



OTI GAZETTE

The official newsletter of OTI RACING



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I'm Thunderstruck's Demise Helps Our Understanding of Horse Racing

It's almost a week since I'm Thunderstruck had to be euthanised following a catastrophic injury suffered after surgery. Having come to grips with the initial shock of his demise, it's interesting to reflect on the reaction from various sectors of racing as a means of helping all of us to understand what racing is all about.

As a racehorse, I'm Thunderstruck was typical of so many New Zealand-breds. From a mare that only cost \$2,500, he was too immature to go to a yearling sale. He was gelded and following a very impressive trial, he was sold for a relatively modest figure. Moved to Mick Price and Michael Kent Jnr, he won 7 of his 23 races and amassed prizemoney of over \$8.3m. Suffice to say he was a very good horse.

His loss hit hard to a wide group. Within the Price Kent Stable, the staff, most of them young, who handled him daily were immediately impacted by the absence of the stable's flag bearer. They had seen how he's developed; they knew his personality and they had been proud of what he had achieved. He was part of their team as much as a fellow worker. Mick Price recognised the loss and was quick to facilitate counselling for those who needed it. For the owners, the horse provided them with remarkable experiences. While covid stopped them enjoying being present for many of his wins, I'm Thunderstruck's sudden death put a quick end to their unique experience. They shared the loss with his handlers and felt deeply for the people who lived with him on a daily basis.

All those involved with Thunder were touched by the outpouring of condolences received. Our sport is very competitive and we do all that we can to achieve success. That's usually of the expense of others. However, it was heart-warming for all connections to receive messages, many from fierce competitors, following the news. Between Mick Price and Michael Kent Jnr, the stable staff and the team of owners, literally thousands were received. Relatively few people may have been officially linked to I'm Thunderstruck, but he was, as most champions are, a horse for all – punters, racegoers, officials, and competitors.

It may sound a touch corny to say that racing is a big family. The reality is however, that with few exceptions, we feel genuinely for each other's loss when confronted with sad news, even though before and after we will be doing our best to prevail against each other. This is not unique to the sport of racing as most successful sports enjoy similar cultural traits.

We'll miss I'm Thunderstruck deeply. We'll continue to relive his battles against some of the country's best middle-distance horses. And in the next few months, all involved with him, will thank him and enjoy a champagne or coffee alongside his gravesite on Michael Kent Jnr and fiancé, Ali's property.

– Terry Henderson

OTI WEEKEND RUNNERS

Another big autumn weekend awaits with much of our focus turning to Day 2 of The Championships, but we're not without chances in Victoria and Queensland!

At Sandown on Saturday

Miss Subtly is looking to bounce back in the 1200m 3yo Fillies Handicap after getting a bit lost in behind runners last start. Naturally, this is a fair jump in grade but she's always been a filly whose shown Saturday ability. From the good draw, we can expect to see her prominent in running.

At Randwick on Saturday

To read more about **Cloudland**'s chances in the 1400m Provincial-Midway Championships Final, click [HERE](#)

Lady Laguna is set to back up in the 1200m Group 2 Arrowfield Sprint.

She was her usual honest self last week, running a brave race at Group 3 level. This is a tougher task against the boys but she'll make her own luck again. She's come through her last run in terrific shape and really is thriving.

Amade races over his favourite journey again in the 3200m Group 1 Sydney Cup. His record at the distance is exceptional, and he arrives here off the back of a great effort in the Adelaide Cup. If he's afforded a soft run and the race becomes a true staying contest, we know he'll be there fighting late.

Selino is another one of our Sydney Cup contenders, looking to win the race for a second time. There's no doubt his form leading in is well below what we saw in 2021, but it's hoped he can step up his game over this journey. He'll be staying on late!

Timour appears to be our leading hope in the Cup following his Group 3 win three weeks back. He's been set for this race since last year and arrives in lovely order. This is a journey he'll appreciate, and from a low draw, he should be afforded a cosy run. He'll need to go to a new level to win, but the 2 mile affair and soft ground may well present him with his best chance to do that.

Hezashocka will take advantage of the rain affected ground on offer in the 2000m Group 1 Queen Elizabeth Stakes. His run in the Australian Cup had plenty of merit given he's a momentum horse, and drawn barrier 1 on Saturday, he should be able to take up a prominent position. It's a terrific race and one we're proud to be a part of. If he can sneak into the top 4 it would be a fantastic result.

At Doomben on Saturday

Coppleson should find the company a little easier in the 2040m 3yo Handicap. His last run at Group 2 level was sound, clocking the fastest last 600m of the race. That race produced the Derby winner, which is good form for this event. He's a horse still putting it all together but we hope he can be competitive at this level.

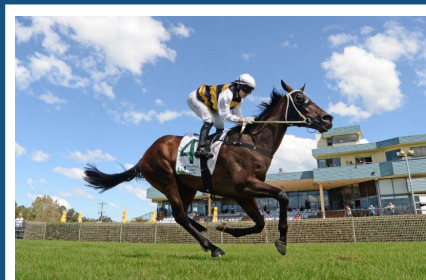
Gambu will run second-up in the 2040m Benchmark 78. This distance is more to his liking but he still has good improvement to come. He'll be ridden patiently to close off and although he'll be better suited 3rd and 4th up, he's capable of running a good race.

Stuck With You will compete in the same race as Gambu as he looks to get his campaign back on track. He disappointed last time out but is now at a track and distance that really suits. He's always been one to continue to improve as he gets deeper into the campaign, so we can start to expect more from him here despite his poor draw.

At Newcastle on Saturday

Funambulist will make his return in the 1600m Benchmark 68. Off the back of his trial performances, he's likely to find this race a bit sharp for his liking. In what looks a competitive event, he'll be ridden conservatively to find the line. It will serve as a day out as he looks to build towards more suitable races over 2000m+.

WINNER



INTROVERT

1910m Class 1 & Maiden Plate, Ballina
Trained by Matthew Dunn

AN INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM HAGGAS

William Haggas - Seven Time Classic-winning trainer and one of the most respected trainers in British racing.

Where did your interest in racing begin?

I've always been fascinated by horse racing and followed the form avidly when I was young. At school, I knew every horse training in England, what it had done, where it had done it and I suppose the fact that I was backing horses at a young age (not for very much money) but I felt I knew what I was doing, which proved to be wrong. My interest in racing was started by the fact that my Grandparents had jumps horses with the Dickinson family and Jeremy Hindley on the flat. My Father had horses with Jeremy Hindley and Sir Mark Prescott (and still has) and my Mother, who died eight years ago, had horses with the Dickinson family and won the Cheltenham Gold Cup in 1982 with Silver Buck. So in short, I was following their horses very closely and that graduated to following everyone else's.

What steps did you take to get to your current position?

When I left school, I came down to spend the weekend with Jeremy Hindley at his yard at Clarehaven in Newmarket. At the end of the weekend, I asked Jeremy if he would give me a job doing anything, mucking boxes out all day, anything to get me into the business and he did. I did a year with him, two years with Sir Mark Prescott as Pupil Assistant and 4 years as Full Assistant to John Winter before starting on my own in 1987.

You've had a very successful career so far, what would be the most memorable experience or win for you?

We have been very lucky and have had some great experiences via horse racing. My most memorable experience, personally, was SHAAMIT winning the Derby, but outside our horses, my Mother winning the Cheltenham Gold Cup in 1982 with Silver Buck and Maureen's father winning at the Breeder's Cup on Royal Academy after all he and his family had been through.

You worked with John Winter and Sir Mark Prescott, what are the things you took on and what do you do different?

Although both Sir Mark and John Winter were both very successful trainers, neither of them had a Group winner whilst I was working for them. Mr Winter, in particular, was on a bit of a downward spiral when I arrived having lost one of his biggest owners, who died. He did however, give me the freedom to get really involved and I loved every second of assisting him. Sir Mark had one very good horse whilst I was there, called Spindrifter who won 13 races as a two-year-old and was the most phenomenal racehorse – tough, brave and genuine with quite a lot of ability too. I am sure he would have won Group races.



You work closely with your wife, Maureen. Are you both able to turn off talking horses?

Of course Maureen is just as involved as I am, if not more, so it is very hard when we have time out not to discuss horses at some stage. Horses are our lives and whilst we are training and continue to train, it will always be, other than family, the most important thing in our lives.

What is the race you would most like to win in Australia?

I suppose everyone's answer would be the Melbourne Cup and that would have to be my reply, but I am great fan of racing in Sydney, so any big race in Sydney will do us well. We failed twice to win the Sydney Cup with live chances, so having eluded us thus far, it would be quite satisfying if we could win it one day. I would also like to have a go at the Golden Eagle in the Spring if we have the right horse.

How do you find racing in Australia compared to racing in the USA or Middle East?

Our record in the USA is poor and we have not had many runners there. We have had a few more in the Middle East where the prize money is fantastic but the ground is invariably very firm and most of our horses seem to thrive with cut in the ground for some reason. You can be virtually certain that in the USA and Middle East that the ground will be on the faster side of good, but there is no guarantee of that in Sydney and more often than not during the Autumn Carnival, the rain clouds descend on Rosehill and Randwick, which seems to favour our horses.

If you were in charge of racing for a day in Australia or the UK, what would you change?

The obvious answer is prize money in the UK. We have a wonderful product in England which has been given short shrift by the bookmakers and when the Government allowed Bookmakers to operate off course in 1961, we were doomed financially. Everyone is envious of your current model in Australia, but there is no magic wand for us in the UK, unless the Tote is invigorated and the Government pass a law banning Bookmakers to bet off course. The chances of that happening are comparable to that of me flying to the moon!

OTI'S AUTUMN

OTI Racing is pleased to share the results produced by our runners in stakes races this autumn, with black-type performances in three different countries so far. To view the spreadsheet, which includes all likely autumn feature race runners, please visit our website at oti.com.au or click [HERE](#). Below are the results of our stakes runners so far this autumn (top four only).

Feb 11,'23	Sandown	G1	C.F. Orr Stakes	I'm Thunderstruck	1400m	WFA	\$750,000	4th
Feb 18,'23	Pukekohe Park (NZ)	G2	Avondale Guineas	Full Of Sincerity	2100m	3yo SW	NZ\$140,000	4th
Feb 25,'23	Sandown	G1	Futurity Stakes	I'm Thunderstruck	1400m	WFA	\$750,000	3rd
Feb 25,'23	Sandown	G3	Mannerism Stakes	Toregene	1400m	4yo&Up M SWP	\$200,000	2nd
Feb 25,'23	Sandown	Listed	Victoria Gold Cup	Amade	2100m	Open Qlty	\$175,000	3rd
Mar 4,'23	Te Rapa (NZ)	G1	New Zealand Derby	Full Of Sincerity	2400m	3yo SW	NZ\$1,000,000	3rd
Mar 4,'23	Te Rapa (NZ)	G1	New Zealand Derby	Mark Twain	2400m	3yo SW	NZ\$1,000,000	4th
Mar 4,'23	Turffontein (ZAF)	G2	Hawaii Stakes	Under Your Spell	1400m	Open SWP	R400,000	1st
Mar 11,'23	Rosehill	G2	Ajax Stakes	Cepheus	1500m	3yo&Up Qlty	\$250,000	1st
Mar 13,'23	Canberra	Listed	Canberra Cup	Athabaskan	2000m	Open Qlty	\$200,000	3rd
Mar 13,'23	Morphettville	G2	Adelaide Cup	Amade	3200m	Open Hcp	\$302,500	3rd
Mar 18,'23	Rosehill	G3	N E Manion Quality Cup	Timour	2400m	3yo&Up Qlty	\$200,000	1st
Mar 18,'23	The Valley	G3	Typhoon Tracy Stakes	Lady Laguna	1200m	3yoF SWP	\$200,000	3rd
Mar 25,'23	Rosehill	G2	Tulloch Stakes	Full Of Sincerity	2000m	3yo C&G SW	\$250,000	4th
Apr 1,'23	Randwick	G3	PJ Bell Stakes	Lady Laguna	1200m	3yoF SWP	\$200,000	3rd
Apr 1,'23	Turffontein (ZAF)	G1	Horse Chestnut Stakes	Under Your Spell	1600m	WFA	R1,000,000	4th

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH RACING HEARTS

Our OTI Equine Welfare Program is excited to commence an official partnership with Racing Hearts, a registered charity offering Equine Assisted psychology through the use of retired racehorses.

To learn more about Racing Hearts, please click [here](#).

To celebrate the official commencement of the partnership, we have planned a morning at Racing Hearts for anyone who is interested. The morning will kick-off with an interview panel, featuring several ambassadors including star jockey Glen Boss. This will be followed by a tour of the farm, along with a unique hands-on equine wellbeing session. OTI retirees Blue Ocean & Fairlight currently reside at Lisa's property and will be available to visit!

Date: Sunday April 16, 2023
10:00am - 12:00pm at Racing Hearts

*Coffee & Breakfast Appetizers will be available throughout the morning.

Family and Children/Grandchildren are most welcome!

RSVP: Should you wish to attend, please email lisa@oti.com.au or phone (03) 9670 0255 by Wednesday April 12, 2023 as spots are limited.



INTRODUCING NIGHT OF THUNDER x STELLATINA '21



We're delighted to introduce a cracking Night of Thunder colt out of the Street Cry mare Stellatina, purchased in conjunction with Gai Waterhouse & Adrian Bott.

The key features that showcase this colt's appeal are:

- He's by gun sire Night of Thunder, who now commands a fee of approx. A\$160k in Ireland. We've enjoyed Group 2 success with his progeny in the form of Italian Oaks winner Auyantepui.
- He's out of a half-sister to the Champion US colt English Channel, one of the main reasons this is such a strong international family.
- His education is already well underway, with the team at Evergreen Stud describing him as a "Strong, forward horse. He's a quality individual who seems intelligent during the early stages." See parade footage and some of his early education process [here](#).
- He'll get every chance in the care of formidable pair Gai Waterhouse & Adrian Bott, who have taken 50% for their clients. From their Randwick base, owners can be assured of an informative, enjoyable and hopefully successful experience!

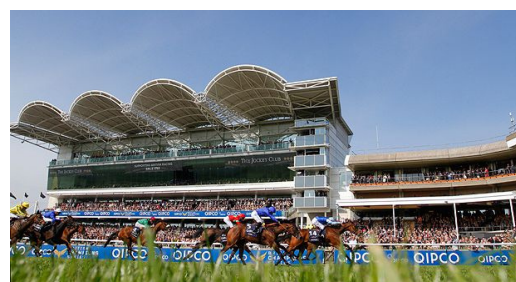
For more information about the colt, please contact us at oti@oti.com.au.

QUIZ

1. How many Group 1 feature races are part of The Championships in Sydney?
2. With which horse did William Haggas win the Queen Elizabeth Stakes twice?
3. How many \$1m + lots were sold at the Inglis Easter Sales in 2008?

NAME THE RACECOURSE

Hint: United Kingdom



INGLIS EASTER SALES

This year's Inglis Easter Yearling Sale has finished as the 'Best of the best' sale in the southern hemisphere with 26 lots selling for \$1m or more. Only the 2008 Easter Sale sold more (28) million dollar lots than that.

Most of the \$1m+ yearlings were by proven stallions like 'I Am Invincible' and 'Snitzel', however the sales topper (\$1.8m) was a filly by 'The Autumn Sun', who reached the \$1m mark for the first time along with up and coming stallion Russian Revolution.

The sales gross of \$137,670,000 was the third highest turnover in the Sale's history with a clearance rate of 83%. The average yearling price at the 2023 Easter Sale was a whopping \$391,108.

Not usually as active at yearling sales, OTI was delighted to secure a colt by So You Think in partnership with the Price Kent Stable and a colt by The Autumn Sun with Andrew Forsman (see pictures below).

"He looks just like his dad! Not many stallions get THREE Group One winners in one day. A magnificent colt", said trainer Mick Price after the sale.



Pictured: The Autumn Sun x Acouplamas colt



Pictured: So You Think x Sweet Martini colt

MEMORIES OF I'M THUNDERSTRUCK

The passing of I'm Thunderstruck has not only effected the connections and stable staff who closely worked with him every day, but the wider racing industry, who cheered him on in all of his races!

Thunder grew a large fanbase over time and will be remembered for his strong will to fight in his races. His incredible win in the Makybe Diva Stakes against Alligator Blood and his second place in the Cox Plate against superstar Anamoe are only a couple of the great memories he created!

In memory of him, we would like to give away some of our I'm Thunderstruck pins, to anyone who would like a small 'piece' of him. If you are interested, please email lisa@oti.com.au with your full name, address and wanted number of pins.



SNIPPETS

Chris Waller's Pre-emptive Move

Chris Waller's decision to do pre-emptive scans on those horses thought to be Melbourne Cup contenders next spring is most wise. The scans provide him, and the vets from Racing Victoria, with a datum point for each horse who may otherwise undertake its first scan under Racing Victoria's guidance within a month of the race.

OTI knows from specific experience in 2021 with Future Score, that the testing procedures are only a loose guide to the horse's ability to safely compete (Future Score was taken out of the Melbourne Cup by stewards before going on to be most competitive in the Adelaide and Sydney Cups in the following few months).

Unlike a number of highly respected international trainers who have simply put a line through the Melbourne Cup as a result of Racing Victoria's regulations, Waller will be able to argue his case on the condition of his horses with some hard facts.

European Racing Season About to get Busy

As Racing starts to quieten a little on the Australian scene, the reverse is happening in Europe. In April, flat racing on the grass returns to France, the UK and Ireland. By May, most of the Classic race contenders have had a run in preparation for the Guineas and Derbies held in late May and June. This year OTI is exceptionally well-placed to compete in many of the European Classics.

Everything Counts' and 'Tigrais' are hopeful contenders for both male and female versions of the French Guineas. In England and Ireland, horses including Deakin, Banderas and Docklands could well feature.

While June and July are key months, the European season is strong until October with feature Group 1 racing. The ultimate of course being The Arc in early October. It's a dream for connections worldwide to be a contender in that great race.



Pictured: Tigrais winning G3 Prix La Rochette

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 8 - see all [here](#).

2. Addeybb (2020 & 2021)

3. 28

NAME THE RACECOURSE: Newmarket, training base of William Haggas.



Pictured: Addeybb