



OTI GAZETTE

The official newsletter of OTI RACING



IN THIS EDITION

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Australia Can Learn from the Kiwi's Current Approach to Racing

We could learn much from many of the initiatives recently adopted by our Kiwi friends. While for decades they have been regarded as inveterate traders, the general perception, at least from Australians, was their domestic racing was inferior, especially when it came to stake money. There is good reason why that perception should now change.

A few months ago, Entain Pty Ltd, the owners of Ladbrokes, purchased the New Zealand TAB. With the purchase came both several new initiatives to promote racing and more creative approaches to marketing racing.

Concurrently, the Auckland Racing Club, with proceeds from the sell-off of surplus land around its track, upgraded its track and stable facilities to a world-class standard. In achieving the upgrade and with the benefits of increased prize money, the Club showcased the racing product at its Karaka Millions (which was included in the Hong Kong-based world pool), NZ Derby, and Auckland Cup meetings.

In the last month a consortium of major stakeholders, including New Zealand Bloodstock, offered slots by auction for a series of valuable 3-year-old races over the next 3 years. Despite the nominated minimum bid of \$NZ400,000, 9 slots attracted bids between \$NZ675,000 and \$NZ725,000. There is possibly no better reflection of the confidence in the local product than the support given to this auction process.

There is no doubt that, despite the Kiwi progress, Australia remains a far more attractive place to race horses. However, that does not mean that we cannot learn from the initiatives adopted in New Zealand. Some of those initiatives include:

- The ability to sell surplus land holdings and use funds to improve tracks and stakes moneys – Sandown and Rosehill come to mind.
- The ability to use market forces to create demand for major races – The All-Star Mile comes to mind.
- The ability to consolidate metropolitan racing active under administration – the state of Racing Victoria and Melbourne's three metropolitan clubs come to mind.
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The final component of New Zealand's re-awakening is the support from the Government. New Zealand's Racing Minister (and Deputy Prime Minister) is a passionate racing man. Currently, New South Wales and Victoria can only wish for someone at the top with the wherewithal to ensure racing in their respective jurisdictions is conducted in the most professional, empathetic, and cost-effective manner.

OTI WEEKEND RUNNERS



OTI Weekend Preview

After a thrilling Saturday with Lady Laguna bringing home the Group 1 Canterbury Stakes, we look forward to another busy weekend, including four stakes runners set to take their place at Caulfield and Rosehill.

The action will kick off on Friday night at Pakenham with The Creator, before heading into an action-packed Saturday.

Terry, Shayne & Gus take you through our runners and include their best for the weekend. Click [HERE](#) to view the weekend preview.

WINNERS



Upwoods
2550m Maiden, Pakenham
Trained by Mick Price & Michael Kent Jnr



Elderberry
1200m F&M BM64, Pakenham
Trained by Anthony & Sam Freedman



Auriel
1200m 3yo Maiden, Colac
Trained by Natalie Young & Trent Busuttin



Nettles
1200m Maiden, Scone
Trained by Annabel Neasham



Principessa
1900m BM78, Canterbury Park
Trained by Joe Pride



LADY LAGUNA
1300m **GROUP 1 CANTERBURY STAKES**, Randwick
Trained by Annabel Neasham (photos courtesy of Ashlea Brennan)

AN INTERVIEW WITH BRAD TAYLOR

Brad Taylor - current Racing Manager for Anthony & Sam Freedman, soon to relocate back to NZ to embark on a new journey with RACE.

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

I grew up in Mosgiel, actually opposite Wingatui Racecourse. My family weren't involved in racing so I wasn't born into it.

How did you get involved in the horse racing industry?

I was lucky enough to be paired with Hong Kong Trainer Jamie Richards on my first day of primary school. We quickly became good friends and I spent most of my weekends at his parents farm working with the horses and going to the races. I just fell in love with it that way.



Who has been the biggest mentor or influence on your career?

Jamie Richards.

What appealed to you about becoming a Racing Manager?

I wanted to get involved in racing, I never had any plans to be a trainer or anything. I was lucky enough to get given the opportunity to be the Racing Manager at Te Akau while Jamie was training there and it was too good of an opportunity to turn down. I like working with the horses and being involved in a stable.

What was your most memorable racing experience or win to date?

Most definitely 'Without A Fight' winning the Melbourne Cup.

You're soon moving back to New Zealand to take on a new role with RACE. What will that role look like?

I am taking on the role as General Manager of Racing at Race, which run Awapuni and Trentham Racing Clubs, but the role will also include Hawkes Bay Racing Club. I will be looking after the racing side of the business for those racing clubs, as we see in Australia, there are different arms to these clubs now.

Was it a hard choice to leave Australia, and what will you miss most about your role with the Freedman's?

A very difficult decision to leave Australia, Jayne and I both love it over here. I have loved my seven years with Anthony and Sam. I owe Anthony and Sam a lot for what they have done for me while I have been here. I will definitely miss the role, being involved with the horses hands on and that winning feeling especially those big Group 1's.

Is there a horse in the Freedman yard yet to debut that you'll be following closely once back in New Zealand?

Appointed, a Super Seth horse that we purchased privately from New Zealand.

When you and Jayne get time away from horses, how do you like to spend it?

With our two kids, Pippa (4) and Luca (2).

Given the opportunity, what would be the first thing you'd change in the racing industry in Australia?

Increase prizemoney of Maidens, make them worth more so more people get a return and more people will reinvest into the game.

OTI'S AUTUMN

Feb 3, '24	Rosehill	G3	Southern Cross Stakes	Lady Laguna	1200m	3yo&Up Qlty	\$250,000	1st
Feb 17,'24	Ellerslie (NZ)	G2	Avondale Guineas	Interlinked	2100m	3yo SW	NZ\$175,000	3rd
Feb 23,'24	The Valley	Listed	Torney Night Cup	Amade	2500m	Open Hcp	\$200,000	3rd
Feb 24,'24	Rosehill	G2	Millie Fox Stakes	Lady Laguna	1300m	3yo&Up F&M SWP	\$300,000	2nd
Feb 24,'24	Caulfield	G2	Caulfield Autumn Classic	Caracas	1800m	3yo SW	\$300,000	2nd
Mar 9, '24	Randwick	G1	Canterbury Stakes	Lady Laguna	1300m	3yo&Up WFA	\$750,000	1st
Mar 9, '24	Flemington	G3	Matron Stakes	Rivaport	1600m	3yo&Up F&M SWP	\$200,000	4th
Mar 9, '24	Ellerslie (NZ)	G2	Auckland Cup	Mark Twain	3200m	Open Hcp	NZ\$500,000	3rd
Mar 11, '24	Morphettville	G2	Adelaide Cup	Amade	3200m	Open Hcp	\$350,000	4th
Mar 16,'24	Rosehill	G2	Ajax Stakes	Cepheus Hezashocka	1500m	3yo&Up Qlty	\$300,000	
Mar 16,'24	Rosehill	G3	Sky High Stakes	Athabascan	2000m	3yo&Up SWP	\$350,000	
Mar 16,'24	Caulfield	Listed	Victoria Gold Cup	Selino	2000m	Open Qlty	\$175,000	

Our contingent of OTI horses has kicked the autumn off in great style, headlined by Lady Laguna's win at Group 1 level.

Above is a rundown of top-four results so far, and our autumn spreadsheet outlines all potential stakes class targets for the OTI team. This weekend, the likes of Athabascan, Cepheus, Hezashocka and Selino are all met with important assignments as they work towards their respective 'grand finals'.

To access a copy of the spreadsheet, you can click [here](#) or view our home page.

SANDY - THE ONLY ONE TO RETURN

Sandy, a war horse well known to many as the only horse returning to Australia from World War I, now has his very own statue in Tallangatta, his hometown in Victoria.

OTI's Welfare Program is proud to sponsor the promotion of his statue to raise awareness for his unique story.

Read the full story of Sandy [here](#).



HAVE YOUR SAY!

Your opinions are always welcome! If you would 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



INTRODUCING NATURAL RULER

~ 3YO COLT THAT IS READY TO WIN ~

"I'm reluctant to say this, but this colt reminds me of Ottoman Emperor" ~ Johnny Murtagh



Although still lean and unfurnished as a two-year-old, the colt was given two educational runs last year. A tall (16.1 hands), athletic and well-balanced colt, he showed good race manners but lacked physical maturity. Watch footage of him under saddle [here](#).

On March 8, Natural Ruler had his first start for the year. Settling midfield, he was strong through the line to finish second, two lengths behind the winner and three lengths in front of the third horse. Watch his race replay [here](#).

Natural Ruler will head back to Dundalk before the end of March for a Maiden between 1600m and 2000m. From there, it is planned for him to work his way through the classes during the turf season. Once he attracts a rating in the high 80's, numerous options will be open for him including feature Carnivals at Royal Ascot, Goodwood (as Ottoman Emperor did) or Newmarket.

The plan at the end of his three-year-old season is to bring the colt to Australia. From what we have seen, he appears an ideal type both physically, and in his racing style (a good turn of foot) for the Australian scene. Until he comes to Australia, Johnny Murtagh will continue to train the colt from his stables in the Curragh, Ireland.

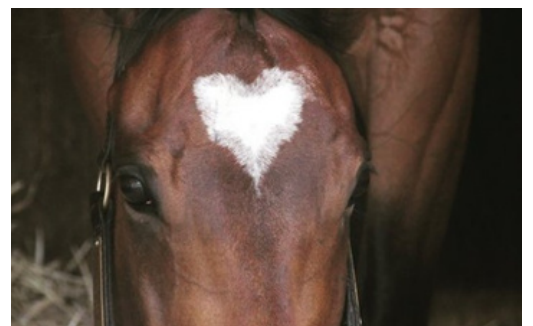
For more information about the colt, please contact us at oti@oti.com.au.

QUIZ

NAME THE RACEHORSE

Hint: Mick Price Racing

1. What is the total prizemoney for the 2024 All-Star Mile?
2. Which Australian stallion retired from stud duties last week?
3. Who was the sire of the top lot (\$925k) in the recent Inglis Melbourne Premier Yearling Sale?



FEATURED OWNER - TERRI CLUSE & CAMERON ELLIS

Were you both involved in horse racing before buying into Lady Laguna? If so in what capacity?

Cam: I never really thought about horse racing growing up, besides Melbourne Cup Day where the whole country knew it was on. That changed in 2002, I went to a race day at Caulfield that Spring with a friend. I bought an MRC membership the next season. I've enjoyed going to the races ever since, I just love the atmosphere and excitement.

Terri: I grew up with horses with my parents involved in harness racing, both as owners and for a time trainers. I would earn \$5 pocket money a week to muck out the stables. After watching Phar Lap repeatedly as a child, I dreamt of owning a race horse good enough to run at Flemington. I first bought into the ladies syndicate OTI had a few years ago.

What inspired you to become involved in her (Lady Laguna)?

Cam: Terri forwarded me an email about Lady Laguna, her pedigree, and cost. She highlighted the fact, more than once, that there are no guarantees in racing, and that it isn't necessarily a safe investment. Until this point, I never thought I could be an owner of a horse, part or otherwise. This was mid 2021, Terri and I had been together for almost 6 months, attended the races once or twice. I had met Terry and some other OTI horse owners by this stage, and I realised these opportunities weren't out of reach. I dared to dream, so said let's do it!

Terri: I got an email from Hermione asking if I would be interested in a share of this filly. Cam and had only just started dating and I thought it might be a fun thing we can share. Cam had never owned a horse before so I did warn him of the hazards of horse ownership! I thought she looked like a lovely filly with a catchy name so why not.

Has your ownership of Lady Laguna encompassed interest from other family and friends. If so how?

Cam: My son Calvin talks about our horse Lady Laguna with pride, even when she doesn't come first, "she did a good job didn't she dad?". He gets pretty animated when she comes down the straight, and loves to be front and centre after a win. He wanted me to pick up a newspaper last Sunday so he could have a copy of the article about Lady's last win. My brother likes to be kept up to date with any news, and watches every race. And it turns out my uncle is interested in horses. He is usually a pretty quiet guy, but Lady has really opened up the channel of communications, and he and my dad are calling and texting each other all the time mum says. The few friends I have discussed this with have all been genuinely excited and happy for us.

Terri: Certainly my family are very interested and excited. They are all in South Australia, so there is a lot of communication race days going back and forth. After she won the Magic Millions and the Canterbury Stakes my phone was pinging excessively! The excitement has spread to our friends locally and some of the other doctors at work. It's been lovely to see my stepson Calvin get so excited, declaring the weekend we went to Sydney for the Canterbury Stakes the best ever! He's been front and centre of the trophy presentations, chatting with Annabel Neasham and jockeys.

Given Lady Laguna has already accomplished much, what would your dream be for her to now achieve?

Cam: Definitely The Everest. I've thought about it more than once over the past week. I thought the possibility of Lady Laguna racing in The Golden Slipper a couple of years ago sounded ridiculous at first, actually making it there was unbelievable. I wouldn't mind having a good excuse to go to HK or Royal Ascot either!

Terri: The Everest would be very exciting. I've been to Royal Ascot a few times and that would be very special to see her on an international stage.

Do you have any wish to breed with Lady Laguna when she retires?

Cam: Talk to me Terry.

Terri: It would be something new to me but I'll try almost anything once.

Have you purchased any horses since Lady Laguna, and have they been successful?

Cam/Terri: Yes, Self Worth, Lindelago, Nettles, Gyra, Pop's Pipe. We got to see Lindelago race on Oaks Day at Flemington which was great. I'm looking forward to seeing Nettles continue to grow with Annabel, and it's still very early days with Gyra and Pop's Pipe.

Briefly, as a newly married couple, what has ownership of Lady Laguna meant to you?

Cam: Seizing every opportunity, and saying yes to experiences.

Terri: Feeling very grateful and extremely lucky to be part of it all. We try to embrace & enjoy it as much as we can.



SNIPPETS

Caulfield's new mounting yard, stalls and opening of Heath track

Wednesday marked the official first race day on the new inside course proper at Caulfield, called the Heath track, and the opening of the new horse stalls and mounting yard.

OTI's Tom Melbourne was amongst the first horses to enter the new facilities for their official media day a few weeks ago. The first Saturday metro meeting will be held this week for the running of the 2024 All-Star Mile.

Take a look at the new horse stall [here](#) and the new mounting yard [here](#).



Something funny for the dog lovers out there!

Click the link [here](#) to watch the video.



Racing South Australia announces significant Group 1 prizemoney increase

Sportsbet, Racing SA and SAJC are excited to announce a 7-year partnership, which will see each of the four Group 1 races (G1 Australasian Oaks, G1 Robert Sangster Stakes, G1 South Australian Derby, G1 The Goodwood) during the Adelaide Racing Carnival worth a minimum of \$1 million in prizemoney.

More information [here](#).

Congratulations to Michael Kent Jnr and partner Ali Berwick on their recent wedding. The team at OTI wishes you the very best for your future together!



QUIZ ANSWERS

1. \$4m
2. Exceed and Excel - stood at Darley
3. filly by Snitzel

NAME THE RACEHORSE - LANKAN RUPEE, multiple G1 winner and famous for his heart shaped head marking



Pictured: Lankan Rupee wins 2015 G1 Lightning Stakes