999 Futurity Stakes.
4. Australia.
5. Viewed, 2008.

**NAME THE RACECOURSE:** Morphettville, SA  
*Daqiansweet Junior won the 2022 Adelaide Cup at Morphettville Racecourse.*



**PICTURED:**  
**Toregene** after winning at  
Swan Hill

OTI Management Pty. Ltd.  
204/425 Docklands Drive | Docklands | VIC | 3008 | Australia  
+61 (0) 3 9670 0255  
alexandra@oti.com.au