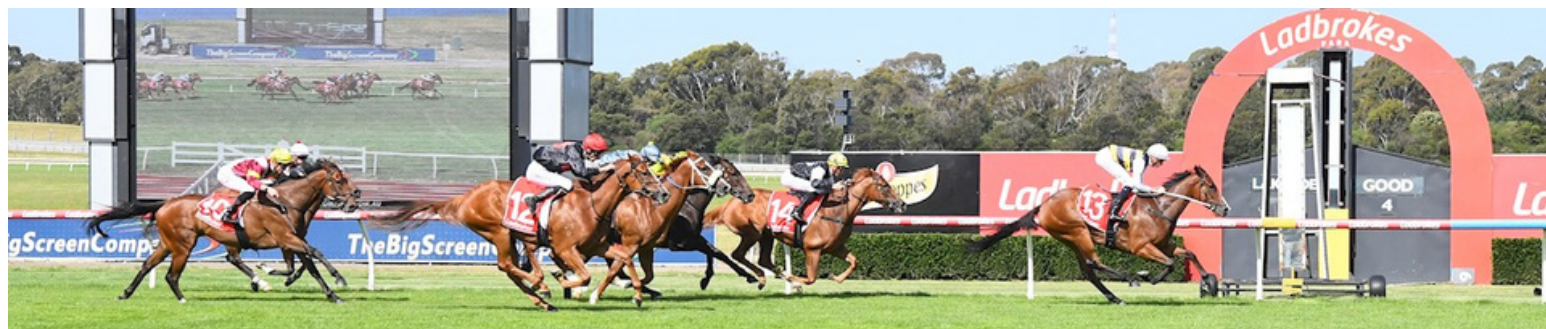




OTI GAZETTE

The official newsletter of OTI RACING



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A Reflection on an Interesting Year

The first full post-covid year produced a full bag of highlights, both on and off the track. Whether racing has progressed as a sport/business is too early to say, however one thing that we can say is that there is no shortage of challenges facing the future.

Clearly the issue that arose this year that is likely to impact Australian racing is the downturn in betting revenue, the lifeblood of our stake money. Following good revenue years, Australia, when it comes to prizemoney, is currently seen as an excellent place to race horses. While New South Wales is not showing any sign of moving prizemoney levels backwards, Victoria has already started reductions.

With the seeming inability of Victoria to consolidate its operating structure, and as a result make optimum decisions for the overall betterment of racing, the gap between NSW and Victorian racing continues to grow in 2023. The gap is likely to further widen in 2024.

Off the track, little progress was made during the year on the ineffectiveness of Racing Australia. Indeed, with legal actions between the various states still pending, Australian racing continues to be rudderless on important issues like the Pattern System (the approval of Group races) and various rules of racing, some including issues relevant to the public's perception of racing and horse welfare.

While NSW and Victorian racing continue to be at each other's throats, Queensland and New Zealand racing have moved forward with good structural reforms and improved prizemoney. Should current trends continue, and Victoria remains fixed in its current structure and cost base, it's conceivable that the current gap between Queensland and Victorian Racing's prizemoney levels could evaporate.

With racing generally having considerable land assets, 2023 saw some interesting moves to realise income by selling off property. Following the ongoing debate on the way Melbourne Racing Club's Sandown may be developed (who knows where it will end), the ATC in Sydney announced the possible sale of Rosehill. On the back of development of the land around Moonee Valley and the redevelopment of Ellerslie in Auckland, it's clear that racing sees the sales of their fixed assets as a means to sure up the future of the game.

While much is still to be done, the industry has improved its performance in getting the message to the general public that we really do care for our horses. We are still a long way from a consolidated, economic approach to welfare, but it at least is now a 'front of mind' component of the way racing functions.

Of course, the real highlights were on the track. Again, we were treated to numerous outstanding equine and human performances. Looking inwards at OTI, we had more winners, more city winners and more stakes winners in 2023 than we'd previously enjoyed. We won races in five countries and enjoyed our first Royal Ascot winner. None of this would have happened without the great support of our owners. So, on behalf of the OTI team, a huge Thank You.

We wish you a great Christmas with your loved ones, the best of health, and plenty of winners in 2024.

OTI WINNERS & WEEKEND RUNNERS

Weekend Preview

It's been another successful few weeks for the connections of OTI with plenty of winners around the traps. A highlight was Baby Rider winning the Listed ATC Cup for trainer Bjorn Baker, which was also his first win in Australia. It was also great to see Interlinked saluting twice within the last three weeks, the second time around being in the city.

Looking ahead to the weekend, we've got eight runners with only one outside of Victoria, being Flashing Steel. We have an exciting debutant in the form of Salchow, as well as a promising return to the races for 4yo mare Fretta.

In the video [**HERE**](#), Shayne will take you through our runners for the weekend.



BABY RIDER
2000m **Listed ATC Cup**, Randwick
Trained by Bjorn Baker



WINNERS



INTERLINKED
1600m BM64, Caulfield
Trained by Natalie Young & Trent Busuttin



CLOUDLAND
1400m CG&E BM72, Randwick Kensington
Trained by Kris Lees



KREMENTZ
1400m Maiden, Sandown
Trained by Mick Price & Michael Kent Jnr



RUMINATE
1400m BM58, Bendigo
Trained by Matt Cumani



ALTRUIST
1200m Maiden, Yarra Valley
Trained by Mick Price & Michael Kent Jnr



INTERLINKED
1450m Maiden, Kilmore
Trained by Natalie Young & Trent Busuttin

AN INTERVIEW WITH MARK WALKER

Mark Walker - Multiple Group 1 winning trainer. Originally based in New Zealand and now also located at Cranbourne, Victoria under Te Akau Racing.

Where did your interest in racing begin?

Riding trackwork before school to earn some pocket money.

Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

David Ellis – For giving me training opportunities when so young, as I started training when I was 26yrs old.

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

Every Group race win is memorable – they don't give them away!

What would you say was the most challenging and most rewarding part of being a trainer?

Challenging – the weather from May to August.
Rewarding – seeing the thrill on owners faces when winning a Group race.

You have won some of the biggest races in New Zealand and most recently multiple Group 1's in Melbourne with Imperatriz. Is there one specific race you would like to win in Australia?

The Melbourne Cup & Golden Slipper.

You have recently relocated to Cranbourne, Victoria with Te Akau Racing. What would you say might be different in our training methods or facilities compared to New Zealand?

Cranbourne, it's a trainers dream to have such great facilities at a purpose built training complex. Also, the beach is nearby, which is a great low impact work out, plus it's super for recovery.



What are the plans moving forward now that you have an Australian training stable?

I would like to think all going well, I will live in Australia full time by the 2024/2025 season.

If a young trainer asked you for one piece of advice, what would you say?

The harder you work, the luckier you get.

You were happy to agree to train the El Roca / Singa Songa filly from the R2R Sale, how important is getting new silks into the stable for his success in Australia?

It's so important and such a thrill to have OTI on board with such famous colours coming into the barn.

If you were in charge of racing for a day in Australia or New Zealand, what would be the first thing you'd change?

To have more of a staff training academy, to focus on proper horse skills before entering the racing industry.



Pictured: El Roca x Singa Songa '21 filly

OTI TRIAL WATCH

As we head into the summer months, we have a few exciting horses finishing up their trials and heading off the races.

One of those horses is **Fretta**, a now 4yo mare by Frankel, who hasn't been seen at the races since December last year. After her debut win at Sandown she was sent for a spell, only to have a bone chip removed shortly after returning back to training. Now back to full health, the filly had two pleasing trials at Cranbourne and will most likely head to the races this Sunday at Bendigo.

In her latest trial, where she was ridden by Jamie Kah, she finished second behind other OTI horse Kooky, who is also one to watch out for. Watch the trial replay of Fretta and Kooky [here](#).

Kooky, who won her third trial in preparation for her debut, will head to races after three satisfying jumpouts. The 4yo mare came from New Zealand to the Price/Kent stable earlier this year and has developed well since. She could potentially make her race debut at Seymour next Thursday over 1400m.



Pictured: Fretta wins at Sandown in December 2022

MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all of our owners, trainers and everyone involved with OTI for another successful year on and off the track. While we had some unfortunate losses, we also had many reasons to celebrate and we hope to continue that in the New Year.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



INTRODUCING 2YO FILLY BY EL ROCA

OTI joins forces with Te Akau Racing at Cranbourne



We are thrilled to have added Mark Walker/Te Akau Racing to our team of valued trainers with the recent addition to our stable of the 2yo filly by El Roca out of Singa Songa.

Purchased at the recent Ready To Run Sale at Karaka in New Zealand, this filly is a beautiful mover with a generous overstep. Her breeze was strong, becoming more fluent the further they ran. Upon inspection from within the Westbury Stud draft, she was well conformed, with little to fault in her physique. View the Breeze Up and her parade [here](#).

By El Roca (a sprinter) out of a family that includes G1 Queensland Cup winner Portland Singa, she appears to possess a sharp turn of foot that will compliment her staying bloodlines in time. The 3yo filly classics are certainly in our sights.

Mark Walker was delighted to be offered the opportunity to train her from his Cranbourne base. Mark, who owns Te Akau Racing in partnership, has an enviable training record. He has overseen the careers of many champions, most identifiable by the 'orange tsunami' colours well known in racing circles and carried currently by spring star Imperatriz.

A Product Disclosure Statement is under construction and shares in this filly will be available when the PDS is finalised. Expressions of interest in being involved in her future are welcome to oti@oti.com.au

QUIZ

NAME THE STUD

Hint: Hunter Valley

1. What Racing Entity/Brand does Mark Walker work under?
2. What is the prizemoney for the 2024 All-Star Mile?
3. Which racehorse trainer was recently elevated to legend status in the Australian Racing Hall of Fame?



WELFARE UPDATE

Happy Pharrell is enjoying his new life as a show horse and has successfully completed his first few competitions in the ridden and led 'Off The Track' classes.

"He has been to two shows for two Champion Open Small Hack in good company. We're so happy with him."



OTI 2023 WRAP UP

Another successful year on the track for the OTI colours with 17 feature winners in Australia and around the world. Find a list of our key winners below and click [**HERE**](#) to view a video including all the race replays!

In Australia:

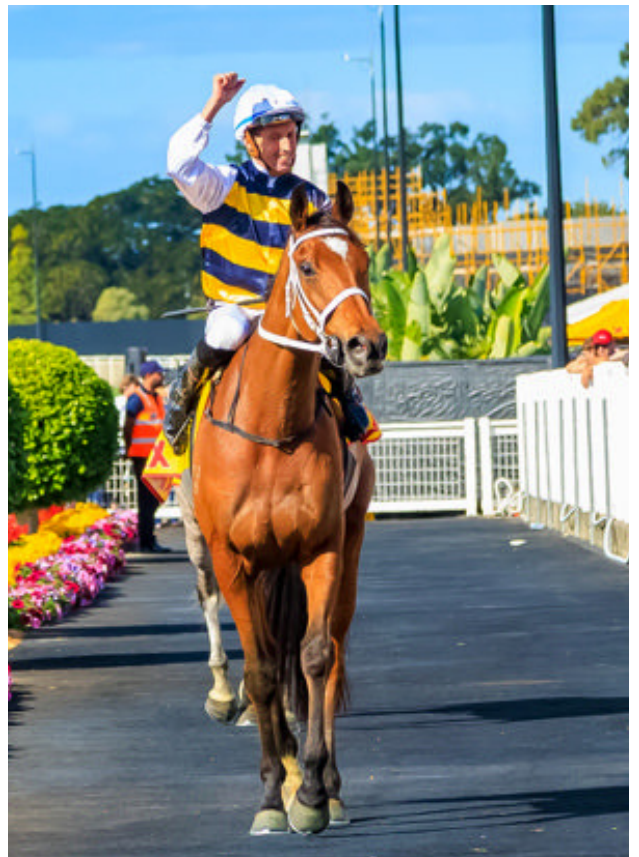
San Huberto - Listed Bagot Handicap
Cepheus - Group 2 Ajax Stakes
Timour - Group 3 N E Manion Quality Cup
Bengal Boy - Listed Galilee Series Final
Lady Laguna - Listed Mick Dittman Plate
Selino - Group 2 Brisbane Cup
Regal Lion - Listed Ipswich Cup
Athabascan - Listed City Tattersall's Club Cup
Athabascan - Group 3 Colin Stephen Quality
Cepheus - Group 2 Shannon Stakes
Cepheus - \$1.5m Alan Brown Stakes
Amade - Group 3 Geelong Cup
Warmonger - Listed TAB Trophy Stakes
Baby Rider - Listed ATC Cup

In Europe:

Docklands - Britannia Stakes
Sevenna's Knight - Listed Prix Michel Houyvet

In South Africa:

Under Your Spell - Group 2 Hawaii Stakes



Pictured: Selino wins the G2 Brisbane Cup

SNIPPETS

Rosehill Racecourse to be redeveloped

Racing could end at Rosehill and be replaced with housing under a plan between the ATC and the New South Wales Government, according to recent reports.

It was reported over a week ago that under the plan, Rosehill trainers would be relocated to a new facility to make way for a 'mini city featuring 25,000 houses and a train station.' The redeveloped Rosehill would also feature entertainment, parkland and a new school.

The club is expected to raise \$5b from the development, which would be invested in racing, training and other facilities at its other venues, like Randwick, Warwick Farm and Canterbury Park.

The above is an excerpt from Ryan Reynolds' Racing.com article and can be read [here](#).

Renovation plans for The Valley confirmed

The Valley will stop racing on its current track following the 2025 Cox Plate as it enters stage 1 of its massive development.

"The new straight will be longer (and wider) at 317m, almost double of what it was before, allowing for larger field sizes. The winning post will go back to the northern side, the school side and the track will be a little bit shorter. It'll come back to just to tick over 1700 meters in circumference and it'll be a completely different racing experience here at the Valley," said Moonee Valley CEO Michael Browell.

The turf for the new track will be laid in the second half of 2026. The club will do away with the inner chute, with plans to develop the infield into community facilities.

The above is an excerpt from Ryan Reynolds' Racing.com article and can be read [here](#).



Pictured: Moonee Valley's new Grand Stand



Pictured: New finish line and development

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Te Akau Racing
2. \$4M (down from \$5M in 2023)
3. Gai Waterhouse

NAME THE STUD - Arrowfield Stud



Pictured: Recent winner Altruist - bred at Arrowfield Stud