



# OTI GAZETTE

*The official newsletter of OTI RACING*



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## Let the Good Times (and \$) Roll...but for How Long?

For the next four months, the owners of horses racing in Australia will be treated to a feast of funds.

While Japan and Hong Kong excel with their prizemoney levels, Sydney can arguably claim to be a global leader with the offering of at least a \$1m race on most Saturdays throughout the spring. Melbourne's stakes are good, but the gap between Australia's two major cities is now significant and that gap is widening. Queensland Racing is also doing well, with stakes increasing significantly over the past two years.

The current healthy financial situation nationally can be put down to four key issues:

- The High Court Ruling that Racing NSW was entitled to charge a rights fee for companies offering wagering on its product. This flowed on nationally.
- Racing's share from the Point of Consumption Tax paid to State Governments.
- Covid.
- Administrative consolidation and cost reduction.

With an eye to the future, we can hopefully say that the benefits racing derived from Covid are hopefully gone. People now have more options to spend their gambling dollar.

With a combination of the increases in the Point of Consumption Tax and the push to put restrictions and warnings on gambling activity, betting turnover, the lifeblood of stakes, will drop. In fact, it is down significantly on comparative months from last year.

Victoria is the only state that has not consolidated its racing administration. When combined with the costs of servicing Racing.com, a cost that other states do not incur, its understandably one of the key reasons that comparatively they are falling behind NSW and QLD on stakes.

The above issues impacting future stakes monies are critical, but in the medium to longer-term, the public perception of horse racing will be critical. While NSW now dominates the national media with the promotion of its Spring Carnival, focused around The Everest, nationally we spend little money on telling the public of the positive initiative racing has undertaken. Certainly, there is more to be done, but unless racing shows the public that the industry is tuned to today's social standard, our future will not be as healthy as it should be.

The good times we currently enjoy can be maintained only if we keep a keen eye on the future and where necessary, make some tough decisions.

# OTI WEEKEND RUNNERS

As our feature spring horses return to the races, we see Hezashocka, Daqiansweet Junior, Cepheus and others step out to start or continue their preparations in the lead up to bigger targets in the spring carnival.

A little different to our usual weekend preview, Terry and Gus will take you personally through our runners and might include a tip here or there.

Watch the full Weekend Preview [here](#).

## WINNERS



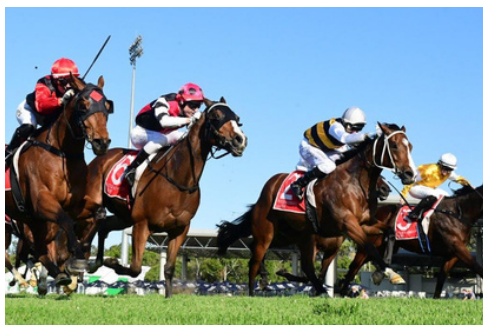
**PRINCIPESSA**  
1600m BM78, Randwick  
*Trained by Joe Pride*



**DICK WHITTINGTON**  
2200m BM70, Pakenham  
*Trained by Phillip Stokes*



**MARCHONS ENSEMBLE**  
1800m BM70, Sandown  
*Trained by Busuttin Racing*



**HOLSTEIN**  
1800m BM70, Sunshine Coast  
*Trained by Matt Dunn*



**PRINCIPESSA**  
1550m BM72, Canterbury Park  
*Trained by Joe Pride*



**HOLSTEIN**  
1800m Highway Class 3, Rosehill  
*Trained by Matthew Dunn*



**RUMINATE**  
1400m 3yo Maiden, Ballarat  
*Trained by Matt Cumani*



**LAND OF HEROES**  
1100m Maiden, Warrnambool  
*Trained by Matthew Williams*



**SEVENNA'S KNIGHT**  
2800m Listed Prix Michel Houyvet,  
Deauville (FR)  
*Trained by Andre Fabre*



# AN INTERVIEW WITH DARREN FLINDELL

*Darren Flindell - Race Caller in NSW*

## **What/who was the catalyst for your interest in racing?**

I didn't have any particular family members involved in racing, so it was more the company of school mates who did and as a group we would attend the Trots at Harold Park and weekend gallop meetings.

## **When and why did you decide you wanted to be a race caller?**

At about age 15 I started showing an interest in broadcasting. Initially Rugby League, but it soon led to an interest in the races and there was a great sense of excitement that this could be a career.

## **How did you learn the art of race calling?**

Race calling is a completely self-taught craft. I would go to a lot of race meetings across all three codes and practice calling races into a tape recorder and then send audition tapes to various organizations and work on the feedback I'd receive.

## **Who was your biggest influence when you started?**

I grew up listening a lot to Ian Craig and Bill Collins. Both were outstanding radio callers, who created so much energy, accuracy and excitement in their calls. I got to work with Ian as an assistant at an early age and I learnt a lot working in the broadcast box with him.

## **You originally started off calling greyhound races, how did the change to thoroughbreds take place?**

Calling greyhounds was typically the way all young race callers would start off their careers. I really loved my time in the greyhounds and as I got older and more experienced, opportunities then began to open calling the thoroughbreds as well. The late Gowan Williams helped me get my foot in the door calling the horses.

## **The pressures on race callers are enormous. What race call gave you the most angst?**

Calling the farewell race for Winx had me on edge. I had to choose the right words to send the champ off with.



## **You've called some of the biggest races in Sydney, including all of Winx's major wins. Outside of Winx, does one horse or win specifically stand out for you?**

Without doubt, Chautauqua winning the 2017 TJ Smith Stakes will be remembered as my best.

## **Earlier in your career you spent quite a long time in Hong Kong. How do you compare it to Australia when working as a race caller?**

Sha Tin is a great track to call at, just like Randwick. You're very high up and a good distance back from the track to get a good perspective of the finishes. Happy Valley has a terrible angle for race callers, but it's a very exciting track to call at plonked in the middle of the city, surrounded by high rise apartments and vocal on-course crowds. My time in Hong Kong was a great education as it was such an International Hub for racing.

## **Do you have any specific aspirations for the future, for example calling at Ascot or other sports?**

I'm calling in one of the strongest racing jurisdictions in the world so I'm very content with my position in Sydney. If I were to do other sports, Rugby League and Swimming would be top of the list.

## **Outside of racing and your family, what do you consider your greatest interest?**

I love following Rugby League and do enjoy plotting future holidays overseas.

## **Given the opportunity, what is the first thing you'd change in Australian racing?**

Have the TV camera as close to the winning post as possible at all TAB tracks!

# TRIAL WATCH

With spring horses now returning to the races, we have a few impressive trials from the likes of Hezashocka and Toregene whilst preparing for their spring campaigns.

**Hezashocka** will kick off his campaign this Saturday in the Heatherlie Stakes over 1700m at Caulfield after winning both of his trials, the latest one by over 5 lengths. Watch the full trial [here](#).

While he needs more distance to show his peak performance, he's in good nick to get things started. Races like the G1 Underwood Stakes, G1 Turnbull Stakes and the G1 Caulfield Cup could be on the agenda for the 6yo son of Shocking.

5yo mare **Toregene** is yet to have a second trial next week, but has returned well after a hiccup in her last run in March this year. Being ridden under a hold in her first jumpout, she was keen to get on with the task and was strong through the line. Watch the full replay [here](#).

Toregene will start her campaign on September 16 in the Group 2 Let's Elope Stakes. She could later on be seen in races like the G2 Stocks Stakes at The Valley or possibly the G1 Empire Rose at Flemington, a track she won at impressively last spring.



## SPRING CARNIVAL KICK OFF

With the first official day of spring, we are excited for the racing ahead with the Melbourne and Sydney Carnival's not too far away.

Looking back on last year's results, we will dearly miss seeing our superstar I'm Thunderstruck, but have plenty of horses who stepped up during the year. Hezashocka, Cepheus, Full Of Sincerity, Toregene and Daqiansweet Junior are just a few of the many horses we look forward to following around.

To see a full list of races during the spring and possible targets for OTI horses, click [here](#).



Toregene



Hezashocka



Cepheus



Timour



Daqiansweet Junior

## INTRODUCING PICTURE OF A CITY



In the hands of the **Busuttin/Young** team, Picture of a City is set to excel in Australia. Lightly raced, this three-year-old, well-bred colt ticks all the boxes as a galloper capable of success at Group level.

Picture of a City has been in the first four in each of his seven starts. In his last four starts, he has won once and finished second three times. Watch his win [here](#).

His respected Irish trainer Andy Oliver (who sold Tom Melbourne to OTI) described him as a slow developing colt with **significant upside**.

Arriving at the Busuttin stable in early October, the colt will go **into work immediately** with the intention of getting him racing during the summer. With a rating in the mid 70's and given that he has performed well on good tracks, the colt should quickly work his way through the classes and be ready for the spring of 2024.

For more information about Picture of a City, please contact us at [\*\*oti@oti.com.au\*\*](mailto:oti@oti.com.au).

## QUIZ

### NAME THE RACEHORSE

*Hint: Geelong Cup*

1. In which race did Hezashocka finish in front of Anamoe and I'm Thunderstruck last year?
2. Who is Peter Moody's new co-trainer?
3. Which OTI horses are currently nominated for the 2023 Caulfield Cup?





# EUROLINK HORSES READY TO RACE

*Our 'European Youngsters' are getting ready for their first race experiences, with Hampden being the first one to make his debut last Sunday.*

**Hampden** was most impressive in his debut performance. Coming from the rear of the field early, he finished a strong 3rd in a run that showed he is a very exciting 2yo. His trainer, Tom Ward, now believes he can win this season before being campaigned towards quality races as a 3yo.

His jockey, David Probert, spoke highly of the gelding and said "He did everything I asked him to and responded well. He's got a good mind on him, enjoys his work and will take a lot from this run. I don't think there will be any problem in stepping up in distance in future."

The son of Night Of Thunder is expected to only improve going into his 3yo season.



Likewise, yet to race are 2yo filly **Tournelle**, who has been set up for her first race in the coming weeks and is in good order. She has continued to please through the back half of the season with George Boughey, who is very happy with the daughter of Sea The Moon.

"She looks forward and mature enough to think she can perform well at two but I think we will see the best of her as a three-year old and beyond." said Boughey.

Also part of the initial Eurolink group is **Lennox**, a handsome 2yo colt with plenty of quality. He's a straightforward, good-moving 2yo that will continue to develop into next year.

He is trained by recent Royal Ascot winning trainer, Harry Eustace, who recently commented "He's really come along with his recent step up in work and is growing in confidence all the time. I've very happy with where he's at at the moment."

He's currently completing his fast work in preparation for a race debut in a few weeks' time.



The fourth 2yo in the Eurolink initiative is **Pont Neuf**, a colt by Le Havre. Due to a set back in his preparation, he will require a longer period of rest before he can restart his training and work towards a race debut early next year.

Connections have some exciting times and long nights ahead as we look forward to each of their debuts!

For more information about our Eurolink horses, please contact us at [oti@oti.com.au](mailto:oti@oti.com.au).

# SNIPPETS

## Damien Oliver to retire

Champion Group 1 jockey Damien Oliver, also known as the GOAT, has announced his retirement. With 128 Group 1 wins on the card, more than anyone in Australia, he will give it one last crack at the Melbourne Spring Carnival before heading over to the Perth Carnival, where he will finish off his career.

At 51 years of age, Ollie rode an incredible 3,167 winners to this day (with plenty more to follow in the next few months), including three Melbourne Cups, four Caulfield Cups, two Cox Plates and a Golden Slipper.

A jockey with extraordinary talent, discipline and love for the horse. We will miss hearing him roaring down the straight!



*Pictured: Ollie on Gailo Chop*

The movie 'The Cup' reflects on his 2002 Melbourne Cup win and is certainly worth a watch!

## One v One race between Everest Stars

Earlier this week the Cranbourne Turf Club forwarded the idea of a race between the two Everest contenders and Victoria's best sprinters, Giga Kick and I Wish I Win.

It was proposed to have a feature race on the card at Cranbourne on September 22, where both horses would race each other in the lead up to the Everest on October 14. An initiative to attract more spectators to the track, which have been lacking in the last few months.

Connections of the Peter Moody trained I Wish I Win are hesitant and most likely won't go ahead with the race, whereas part of Giga Kick's ownership group is keen to see what happens. Giga Kick, who won the Everest last year, is trained by Clayton Douglas and will return in the G2 McEwen Stakes at The Valley.

# QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Group 1 Champions Stakes at Flemington
2. Katherine Coleman
3. Amade, Athabaskan, Full Of Sincerity, Daqiansweet Junior, Hezashocka, Timour, Vardani, Win O'Clock

**NAME THE RACEHORSE** - Media Puzzle wins the 2002 Melbourne Cup with Damien Oliver

