
BREEDERS' UPDATE

June 12, 2020



THE BREEDERS' AND WOODLANDS
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BODRUM BOY GETS GODFREY BACK ON TRACK

Brad Reid

John Godfrey is a name not many casual harness racing fans or breeders in New Zealand would be familiar with.

Not because he hides from the spotlight, but simply because the Roto O Rangi dairy farmer from the Waikato does not like to have too many horses around him.

"It's just a hobby for me," he said.

A hobby that has spanned more than a few decades, a training licence and a life membership at Cambridge for 26 years of service on the Bay of Plenty/Waikato Harness racing committee.

"I got involved through my father who had a horse called Prince Tartan (1965 g Prince Calumet - Mary Mayfield) who Kelvin Primmer used to train.

"I was going to get my driver's licence but when my father passed away I took out a trainer's licence instead."

Godfrey did so in 1984, but as with many things that we call a hobby, other areas of life took precedent and Godfrey sparsely lined another one up again before the new millennium.

"Because I was on a dairy farm and had a young family I got Kevin Shaw to train a lot of my stock for me as well," he said.

He trained his first winner in 1999 by virtue of his good friend, the late Colin Webber.

Webber had given him Ryan's Flight (1993 B g Tuapeka Knight - That's My Dream) to train and he was able to salute the judge at Bay of Plenty at his third start at odds of 40/1.

Webber was also responsible for getting Godfrey involved in the breeding side of the game which is the source of Godfrey's latest training success.

Bodrum Boy was a debut winner at the first Cambridge meeting post Covid.

He was able to lead from barrier five before handing up and taking a trail and easily put paid to his race-day rivals up the Brogden Transport passing lane.

The son of American Ideal was bred by Godfrey out of



Bodrum Boy and Sean McCaffrey winning at Cambridge on the 29th of May at his debut effort. He ran third last night also.

an Astreos mare called By The Stars, who he acquired through another good friend, Sean McCaffrey.

“Sean went down to the dispersal sale and rang me up saying he had bought a filly that he thought would be perfect for me.

“I said well you’re a better judge than me and I ended up taking her home for around \$5,000.

“He helps me quite a bit Sean. I don’t break horses in or anything, I let him do all that sort of work for me,” he said.

“Her grand-dam was Sakuntala and her mother, Tuapeka Royale, was a six-figure purchase as a yearling at the Yearling Sales.”

The Sakuntala family needs no introduction, but her daughter Tuapeka Royale might take some specking.

I can’t confirm but it is said she was a \$180,000 yearling sales purchase.

Sadly, she could barely run fast enough to get warm and the Halligan’s who bought her did their dough cold with three unplaced runs before retiring her.

Given she was by Lordship out of Sakuntala, and the many branches of the Sakuntala family that have gone onto dizzy heights, you would be forgiven for thinking she might leave one at stud with some ability.

Inexplicably Tuapeka Royale had three to the races for nine foals and only two winners.

The stallions she was bred too weren’t what you would call top shelf, however the history books have little room for hard luck stories.

The next daughter of Sakuntala (Tuapeka Vale) was sold at a fraction of the price, went 1:56 on the track and left dual NZ cup winner, Monkey King.

How about them apples.

The lack of runs on the board for this branch of the family undoubtedly aided Godfrey in getting his filly so cheaply.

The Astreos mare won three races and had nine placings, but never went as good on the grit as she did her preferred grass surface.

You could say she had little option but to love the grass being worked on the paddocks of Godfrey’s Waikato dairy farm. However, there were underlying reasons for the preferred surface of the mare.

“By The Stars was really tough. She was really good on the grass, but on the hard track lacked a bit of speed. On the grass she was a different story.

“Like her son Bodrum Boy, she would hit the ground so hard with her feet she developed a lot of problems with her toes. I actually got her fit on my farm just working her there and never went near a hard track.”

“She won her first at Stratford sitting parked the whole way which is a pretty good effort going up the hill. She won her second race at Stratford sitting three-wide with cover and her other win came at Bay of Plenty in similar fashion,” he said.

Colin Webber had a good mare called Aitch Ar (1994 B m Cam’s Trickster - Royal Chevalier) who won four races for him back when he was training.

He bred her to Holmes Hanover to get Rosie Ryan and she never won race but ran second five times.

He asked me one day do you want this mare? She arrived the same day he phoned me,” laughed Godfrey.

The one and only foal Godfrey bred out of the mare was called Chequeme Rosie which was a fitting name given how honest she was.

The Julius Caesar mare was responsible for more than half of Godfrey’s training wins to date with six and 16 placings.



You might question why she was never bred from by Godfrey, nor the dam but again that lends to the nature of his career and family commitments and the breeding and training being just a hobby.

"I was breeding from By The Stars and I thought her pedigree was better, to be honest.

"They just multiply too quickly and I never like to have more than one in work," he said.

"I had a stipe round here last year inspecting my training facilities and we had a bit of a laugh because he said I'm not presenting them to the races very often."

"I told him that's because I'm only breeding from one mare every couple of years and some of them don't make it to the races," he laughed.

Last month's winner Bodrum Boy almost went down a similar line as his older sister by Real Desire who, although showed ability, bowed a tendon and was then destined to be a hack.

Bodrum Boy was at the trials in 2017 as a two-year-old but after bruising up in the front of his feet like his mum, he had a two-year layoff in public appearances before being presented prior to Christmas.

"He's gone sore on me three times which is what took him so long to get to the races.

"Sean said he should have won his qualifying trial before Christmas, but he couldn't get the plugs out," he laughed. "He won his first workout after lockdown with Sean in the cart and then he said to me that I had to drive him because he had one of his own in. I guess when he won with me in the cart it didn't help his divvy last week.

I always knew he had ability because on my track you barely had to move on him, and you were three laps holding on to him. You get other ones that your tapping up all the time to get them to work, and he is just a bit different, I guess. He is a nice horse," he said.

Picking up the maiden win at his home track and one that he is a life member made the breeder/owner/trainer success all that much sweeter.

Godfrey has an Auckland Reactor filly out of By The Stars with Sean McCaffrey who should by all accounts make the grade. He has designs on sending his mare to stud for her fourth foal in the near future.

"I don't know who I'll send her too yet, but I'll wait for your catalogue to come out and make a decision," he said.

We should all look forward to seeing who Godfrey mates his well-bred mare with next.

* Bodrum Boy ran a nice third at lastnights Cambridge meeting

DOMINANT WEEK-END FOR STOCK OF DOMINATION

Brad Reid

South Canterbury farmers Ray and Joan Scott of St Andrews have raced some nice horses over the years.

Ray part owned the smart Phil's Gift prior to him breaking down.

But for every Phil's Gift there have been a few more that we didn't hear much about.

Therefore it's weekends like last Saturday breeding double at the Invercargill meeting that make the perseverance all worthwhile.

The couple who have spent a lifetime in farming notched a breeding double on the same day from their former smart trotting mare, Domination 2002 B m (Sundon - Syndication).

"We were thrilled to get two horses win on the same day," he said.

"I bought a half share of Domination off Murray Tapper in 2007 and we had a lot of fun with her. She won about \$90,000 altogether which was pretty good in them days," he said.

Domination was out of the eight win Greener Pastures mare, Syndication.

Like her mum, she was an honest toiler and there is no denying the Sundon influence in lifting this breed.

Of the 10 foals out of Syndication, four of them won races and three of the four were by Sundon. Domination with her 10 wins is easily the best of them.

Although she didn't start her racing career until the age of, she more than made up for it with 96 starts across four seasons that also included 21 placings and four of her 10 wins at the home of harness racing, Addington.

"She won some very good races at Addington and beat Braig one night up there who was smart, but racing off handicaps wasn't suiting her in the end and we retired her to stud," he said.

The first foal by Monarchy resulted in a pint sized filly that was sold on the recommendation of Murray Tapper due to her smaller stature.

What she lacks in size she makes up for in the ticker department and her win on Saturday marked her sixth win in five seasons of racing.





Rydgemont Son & Brad Williamson with daylight to second after a dominant win on Cup Day

"We initially leased her to Debbie Shirley (now trainer/owner) and she persevered with her a lot and put a lot of effort into her, she's had wind problems and all sorts but has done quite well," he said.

"All of Domination's foals are slow away but she has a great turn of foot, Rydgemont Milly," said Scott.

After failing to conceive for a season despite a couple of attempts, Domination was in foal in 2013 to The Pres, resulting in The Dominator.

"Steve Bell got The Dominator as we ended the breeding partnership after racing Domination together," he said.

Trained by Bell's partner Donna Williamson, The Dominator was slow in maturing but has come to show plenty of ability.

The now 8 win gelding has a great turn of foot when produced for one run and is not out of place in the pen Class trotting ranks when he puts it all together.

The next foal by Majestic Son produced last Saturday's other half of the Domination double, Rydgemont Son.

"He's a bit temperamental, but if he gets away he is very good. I Presume you saw his effort on Cup Day?" said Scott

I certainly did, he cost me and plenty of others pick 6, Ray!

Brad Williamson got him to step away safely before producing a peach of a drive to see Rydgemont Son score by three lengths going away from them.

"I said to Brad that we would like to have a horse at the races on Cup Day. We hadn't been for over 10 years because we are getting old, and I said what are the chances of getting him in. We were lucky to get a start and didn't expect him to win, but he flew home didn't he," said Scott.

He went a terrific race on Show Day going down a head to the peoples horse, Overzealous.

His effort to reel in the talented Davey Mac off 15 meters suggests there is plenty in store for the talented square-gaiter.

"He made a good beginning which was probably the key to the win. Making a good start has been one of his problems," said Brad Williamson

"Ray decided to give Rydgemont Son a go in my stable because he was galloping a lot for Murray. The horse had always shown ability. At our Oamaru trials I remember him qualifying and Dad said he quite liked him then. "

"I told Ray a long time ago that by the time he's had thirty to forty starts he may be a good genuine standing start horse. Ray joked and said he'd be dead by then," said Williamson.

The next foal by Muscle Hill went through a fence as a young horse and badly hurt her neck, with the filly at the time lucky to be spared from her injuries.

She was by all accounts a lovely type but was sold to Bev Williamson as a broodmare with her value getting better by the day.

"Looking back we should have kept her because she was a lovely filly to have on the farm and she was a beautiful looking horse too," he said.

"I'm in my 80's now and didn't think it would be wise to wait another three years breeding, so I've rolled the dice and bought into a few and it seems to be paying off."

Rydgemont Son is not the only horse in the Brad Williamson barn with the association now a solid one for both owner and trainer.





Ray and Joan Scott in the biordcage on Cup Day last year after Rydgemont Son smashed them in the penultimate

Unlike his brothers, Brad hasn't had the same luck in timing with both Nathan (Springbank Richard) and Matthew (Leighton Hest) experiencing the Group One thrill early in their driving careers.

Unfortunately for Brad that has yet to eventuate and is synonymous with his father's lean run in the open Class ranks in recent times.

Majestic Man has probably provided him with his best chance in Phil's colours and the talented gelding has just run into one or two better than him on the day. Sundees Son and Winterfell come to mind.

Despite this, Brad has forged a very solid driving career of his own and is now making every post a winner as a trainer going from taking others hand me downs, to purchasing and syndicating from the sales with owners now all but lining up.

"Ray is a legend, he's just been at my place for a few hours today watching his horses," said Williamson.

One of them being boom three year old trotter, Cracker Hill.

The Muscle Hill gelding was passed in at the sales and was one Ray was keen to buy outright himself.

"I'm not getting any younger and I had sold some shares at Synlait for around \$10 each so I was keeping my eye on a few I liked by Muscle Hill. He was passed in but I was away overseas at the time otherwise I would have bought him myself," he said.

If it weren't for Bolt For Brilliance and then Covid19, Brad Williamson would have bagged a training/driving credit in a Group One this season with Cracker Hill undoubtedly the best of his crop.

Ray isn't complaining though and considers himself lucky to finally have a trotter good enough to compete on the grand stage.

"He's going to quite well, he's been to one workout at Ashburton already and he was in a learners heat at Oamaru yesterday. Brad hopes to qualify him as a two-year-old but we aren't too worried about it. He's got a got turn of foot and will make a nice trotter," said Scott.

Unfortunately for Ray and Joan, Domination had to be put down two years ago after suffering an injury.

"She got hurt in a paddock accident where a horse kicked her in the leg down low and shattered it which meant she had to be put down. It was a bugger because everything she left has been good," said Scott.

With one door closing another one has opened and the next generation are being put through their paces and Ray and Joan are hopeful they have their next Cracker Hill waiting in the wings at Brad's place.

Williamson spent \$80,000 on two Muscle Hill yearlings at Karaka and you get the sense Ray is a little bit excited about them.

"We've got shares in One Tree Hill out of Landoras Pearl and Hill of Grace who is out of Whitney. I'm an old man now so I thought I better go to the doctor now while I can," said Scott.

"We've had a happy life, it's an expensive hobby for a one man band but it's a fun one too," he said.

THEILERIA FINAL TEST RESULTS

Brad Reid

We are pleased to report that The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) have completed testing all of the adult horses considered at risk of contracting Theileria equi infection through association with the infected imported thoroughbred mare. All the 263 tests have returned negative results.



The horse concerned was imported to New Zealand for breeding purposes in February 2019 and was found to be infected with *Theileria equi* as part of standard export certification prior to onward shipment to Australia, and has not displayed any signs of illness in its time here.

Ministry scientists worked with the Cambridge Stud to quarantine the mare and immediately test all adult horses that were either paddock mates of the infected mare or had grazed the same pasture. These 22 animals all tested negative for *Theileria equi*. Subsequent testing was carried out on 241 other horses at the stud to provide confidence that the operation is free of the organism, and that there has been no transmission of it within the farm.

Theileria equi is an organism that can cause the blood condition Piroplasmiasis which causes anaemia and poor condition. It is primarily spread from horse to horse by ticks. It is not infectious directly between horses, and the ticks that are known to transmit the disease are not a species present in New Zealand.

The situation temporarily halted the export of some horses from New Zealand to Australia as Australian importing requirements include certification from the New Zealand government that the entire country is free of *Theileria equi*. Exports have now resumed under an interim arrangement and MPI continues to work with Australian authorities. Negotiations are also underway with other importing countries and also making good progress.

At the time of its import to New Zealand, the horse met all requirements including testing negative for *Theileria equi* within the required 21 days before its shipment. It had also undergone full quarantine in the UK before export and in New Zealand on arrival.

Agreed trade conditions for a number of countries that import New Zealand horses require veterinary certification stating that New Zealand is completely free of the disease to accept horses from here. As statements of country freedom cannot currently be given, alternate measures now need to be agreed until such time New Zealand can regain this status hopefully in the not too distant future.

MPI has been working closely with Australian authorities and has agreed an interim testing regime for individual horses that has allowed exports to Australia and via Australia to resume. This testing will incur an additional cost to exports as the testing requires specialist expertise and therefore is subcontracted to an Australian laboratory with these skills.

Airfreight companies have now resumed flights but as above additional testing will be required. Talks are also underway with other importing countries, and to date very good progress is being made.

We are relieved this is an isolated case but shows the importance of our border controls as an exporting country and that we must remain vigilant. We are fortunate that the co-operation and efforts of Cambridge Stud assisting MPI to complete the testing in such a prompt manner has meant we are hopeful in regaining our country freedom status in the near future.

RITA UPDATE JUNE 10

Dean McKenzie

Good afternoon,

It's been two weeks since we last updated you on changes across the TAB in response to the significant impact COVID-19 has had on our business. Fortunately, in that time we have seen the resumption of NZ Harness racing, a full programme of domestic greyhound racing, and the reopening of our gaming business. And this week, an important milestone in securing racing's future was achieved with the Select Committee Report on the Racing Industry Bill presented to the House of Parliament. We wanted to provide you with an update on these and some other developments which will be of interest to you.

Racing Industry Bill

The Transport and Infrastructure Select Committee have this week delivered their Report on the Racing Industry Bill to the House of Parliament, including some recommended changes.

While nothing is confirmed until it is voted on, it is a positive signal to the racing industry that the Government has continued to prioritise the passing of the Bill especially in light of the significant amount of industry feedback to work through and the impact Covid19 has had on the ability of Parliament to operate.

There are over 30 areas where the Committee have recommended changes and it will take us some time to work through and understand each of the different proposals. Our initial view of the Select Committee's recommendations is that the overall direction and structure of the Bill remains the same as it was before the Committee and is still in line with the direction of the Messara Report. The TAB will be established as a pure betting, broadcasting and gaming entity, and the Codes will have greater roles and responsibilities for developing and promoting their sport.

From our initial review of the Report, the key aspects of change the Select Committee has recommended includes:

- The establishment of Racing NZ as soon as the Bill becomes law. This is a formal consultative forum comprising the three Codes. It could carry out some of the functions of the Codes (if the Codes wish).
- Changes to the venue provisions of the Bill. The changes appear to require the Minister to have greater consideration of the community before deciding whether to vest a Club's assets with the Code.



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027 448 8612
riddo@xtra.co.nz



Chris Reddiford
027 313 1540
chris@reddiford.co.nz



Fraser Mearns
027 431 9930
fraser@reddiford.co.nz

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154 Springfield Road, Christchurch
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- Changes to the composition of the TAB NZ Board. The TAB is proposed to have three out of seven members appointed on recommendation of the Codes. A Selection Panel is proposed and the overall required skill set of the Board remains generally in line with what was in the Bill previously.
- Intellectual Property. The clause that gave TAB NZ exclusive use of racing industry intellectual property is proposed to be removed. This clause was viewed by almost all submitters (including RITA) as being too broad and encompassing, when the intention was for the clause to apply to negotiations with offshore bookmakers.
- Betting Information Use Charges (Racefields). There are some welcome changes to this aspect of the legislation which make it easier for the industry to require offshore bookmakers to pay for their use of New Zealand product. We will be working with the Codes to ensure we have a coordinated plan for this important revenue earner.

The next stage of the process is that the Minister could also introduce any changes he wants to see included as part of the Second Reading. The Parliament then agrees to or rejects the amendments recommended by the Select Committee and the Minister. This will hopefully all happen prior to the end of this month. If all goes to plan, the Bill could come into effect by 1 August.

TAB Transition

Late last month we shared with you details of the changes across the TAB to enable it to emerge out of COVID-19 a leaner, more efficient business and focused on driving our core wagering, broadcasting and gaming offering to our customers.

In parts of our business, such as oncourse betting, the trend for our customers is increasingly to bet on a device and on self service terminals. We have identified considerable savings for the whole industry by moving away from traditional tote services, however we know many of our clubs and some customers want to see a more gradual change. RITA is currently working with a group of major clubs and the Codes to explore options that enable some tote services remaining over the next 12 months or so, without compromising the savings RITA has committed to. There is broad agreement amongst the group that the status quo is not commercially tenable going forward and digital and self service solutions are the way of the future.

The oncourse betting solution for clubs hosting meetings over the next six weeks are currently being prioritised given the lifting of attendance restrictions under Alert Level 1.

Executive leadership team review

As you are aware, in addition to major staff changes announced, the Board has recently undertaken a review of the TAB executive structure to ensure it is fit for purpose for the new TAB operating model, subsequent to the new legislation being passed.

The Board has accepted the recommendations of the independent consultants we engaged to review the structure and we have advised our executive that we will undertake consultation on a proposed new structure later this month. The process is being led by myself with appropriate support and a Board Subcommittee providing additional oversight of this work. The Board expects to conclude the consultation process, consider feedback, and make final decisions in July. In respect of the appointment of a new Chief Executive, the Board intends to also revisit this in the coming weeks.

Board extension

Last week the Racing Minister Winston Peters announced that the terms for the directors of RITA have been extended to 30 June 2021, or the passage of the Bill. This allows the directors to continue contributing to work to help make the racing industry both more prosperous and sustainable.

TAB performance

In many cases the Board had to make some tough decisions as we focus on the essential parts of our business that generate the funding required to drive the industry. For the likes of Trakside Radio, printed newspaper form, and phonebet, the high cost of providing these in the current climate is simply not sustainable. It's early days yet but pleasingly these changes don't appear to have compromised revenue with turnover and gross betting revenue for domestic racing tracking ahead of budget, and close to or above pre COVID levels. TAB's gaming business has also returned strongly with gaming turnover for the first few weeks above the pre lock-down weekly average. Right now, we are working with the codes on next year's distributions and we hope to be able to give them a more accurate forecast in the next few days, prior to confirming a final budget at the end of the month. Once this is done they will be able to provide information on stakes for the new calendar which will be released early next month.

Positive signs ahead

While we are certainly not out of the woods yet, the progress of the Racing Bill, an early return (and full) programme of domestic racing and revenues returning, in some cases, to pre-Covid levels provide enough reasons to be optimistic that RITA and the wider industry can come out of this crisis with some confidence.

Yours sincerely,

Dean McKenzie
Executive Chair



Harness racing has been playing out to empty stands at Addington but its turnovers have surprised

Dr Darrin's harness health check-up: Turnovers show the patient is still breathing

Barry Lichter: Courtesy of Lincoln Farms Website

A ray of light has emerged for the racing industry with betting on harness meetings stronger than expected since racing resumed 12 days ago.

Figures obtained from Harness Racing New Zealand for the first eight meetings predictably show the highest turnovers in the South Island, with public track-based North Island stables still cranking up their operations.

Friday nights at Addington have been particularly pleasing, says HRNZ racing and marketing manager Darrin Williams, with fixed odds betting clearly more popular than tote betting on weekdays.

With 12-race cards, and the prime betting slot, Addington has returned figures of \$1.17 million and \$1.01 million for its Friday meets.

"It's certainly better than we thought it would be," says Williams.

"I'd like to think betting will keep going up too with still a lot of horses to come back."

Invercargill's two Saturday meetings have also exceeded the traditional numbers, returning \$781,000 and \$833,000 for 11-race programmes.

"Normally you'd expect Invercargill on a Saturday to turn over between \$500,000 and \$550,000, and if you got to \$600,000 that would be very good.

"Once the gallops come back on Saturdays it could be different of course. If people are wanting to have a bet on New Zealand racing at the moment they could be betting on the trots by default."

While there were only 46 horses in six races at the first meeting on a Thursday at Auckland, Williams says to generate an average of \$62,000 per race wasn't too bad.

And Cambridge also got a tick on its Sunday card, with 95 horses in nine races attracting \$582,000.

Thursday's meeting at Cambridge will see 106 runners, a sign that more northern trainers have their charges nearing race fitness.

Williams is hopeful that more of the code's top liners will be seen out on the racetrack soon too, with the cancellation of the traditional late season Harness Jewels allowing them to be spelled earlier.

Williams is reluctant to read too much into the figures just yet, knowing people's disposable incomes have been hit hard by COVID-19 and many coming off subsidies might not now be able to afford to gamble.

He points to the tradie who used to have a few jugs and some bets at the pub on a Friday night.

"Maybe now if they lose \$20 on the first race, they'll be out."

Turnover details

Harness turnovers since racing resumed:

Thursday May 28 Addington (9 races) \$624,586

- Average per race \$69,398
- Fixed odds \$319,000, tote \$305,000

Friday May 29 Addington (12 races) \$1,168,115

- Average per race \$97,342
- Fixed odds \$607,000, tote \$560,000

Saturday May 30 Invercargill (11 races) \$781,228

- Average per race \$71,020
- Fixed odds \$307,000, tote \$473,000

Sunday May 31 Cambridge (9 races) \$582,750

- Average per race \$64,750
- Fixed odds \$251,000, tote \$331,000

Thursday June 4 Auckland (6 races) \$374,321

- Average per race \$62,386
- Fixed odds \$221,000, tote \$153,000

Friday June 5 Addington (12 races) \$1,013,898

- Average per race \$84,491
- Fixed odds \$552,000, tote \$461,000

Saturday June 6 Invercargill (11 races) \$833,246

- Average per race \$75,749
- Fixed odds \$355,000, tote \$478,000

Sunday June 7 Addington (10 races) \$790,727

- Average per race \$79,072
- Fixed odds \$353,000, tote \$437,000.

MASTER PUBLISHER IMPRESSES

Master Publisher, a three-year-old by A Rocknroll Dance from Neverland Franco, by Badlands Hanover from the American-bred mare No Paba, by Abercrombie, failed to win a race in three starts as a two-year-old in NZ last season.

He is bred by NZSBA member Les Whiteside of Blenheim who also breeds from Hot Off The Press, a Bettor's Delight daughter of former NZ 2YO Filly of the year, Classical.

But the A Rocknroll Dance gelding has proved himself to some purpose in his three-year-old racing, and he won at Pinjarra in 1:57.4 and Gloucester Park in 1:57.5 in the space of 11 days.

Master Publisher has won six out of 11 in Western Australia including three at Gloucester Park. He is a very good youngster.

FRANCO NELSON TO BURWOOD STUD

Franco Nelson, a former brilliant juvenile pacer and open class star, has joined the stallion strength at Burwood Stud, Pittsworth (Qld), standing alongside proven harness racing sires Changeover and Cammibest.

His service fee is a realistic \$1,650 including GST.

He served a small book of mares in NSW last season, resulting in an almost 90 percent fertility rating.

Franco Nelson proved himself a top ranking pacer, taking a record of 1:50.3 and winning \$872,493, and can claim to be one of the most fashionably bred horses available in Australia today.

Renowned for his brilliant speed and dour staying ability, Franco Nelson won 23 races including nine at Group level and over all distances from 1609 to 2600 metres.

Racing against horses the calibre of Lennytheshark, Smoken Up, Tiger Tara, Chicago Bull, Bling It On, Christen Me, Smolda, My Field Marshal, San Carlo and co, Franco Nelson had less than 90 starts in his career and yet weighed in 48 occasions.

As a two-year-old he won four and was twice placed in six starts including a win in the Group 2 \$40,000 NZ Welcome Stakes and a close third in the Breeders Crown Final.

At three he earned \$149,476 from five wins and two placings in nine starts including successes in the \$165,000 NZ Sires Stakes Championship and a Great Northern Derby prelude, while he finished third in the \$246,000 GN Derby.

As a four-year-old he numbered among his notable performances a barnstorming win in the \$150,000 Harness Jewels in 1:53.1 at Cambridge and successes in the Group 2 Pelorus 4YO Classic at Marlborough and the Group 3 Founders Cup.

Franco Nelson later annexed the prestigious Kaikoura and New Brighton Cups and Hannon Memorial on home soil and finished a nose second to Adore Me in the 2014 NZ Cup, third in the 2014 NZ Free-for-all and fourth in the 2015 NZ Cup.

He completed his racing career in NSW, winning four races in top company at Menangle highlighted by the Group 1 \$100,000 Bohemia Crystal Free-for-all in 1:53.2.

Franco Nelson is a quality young horse bred on a classic cross of blood – that of Christian Cullen his sire and Falcon Seelster his maternal sire. Christian Cullen, sire of Franco Nelson, was NZ's leading sire on five occasions and topped broodmare sires' list four times. A champion pacer himself, with a bankroll of \$1.2 million, Christian Cullen won 22 of his 31 starts including the NZ Cup in record time, the Miracle Mile, Auckland Cup, NZ Free-for-all and Treuer Memorial.



Christian Cullen has matched his greatness as a race-horse in the siring field, and now his sons are achieving distinctions of the same order.

Notafella Franco, the dam of Franco Nelson, was one of the many grand producing daughters of a champion sire in Falcon Seelster (1:51), being out of the prolific broodmare New Review (1:59.8), by Nero's B B from the El Patron mare No Regrets, and tracing to the noted foundation mare Trilby.

New Review was the dam of nine individual winners, eight of whom took records of 2:00 or better including a Group winner in Franco New Deal (1:53), Ohoka Village (1:52.6) and the Victoria Derby heat winner Franco Newsman (1:56.7).

This is the family of a champion NZ racemare in Spanish Armada (\$787,470), Nevermore (NZ 2YO Filly of Year), the Kilmore Cup winner Chancellor Cullen, Cheer The Lady (Breeders Crown 3YO Final), Glenferrie Hood (\$526,105) and Franco Nester (NSW Carousel).

Franco Nelson is a young stallion with the bloodlines, racing performance and conformation to commend him to the most discriminating breeder.

ALWAYS AN ANGEL SPARKLES IN DIAMOND CLASSIC

NZB Standardbred

Always An Angel (NZ) (Art Major) made history at Gloucester Park on Friday night when her incredible display of stamina notched the first Group One win by a filly graduate of NZB Standardbred.

Barrier 12 and a tough trip, three-wide for the last lap of the A\$100,000 Two-Year-Old Fillies Diamond Classic (2130m), were not enough stop the 2019 National Yearling Sale purchase from justifying her hot favouritism.

The COVID-19 pandemic and previous shutdown of harness racing in New Zealand had prevented many graduates from racing for Group One glory but, Always An Angel showed nothing could stop the incredible success of New Zealand-breds with her decisive win.

Always An Angel never flinched, despite her tough trip, cementing her status as Western Australia's top Two-Year-Old filly by scoring by more than two and a half lengths.

The Group One victory for driver Gary Hall Jnr took the star pacer's record to five wins from six starts and A\$87,607 in stakes for trainer Justin Prentice.



Always An Angel winning Diamond Classic

The classy filly from Angel Of Destiny (NZ) (Christian Cullen), was bred and offered by dual code breeders, Chris and Tina Barlow, of Highfields Bloodstock.

Tina Barlow described the filly as very strong type with a standout conformation.

"She is probably the nicest filly we have bred."

"She was absolutely beautiful – a standout filly."

Though she had the look of a future star, Barlow admitted she was slightly surprised the filly stepped out publicly in February of her two-year-old year.

"She was quite a big and strapping filly, so it was a little surprising she has gone so early."

"But, she has obviously kept her strength because some of her wins have been really impressive."

Always An Angel followed in the footsteps of her close relative, Harness Jewels winner Onlyforyou (NZ) (Art Major), with her Gloucester Park win.

The two-year-old's dam, Angel Of Destiny, is a half-sister to Group One performer for trainer Cran Dalgety.

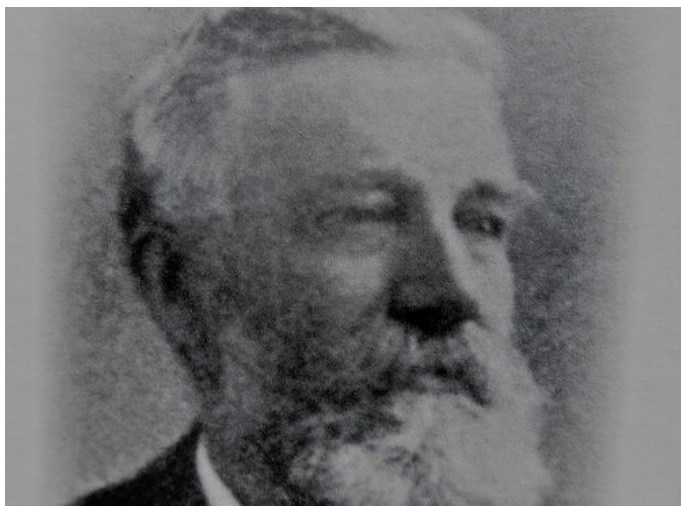
Both Always An Angel and Onlyforyou are by star sire, Art Major.

Angel Of Destiny is back in foal to Art Major and due to foal a full-sibling to Always An Angel in the upcoming breeding season.

The pair are not the only big race performers on their impressive pedigree pages.

They also include another Art Major pacer, Heisenberg (NZ), who recently broke the New Zealand record for 2400m.





SAMUEL GARFORTH OWNER OF GENTLE ANNIE AND ONE OF THE ORIGINAL OWNERS OF SPREYDON LODGE

A GREAT MARE - AND A GREATER MYSTERY

David McCarthy

It is so easy now to look up the breeding of a winner or a horse which has taken our fancy we hardly think about it. When it was a lot harder in olden days with so many mares listed as s “unnamed” “unregistered” or simply “unknown” it would seem not nearly as many people seemed to want to know.

Were the old timers really so incurious as to not try and find out where their fast trotter came from—or were there other reasons?

Most might have felt it was something they didn't really need to know. There was no Stud Book, the horses were largely used for “work”; few raced them, breeding was by word of mouth and sales were done purely on a horse's ability. Some shrewdies might also have felt that having got a fast breed it was not something everyone needed to know about.

Then there were those who didn't want to know. They feared they may find out things they suspected might be the truth. Better to plead ignorance.

And so our first great race mare and broodmare, Gentle Annie, the Scuse Me of her time, has a highly mysterious background, the official version of which was doubted even by her connections at the time and merely greeted with cynical smiles by many others.

Here is the official version.

Gentle Annie arrived in New Zealand in 1864 with a gang of Australian gold miners. She was such a stylish trotter with high speed not often seen here that Sam Garforth, who was making his fortune as a butcher selling meat to the Coast miners quickly became, and remained, her owner.

Garforth was a Yorkshireman, who would later own the famous Spreydon Lodge and become a noted breeder, dealer and show entrant of both sheep and cattle and also of thoroughbreds in Canterbury. He was proud of Gentle Annie, took on all comers who quickly dwindled to very few and she soon had a reputation right through the young colony as the fastest trotter New Zealand had ever seen.

Nearly all her contests were matches over any distance between 3200 and 18,000m (12 miles) which was the racing scene for trotters at the time. Some of them were for big stakes (up to \$1000 -when a good wage per annum was \$40) and she beat all comers, setting records not beaten for 20 years.

One of her most famous victories was a celebrated match in Christchurch in 1866. She was put up against the high class galloper (and later stud sire) Orlando who was dual gaited, for \$350. Many times that was bet on the side. It was over 16km from the Styx Bridge to the Carlton Hotel and because of the money involved, a crowd of several hundred braved the early morning chill to watch them go by. A small army of punters on their mounts followed the race.

Orlando was the favourite partly because he had the famous jockey Bob Ray up carrying just 59kg while the mare was ridden by amateur Pat Corkery at 82kg. It made no difference. Orlando took a while to get organised on the trot, Gentle Annie got a lead early and was never less than 100m in front winning easily. Truly a marvel mare.

At stud Gentle Annie can lay claims to being the foundress of the local trotting industry before there was a trotting industry- and even though Garforth bred her continuously to thoroughbred stallions rather than Norfolk Trotting horses.

Her first foal, to a chance mating with a draught colt, was a filly who left Commodore so fast off a standing start no cyclist ever beat him over 100m in a betting match. He could run from a stand in an officially timed nine seconds 130 years ago.

He was a trotter who wanted to pace and wore enormous weights to keep him to the gait. Even his trainer felt sorry for him and devised a special way of applying them.. Yet Commodore held New Zealand records over short trips.

Her second foal, a colt called Spot owned by John Grigg of Longbeach, was one of the most sought after trotting stallions of the pre-American era when Longbeach was the source of many of the best Mid-Canterbury families. 40 or more foals of hack, road and thoroughbred mares were handled at Longbeach most years—a virtual stud on its own.

But there were “mysteries” there too because shiploads of horses arrived from Australia without racing credentials =but clearly had them. Two examples were called Opossum and Wallaby, both natural trotters.



Opossum once gave a round start on the half mile track at a Tinwald meeting to other local stars and still won. Possibly they were sold back to Australia. Neither mare ever figured in the NZ Stud Book though it is known Opossum left a smart Ashburton trotter in Marengro. And, just perhaps, a few "unregistered" or "unknown" fillies? Gentle Annie's next foal, Duchess of York, was a very successful broodmare and was followed by Southern Queen, the dam of the champion mare of Australasia in the 1890's, Calista.

Calista was as an even bigger star than her granddam especially across the Tasman, Outclassing everything in NZ she became a celebrated trotter there setting Australasian records and was one of the first to use the "new-fangled" speed carts. She only left two foals, both winners but only one a filly who only left colts. Calista once gave a field 85 seconds start over 3200m and won easily.

Gentle Annie's next foal, Dexter is, in the time period we are discussing, a leading sire over many years, He left New Zealand's next champion mare, Princess, who could pace or trot, and that was part of Dexter's appeal. Princess set unheard of records right from the start of her career, almost a reincarnation of Gentle Annie.

While Gentle Annie was only seen in public as a trotter, Dexter's ability to leave foals, especially fillies, who preferred to pace was a major plus in an era when pacers were finally gaining acceptance. This was hugely accelerated when hobbles were introduced to steady them. Dexter's daughter Princess's first foal, Prince Imperial, was the ideal sire to produce them. Before Dexter in Canterbury locally bred pacers were by accident not design.

Since Dexter was by a galloping sire, the pacing trait may have come from his dam who reportedly was naturally dual gaited.

According to the late Ted Lowe, Prince Imperial owed his popularity to the fact he left mostly pacers. Oddly, Princess ended her days in India.

Shamrock was another famous foundation mare by Dexter whose immediate family featured several New Zealand record holders. Another Australasian mile record holder and superstar of her time, Emmeline, trained in Ashburton by Randle McDonnell, was inbred to Dexter. His influence remains today and would take a whole article on its own to explain. Spot was equally popular.

Gentle Annie-Princess-Calista- Emmeline- all Australasian mile female champions one generation after another. Not many families could beat that.

So how did this Gentle Annie emerge from being a gold miners hack to a foundation standardbred breeding influence? Good question.

In the first Stud Book (early 20th century) she is listed as being by (gallop sire) Sportsman then based in Victoria from a "half bred mare" and bred by a Mr Borham. That



will always be the official version. Trouble was, a lot of people never believed it.

A long lived Ashburton trainer, Josh Lewis, recalled in interviews that rumours of a much different background were very strong when Gentle Annie was alive, "based on good information" from the West Coast.

Also odd was that when Gentle Annie died in 1881 the press report based on statements by Samuel Garforth stated that "in spite of extensive searches her breeding has never been established".

The popular alternate story is a lot more intriguing and just as believable.

According to the published Lewis memories (he was around at the time), there was a doctor in Melbourne who was extraordinarily proud of the prowess of his trotting mare and offered large sums for matches against her.

Some astute types decided to take him down but fast road trotters were hard to find. The legend has it that they brought in a mare from the US by a devious route (usually Queensland) and "legitimised" her. This was normally done by putting the horse through a sale ring with a "pedigree", buying it in and claiming it as a record of identity. Don't worry, it happened here too.

On the appointed day and with very heavy betting in Melbourne over the match Gentle Annie (so common a racing name then it added to the later confusion) drew away and won easily. Then, according to the conspiracy theory, the elderly man who was listed as her owner died and the miners purchased her for New Zealand.

So someone would give away Scuse Me? Hard to believe such a performer would be so easily bought by a bunch of battlers- unless of course there were suspicions about her true identity and so getting her out of the country before there were too many questions asked was a smart move.

Gentle Annie never broke in a match; "never took a lame step" according to Garforth, and won her last match here as a 20 year old. She died foaling at Spreydon Lodge at 24 still in good condition. One of her foals was raced in Australia and went on to England as a road horse.

A pure and, especially, reliable, trotting gait in those pre-American sire import days was extremely rare. A mare of such superb performance and breeding blood languishing around the NZ gold fields seems too good to be true.

Perhaps because it was.

We know Gentle Annie, now long forgotten, is one of the best and most influential mares in New Zealand trotting history.

What we don't know, and can never know, is just who was she, really?

FIBRE - A MUST FEED

Dunstan Horsefeeds

Fibre is of key importance in the equine diet.

Adequate fibre intake ensures maintenance of a healthy digestive system and also reduces the risk of colic and gastric ulcers as well as behavioural issues associated with a lack of fibre.

As a rule of thumb, the bare minimum fibre requirement for horse health is 1% of their body weight in hay/chaff or pasture daily (on a dry matter basis). When horses are living out on adequate pasture we can happily assume they are receiving this required intake, however when they are boxed or yarded more attention needs to be paid to ensure this is provided through their supplementary feed. Hay is a great pasture substitute and as it is almost 100% dry matter it can easily assist in meeting fibre requirements.

In addition there are some palatable straight fibre feeds that can be incorporated into the daily ration to increase fibre intake.

Dunstan Beets (Dunstan Betabeet and Dunstan Sugarbeet) are a premium fibre source and are known as 'super fibres' as they have a much higher calorie content than traditional fibre sources, with an energy level close to oats, however provide 'cool' energy.

Equifibre® Lucerne Pro and Equifibre® Meadow Pro provide further great additional fibre options. A 100% Lucerne product in Equifibre® Lucerne Pro and a pasture grass ensiled product in Equifibre® Meadow Pro.



Dunstan Betabeet and Sugarbeet

WINTER RUG HACKS

Dunstan Horsefeeds

1. Gaffer tape is a great emergency solution for rug rips. It's waterproof, and will hold the rip together for a day or two.

2. Buy some iron-on denim repair patches – you can get these at Spotlight or online. Put the patch under the tear with the adhesive side up, position the tear neatly over the patch with the edges as close as possible, put



t a cloth over the area and hold the iron down over the whole thing for the designated amount of time.

3. Believe it or not, dental floss is useful for hand-sewing tears and patches in rugs. It's strong, waterproof and easy to sew through thick rugs.

4. A pack of rubber lamb castration rings (from a rural supplies store) is handy to put over the t-clips on cross surcingles, so they won't come undone.

5. If your horse is clipped right out, a thin cotton rug underneath the paddock rug is easy to chuck in the washing machine, and will help keep the coat nice. Putting silicone spray on the shoulders will help prevent the rubbing that seems to happen when horses have more than one rug on. If your horse is specially prone to shoulder rubs, line the shoulders of the cover with pure silk – you can often find silk scarves at a charity shop to make patches out of.

6. Cable ties and baling twine are handy for emergency repairs – you can cable tie a leg strap to the clip if it breaks, or plait a new leg strap from baling twine.

7. If you bring your horses in plastered with mud, leave the rug on the horse and hose the mud off. The rugs will dry more quickly if they are wet but not muddy.

8. Another good tip to replace broken leg strap clips is carabiner snaps, which you can get from a hardware store. They are cheap and easy to fit.

9. A lubricant spray such as CRC is good to put on your buckles and leg strap clips from time to time, as it helps repel water and keeps them moving freely.

10. Don't throw old rugs away. Cut the buckles and straps off them, and use the best bits of the fabric for making patches for repairs. You can also donate them to your local animal shelter as dog bedding.

11. At the end of the season, don't wash turnout rugs in a washing machine unless they are really, REALLY bad. After washing, they are never the same in terms of waterproofness. Just dry them out, brush off the mud and store them.

12. If you DO have to wash them, only use non-biological washing powder.

13. If you don't want a dirty rug in your washing machine, and can't find a laundromat that will accept horse rugs, you can wash them in a wheelie bin! Put several in at a time, put the hose in, and stomp on the rugs.

14. Finally, you get what you pay for! Invest in quality rugs – the fittings will be stronger, the fabric will last and they will be more waterproof for longer.



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Barefoot by the Numbers: Swedish Standardbred trotters are faster without shoes, but risk breaking gait

The Hoof Blog

Researchers at Sweden's University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) at Uppsala have analyzed the performance records of trotting Standardbreds based on varied configurations of fully shod, front or hind shoes only, or without shoes entirely.

According to the University, the times from just over 75,000 starts and 5,000 horses were included. The research showed that horses raced statistically faster when barefoot. The practice is not without risk, the study found, since data on the all-barefoot horses showed an increased tendency to break stride, causing elimination from the race.

No data was included on how long the horses had been without shoes.

The risk potential of breaking gait and disqualification was then analyzed in over 111,000 starts, reflecting the performance of 6,400 horses. Those results showed that the breaking risks increased by 15-35% if the horses competed fully barefoot.

However, the results also showed that if the horses competed with shoes only on the hind feet, the risk of breaking gait did not increase.

The statistics were on trotting horses only; pacing gait racing is most popular in the United States. This research was not a direct investigation on whether pulling shoes at race time resulted in a faster time for an individual horse over its previous performances.

Racing barefoot is common for trotters in Europe, although the horses may be barefoot only for a matter of minutes before racing. Swedish trainers in the United States have also employed the practice here, with key successes in major trotting races when the shoes were removed immediately before the race.

The practice has been investigated from a welfare standpoint in France at the École Nationale Vétérinaire d'Alfort (National Veterinary School of Alfort or ENVA) and CIRALE, under the leadership of Professor Jean-Marie Denoix. French rules require barefoot horses to be declared to the racing public in advance.

The Swedish study authors noted that since the data

was collected, rules in that country have been put in place to ban barefoot racing during the winter months.

The Swedish research results showed that barefoot horses raced an average of 0.7 seconds faster per kilometer than horses shod on both the hind and the front feet. The difference was a little smaller (0.3 s / km) if they were without shoes only on the hind or front feet but they still raced faster than if they had shoes on all four hooves.

The raceday-barefoot practice first made headlines in the 1990s, when American champion Moni Maker raced in Europe and set a track record; her Swedish-born horseshoer Conny Svensson revealed that her shoes were pulled before the race. In a second attempt without shoes, however, the famous mare broke her stride.

Barefoot trotters were less common on American race-tracks than in Europe until about five years ago; tracks here are much harder than European tracks, but an influx of successful Swedish trainers resulted in some major victories for horses like Sebastian K.

The research was led by Spanish geneticist Marina Solé, PhD, who is currently with the Department of Animal Breeding and Genetics at Uppsala.

"Competing with shoes on the hindquarters seems to be a risk-free strategy that nevertheless increases performance," the researchers concluded. "Further research is needed, particularly to investigate the quality of the hooves in frequently raced unshod Standardbreds and to examine beneficial genetic factors for barefoot racing conditions."

In the Prix d'Amerique in France in 2015, 15 out of 18 starters declared that they would race without shoes. In October 2018, Homicide Hunter set a new world record for the fastest trotting mile ever at the Red Mile in Lexington, Kentucky, with his shoes pulled. He was reshod the next day.

"The track was extremely fast; the conditions were perfect," trainer Chris Oakes told HarnessLink. "I was contemplating whether I was going to take his shoes off or not, but if you don't do it on a day like that, you'll never do it. I thought it was the right conditions and he was OK with it."

From the standpoint of equine welfare, CIRALE researcher Claire Moiroud concluded her study with the comment, "If the shoe removal is well planned and the foot of the horse adapted and prepared, I think that this practice is acceptable."

It's interesting to compare today's shoeless strategies to enhance speed of trotters with the high-engineering efforts of horseshoers in the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Trotters were shod with a variety of weighted and unweighted shoes or with asymmetric calks, as was the case with the famous pacer Dan Patch.

Volumes have been written on both proven methods and elegant theories to increase speed on the harness track by varying shoe designs. Debates have raged about toe angles, half rounds vs swedges, square toes, bar shoes,

and even nailing on shoes backwards, as well as the value of an inventory of bandages and weighted boots for the pasterns, shins, knees and hocks.

In July 2019, Harness Racing Hall of Fame trainer/driver Ron Gurfein endorsed barefoot for some horses when writing for Harness Racing Update. His explanation of why barefoot-at-racetime works: "Horses that need a nominal amount of weight in their shoe to stay trotting are likely to pace when their shoes are pulled. If you are lucky enough to have a great-gaited horse, then it's just a matter of physics why removing his shoes (at least seven ounces of weight) will help."

That's Standardbreds. Thoroughbred trainers, on the other hand, have been experimenting with shoeless training weeks, and then nail or glue shoes on for race day. Godolphin has had notable success with this regimen, which is the inverse of the harness paradigm.

Back in 2004, Professor Emertius Albert Gabel, DVM, Dip. ACVS of The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine, commented on the suggestion that Standardbreds should race without shoes. At Ohio State during Gabel's time, the lameness case load was 45% Standardbreds; he also raced and trained them after his retirement.

"Rarely, extremely well-bred elite trotters, which do not require weight on their front feet, can race without shoes," Gabel wrote in a letter to the editor of the Journal of Equine Veterinary Science. "Their light shoes are taken off just before the race and replaced immediately after the race to protect their feet.

"Shoeing Standardbreds is a science and an art," Gabel concluded.

Danke – No fairytale 300th race start

By David Di Somma - Harness News Desk

He's harness racing's record-breaking veteran but Danke raced more like a rookie in his 300th start last night.



Danke in his youth when in Mark Jones care!

The 12-year-old son of Sundon became the first standardbred in this country to reach 300. But in the race named after him (The Celebrating Danke 300th Race Milestone Trot) at Cambridge he broke at the start and lost all chance for trainer-driver Geoff Martin.

In his 300 raceday appearances Danke has won 13, had 19 seconds and 36 thirds for stakes of \$150,975.

In contrast the race was won by a horse who's had 298 less starts than Danke.

Favourite Kristofferson was cruising throughout in the hands of trainer-driver Joshua Dickie, after being an expensive failure in his debut on May 31.

This time his manners were spot on, giving his backers a very stress-free watch as he won by 1 ¼ lengths.

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