



# OTI GAZETTE

The official newsletter of OTI RACING



## Karaka - The Value Sale?

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Every major sale around the world has its distinctive characteristics. Newmarket (UK) in October, Arqana (France) in August, and Sydney Easter are tops when it comes to yearling breeding quality (and prices). In Kentucky, the buyers' hats get wider as the yearling sale progresses and the prices reduce. Magic Millions is built around fun, sun and a unique but most successful racing program. At Karaka, where the New Zealand Yearling Sale was held this week, the Kiwis can rightly lay claim to it being the value sale.

The relative weakness of the NZ dollar is not the only reason why Karaka is so appealing to those who have a keen eye for the economics of racing horses. Across the board, the Kiwis, unlike Australians, do not have the high-priced stallion fees. In fact, there are only 2 stallions, Proisir and Savabeel that command a service fee of more than NZ\$50,000. In Australia last season, there were 26!

One might think that such a variance would ultimately show up in the overall quality of the racehorses. On the contrary, the Kiwi bred horses continuously outperform their Australian cousins, especially at distances from 1600m upwards. Despite the difference in breeding numbers, in the last 5 years New Zealand-bred horses have won more state derbies in Australia than locally bred stock.

As the Kiwis are quick to promote, "New Zealand-bred horses won 28% of all Australian Group 1 races last season (22/23 season), whilst only making up 8% of the racing population." As the great racing writer Damon Rynon said 100 years ago, "Opinion will die but the facts don't lie."

So, it comes as no surprise that when the race results are overlaid with the prices paid for horses sold at Karaka, it's not surprising that so many Australian buyers travel to Karaka. Sure, the chances of you buying a Golden Slipper or Blue Diamond winner there is highly unlikely, but if you want a Guineas or Derby victor, the odds tell you it's the best place to go.

It's not only the Australians that have come to appreciate New Zealand-bred horses. While as many are brought from jump outs or from the track, the Hong Kong market plays a major role in keeping the New Zealand bloodstock popular. Golden Sixty, Hong Kong's Horse of the Year for the past three years, and Lucky Sweynesse, who is now their premier sprinter, are two prominent examples among many of the Kiwis mixing it with the blue-blooded stock from Europe and Australia.

At OTI we buy few yearlings. However, when we are looking for stock that may take a little time to develop and who look like they'll run 1600m plus, it's to Karaka we turn. The costs and results speak for themselves!

# OTI WEEKEND RUNNERS

A quieter weekend awaits OTI owners, with just the three likely runners. All three are last-start winners including the ever consistent Lady Laguna, who lines up in the Group 3 Southern Cross Stakes at Rosehill.

Our representation will kick off at The Valley on Friday night, and conclude in the UK on Sunday. In the video [HERE](#), Gus will take you through our runners.

## WINNERS



**TOURNELLE**  
1414m 3yo+F Maiden, Newcastle (UK)  
Trained by George Boughey



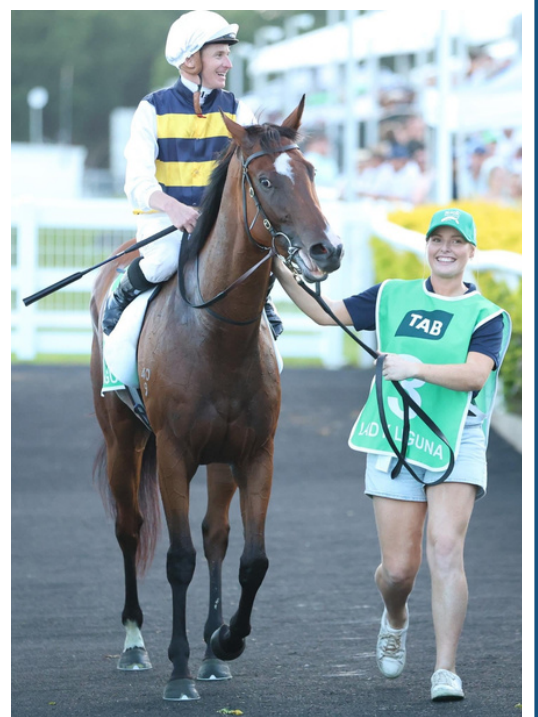
**LUKAN**  
1600m Maiden, Sale  
Trained by Mick Price & Michael Kent Jnr.



**SALCHOW**  
1300m Maiden, Wangaratta  
Trained by Nick Ryan



**SPERANZOSO**  
2400m BM64, Caulfield  
Trained by Clayton Douglas



**LADY LAGUNA**  
1300m \$1m Magic Millions Fillies & Mares, Gold Coast  
Trained by Annabel Neasham



# AN INTERVIEW WITH STUART BOMAN

**Stuart Boman** - Partner/Bloodstock Agent at Blandford Bloodstock in the UK, who specialises in all matters relating to bloodstock in Australia, Hong Kong and the USA.



## **Where did you grow up and were you surrounded by horses from a young age?**

I grew up in the northern suburbs of Sydney and despite not being surrounded by horses, we were a racing family. My father, Ken Boman, was a racing journalist and professional punter and I first went to the races with him when I was nine years old. I hardly missed a Saturday race meeting and effectively grew up in the press room and betting ring at Rosehill and Randwick. I have great memories of this time both the horses and the participants.

## **What influence did the Flying Start program have on your attitude to Racing?**

The Godolphin Flying Start was the single most important thing that happened in my career with horses. I was working as a solicitor in Sydney prior to being accepted on the inaugural programme. At the time, my career was taking me away from horses but thankfully Sheikh Mohammed had the vision for the course and it set my life on a different path. The Flying Start is a unique course and one that exposes the trainees to a huge variety of experiences in all the major racing and breeding jurisdictions. For me it was the first hand experience of seeing racing and breeding around the world and learning the nuances of each region.

## **How did you get involved in the horse racing industry, and did you always want to be a bloodstock agent?**

I got involved in horse racing through going to the races with my father. I studied the form and watched races from an earlier age and do not really remember not following horse racing. I always spent a lot of time looking at the horses in the paddock and then was given the opportunity by Gai Waterhouse to be her first sales assistant in the year she got her trainers license. I have been attending horses sales ever since. Like most bloodstock agents, I am a frustrated racehorse trainer and at certain times held the desire to train, but being a bloodstock agent was what I always wanted to do and I am lucky to have been able to make my career out of what I like doing the most.

## **Who were your greatest mentors or influences over the years?**

My colleagues Richard Brown and Tom Goff have been the biggest influence in my career. They both worked for the BBA and set up Blandford Bloodstock over 20 years ago. The way that they conduct themselves and professional standards they work by were how things were done at the BBA and I have learned a huge amount from both of them. Like so many other young people in racing, Gai Waterhouse was the first person to give me an opportunity to work in racing. She played an integral role in the very early stages.

## **Which racehorses were your most successful buys to date?**

Zaaki would be easily the most successful purchase. I purchased him with Annabel Neasham for the Tattersalls Horses In Training Sale for 150,000gns and he has gone on to win over A\$10m in prize money and four Group One races. In Europe, I purchased Excelebration as a horse in training - he was an exceptional horse and if he was not racing against Frankel would have gone down in history as one of the great milers of all time. Other recent success in Australia have been Top Ranked and My Oberon.

# AN INTERVIEW WITH STUART BOMAN

## **You appear to specialise in buying tried horses, mostly off the track, how do you source the horses?**

When I joined Blandford Bloodstock 14 years ago they needed someone to do horses in training work. It was a natural fit for me as most of my background was in form study and assessing races. This then branched out into breeze up horses which forms a significant part of our business. I have a lot of experience at purchasing yearlings and have had good success at this as well. Bloodstock agents are the only profession in the world where you try to be good at everything and not to specialise. I prefer buying horses in training and breeze up horses as the success rate is so much higher for my clients. Sourcing horses in training in Europe is a combination of private purchases and public auction. Purchasing privately is more like brokering and creating purchase opportunities, often having to structure a deal to entice owners to sell.

## **How do you prepare for a sale at public auction?**

I spend a lot of time researching every sale I attend - which is an increasing amount. Depending on the type of sale it generally starts with pedigree research I do, which slightly differs to others. I prefer to narrow the field based on a selection criterion and narrow any catalogue down before starting my inspections. I then go through the normal inspection and vetting process and whittle the potential candidates down further. I think by doing this you are fishing in waters that are more likely to have fish. A horses in training sale is a lot more in depth with a huge volume of data needing to be assessed. We have developed a database which helps us with this process. I would have the reputation of doing my homework and preparing well leading into a sale.

## **When looking to buy a racehorse, what are some specific things you look for?**

It sounds obvious, but ability and speed. I also value consistency in a horse's race record and do not like to see too many big beaten margins in a horse's form. The main thing is to have an appreciation of the region where the horses are going to do their future racing. For Australia, a horse needs good gate speed, a high cruising speed / tractability and a good turn of foot. Form on firm ground is also an important factor. I also look closely at pedigrees and I am tough on conformation / physique. There are certain sire lines that just don't work in some countries and when you look back the horses that end up working out they generally have a good pedigree behind them. Conformation and physique are both hugely important in particular for Australia I like to send a horse that has good size, is muscular and has good bone.

## **Why is Europe such a brilliant source of racehorses?**

Europe has some of the great owner breeders who have developed families and raise horses in an exceptional way. They are not always breeding for the sales ring and more so for the race course. Stamina, like everywhere, is less fashionable these days but still has a significant place in the breeding industry with the desire to breed, race or own a Derby winner being high on most participants lists. Europe is also a great source due to the way young horses are trained and conditioned both in training and on the race course. We race our horses a lot more at two and I think this is an important part of the development process of a young horse.

## **Given the opportunity, what would be the first thing you'd change in the racing industry in both the UK and Australia?**

For both regions, I would make all racing and pedigree data open source and use it to promote interest in racing and breeding. The case study of the NBA should be closely reviewed and the fortunes of that league and sport have not looked back since they opened up their data for all fans and sports bettors.

# OTI Eurolink Produces First Winner



Created by OTI to streamline the importation of quality European stock to Australia, with the help of agent Stuart Boman, Eurolink enjoyed its first success when 3yo filly, Tournelle, produced an effortless performance to win at her first race start at Newcastle. She follows Lennox and Hampden, who were both placed as two-year-olds and who both look to have exciting futures.

On the back of the success of the first group of horses, Eurolink '23 has now been formed.

## OTI STATISTICS

OTI has enjoyed a terrific season to date, notching up 58 winners as we pass the halfway point. Nine of those have been at stakes level, and we are hopeful that Lady Laguna can add to this number at Rosehill on Saturday!

OTI Statistics 2023-24 Season		
Winners	Placings	Runners
58	146	363
Win SR	Place SR	Stakes Winners
15.98%	40.22%	9

OTI Overall Statistics	
Winners	Group 1 Winners
1025	14
Stakes Winners	Stakes Placings
141	409

\*In 2023, OTI recorded 16 stakes wins, with wins in 6 different countries.

## European Winter

Our European horses are working hard throughout the colder winter months and we look forward to seeing them on the track when the turf season gets into full swing.

Click [HERE](#) to watch a feature video including Deakin, Tournelle, Docklands and others working during some beautiful and snowy winter mornings!



Deakin



# INTRODUCING PRO AUSSIE

**Three-year-old son of Proisir**  
**~ Looks, Breeding, Class and Potential ~**



The decision to acquire the stunning three-year-old gelding by Proisir, named Pro Aussie, was an easy one. Given time to grow into his frame, the gelding has now shown all the attributes necessary for him to be a quality racehorse.

Pro Aussie has now been in work at Lindsay Park's Euroa property for a couple of months. Although he is still a few weeks away from trialling, he is already showing the attributes that indicate quality.

We would hope to see him at the races in March/April. After a run or two, the stable will then be well-placed to plan out his short to medium-term racing career. The bloodlines are particularly attractive with this fellow. Proisir has taken all before him over the last three years and is now rated the top Group 1 producer in New Zealand. His progeny was highly sought after at Karaka 2024 - Book 1.

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

## QUIZ

### NAME THE STUD

*Hint: New Zealand*

1. Who was the sire of the top lot (\$1.6m filly) sold at Karaka 2024?
2. Which horse won the 2024 OTI Balnarring Cup?
3. Who is the sire of OTI's Lady Laguna?



# OTI'S AUTUMN

As the Autumn Carnival quickly approaches, we look forward to plenty of stakes-class action on the track with some exciting horses, including the likes of Athabasca, Lady Laguna, Cepheus, Daqiansweet Junior, Vivy Air and many more.

We've compiled a spreadsheet of all feature races and our potential runners, with a link [HERE](#).



*Lady Laguna' wins Listed Nudge Stakes*



*Cepheus wins \$1.5m Alan Brown Stakes*



*Athabasca wins Listed CTC Cup*

## OTI BALNARRING CUP WRAP UP



We had another great day out at the Balnarring Picnic Races this year, proudly sponsoring the OTI Balnarring Cup.

Congratulations to trainer Jim Cerchi, jockey Henry Jaggard and the connections of LEGENDA for taking home the Cup this year.

Well done to the Balnarring Picnic Club for their hard work and dedication to make it a special day for all spectators and participants. A great turn out with the club reaching it's full capacity on the day, making it a sold-out event. We look forward to coming back next year.



Upcoming meetings at Balnarring are on March 10 & March 30, 2024.

## HAVE YOUR SAY

Your opinions are always welcome! If you like to share your thoughts on anything racing, specific content ideas/wishes or want to share your favourite OTI memories, send an email to [lisa@oti.com.au](mailto:lisa@oti.com.au)



**OTI**  
RACING  
& BLOODSTOCK

# SNIPPETS

## Congratulations to OTI owner Toni Joel

Congratulations to long-time owner, Toni Joel, on being awarded an Order of Australia Medal. Toni has done remarkable work in creating and running 'Off Your Back', an initiative that collects unwanted coats then distributes them through organisations including the Salvation Army to the needy.

Her award is richly deserved and her OTI co-owners in horses, including Manighar and Docklands, are delighted with the recognition she has received for her selfless work.

## New Zealand Slot Race and Prizemoney Boost

The Southern Hemisphere will soon be witness to the richest three-year-old race – '**The NZB Kiwi**'. Sponsored by NZB, the inaugural thoroughbred slot race will headline a major revamp of the New Zealand summer racing calendar next year.

The NZB Kiwi will become one of the major highlights of a newly established 'Champions Day' held in March at Ellerslie - a three-year-old 1500m slot race, which will be the richest race ever held in New Zealand and will carry black-type status.

Fourteen slots will be available to graduates of NZB Sales, as well as Kiwi horses, creating a true destination race for star New Zealand-bred horses from around the world.

The NZB Kiwi slot race will carry stakes prizemoney of at least \$3.5 million in 2025, increasing to \$4.5 million by 2027. An auction for a number of slots will be held on Tuesday 27 February at NZB's Karaka Sales Centre.

The above is an excerpt from the NZB website and can be read in full [here](#).



# QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Proisir
2. Legenda, trained by Jim Cerchi
3. Overshare

**NAME THE STUD** - Rich Hill Stud in New Zealand

