



# Breeding Matters

2021 BREEDING  
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## FROM THE



### Breeding season

The 2021 breeding season is about to get in full swing with semen being shipped and foals being born as standardbred breeders aspire to produce a future superstar.

Once again we have on offer an exciting set of stallions, with plenty of new offerings hopeful of transferring their racetrack deeds to the breeding barn.

The horse birthday change to 1 January underpins the new calendar racing year. If we can follow Australia's example last season, we are likely to see an increase in the number of mares bred, particularly to local stallions.

The extra maturity gained by extending the season August through to end December should encourage many breeders to consider breeding in January and February. Breeding later is not the disadvantage it may have been in previous years.

Increased stakes, more opportunities for pacing and trotting fillies and mares and the re-arranged group racing calendar should all provide incentives and encouragement for breeders to continue their investment in our sport.

We will have a full report on the changes to the racing calendar and race programming in an Update once they are signed off.

I thank all the studs and breeders who attended our three regional stallion presentations. The functions at Auckland, Christchurch and Invercargill were very well attended - an encouraging start for the season

### Membership

Thank you to the almost 85% of members who have renewed their membership and welcome to the new members. The high renewal rate is an appreciated vote of confidence.

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Front cover photo: MASH NZ





# BREEDERS' NATIONAL EXECUTIVE CHAIR

Just a reminder that if memberships are paid before Monday 11 October you go into a draw for a stallion service from Downbytheseaside and Classic Connection. Thank you to Woodlands Stud and Haras des Trotteurs respectively.

## Brad - Onwards to Better Things and Thank You

For several months the NZ Standardbred Breeders Assn has been working with Harness Racing New Zealand to support it in its desire to strengthen breeding.

Under this plan HRNZ established the new senior position of Breeding Manager to help it promote breeding and provide breeding perspectives into all its activities.

Brad Reid, our Executive Manager, accepted an offer from HRNZ Chief Executive Gary Woodham to take this role from 2 August.

Brad's almost six years as Executive Manager is greatly appreciated.

During Brad's tenure we have significantly enhanced our social media presence and maintained a strong member base of 1,100 breeders.

Brad's breeding knowledge is immense. His passion for trotting undoubted.

The insight he showed in finding a trotting mare who had been overlooked, and breeding her to the world's best stallion and producing Bolt For Brilliance says a lot about his knowledge, insight, enthusiasm and passion for our sport. One mare, first breeding, Group One champion!



Those characteristics continued with his work for The Breeders. Brad was instrumental in securing clubs to run the trotting Oaks races and convincing Pat Driscoll the owner of Haras des Trotteurs to sponsor those races, and some Sires Stakes trotting races.

Being the manager of The Breeders requires the ability to listen to breeders talk about their horses. Whether it is just a call about membership or an upcoming event you could guarantee Brad would draw a breeder into talking about their mare and her achievements.

This ability enabled Brad to demonstrate one of his many competencies, an exceptional ability to write and tell a story. His breeders' human-interest stories in Breeders Update and Breeding Matters were widely appreciated. Thankfully for us this will continue with HRNZ, and we will look to reproducing these stories.

Our National Executive looks forward to working with Brad in his new role. We will formally acknowledge his contribution at our Cup Eve Awards function.

As to the future, the National Executive has accepted a narrower role of supporting the community of breeders and our members. We have a core suite of publications and functions that are valued by breeders and members which we will maintain.

Once again, I wish Brad all the best on behalf of all our members, he is not going that far!

## Advocacy & Voice

We recently made submissions to the HRNZ Racing Working Group – these are on our website [www.thebreeders.co.nz](http://www.thebreeders.co.nz) for you to read. I'd like to thank Brian Cross for his work in maintaining the web site. It is up-to-date and full of news and information.

*Colin Hair, Chair*

## Our Revised Mission and Focus

We have established our mission and focus areas as:

***Meeting the needs of members / breeders to be efficient producers of quality racehorses and enjoying the pursuit of their dreams***

We will work on:

- **CREATING CONNECTIONS** – maintaining networks and working together for a sustainable future
- **REWARDING EXCELLENCE** – rewarding and recognising breeders' & members' achievements
- **ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE** – equipping breeders to make informed breeding decisions
- **ACHIEVING VOICE** – influencing policy for breeders' & members' economic and social interests.

I will update members soon on our specific plans and arrangements for meeting breeders' and members' needs.





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# BREEDING MANAGER'S REPORT

***After almost six years with the New Zealand Standardbred Breeders' Association, making the decision to accept a new role as Breeding Manager with Harness Racing New Zealand came with some mixed emotions.***

On one hand I am incredibly excited to continue the challenge of developing the breeding portfolio and infusing the breeding sector throughout the core functions of the Harness Racing New Zealand business model.

On the other hand, it brings with it the closing of a chapter that represents half of my professional career working for an organisation that I am incredibly fond of and one that I am forever indebted too.

I don't want to be too self-indulgent or rabbit on but I can't let this opportunity slip without expressing some thanks and gratitude.

In 2015 the Executive took a chance on a fairly green young lad who to be fair was compensating on experience with a deep passion for this sport.

It hasn't always been smooth sailing but I'd like to think that the NZSBA portfolio has grown and with it contributed to the rapidly changing landscape that is breeding standardbreds in New Zealand.

I've been blessed to get around the country and meet many of you at functions, race meetings and events and the members of this association have never failed to challenge and inspire and I've loved the opportunity to tell many of your stories.

***I have to make special mention of John and Rebecca Mooney who have been there with me every step of the way.***

John's passion for Harness Racing coupled with his intellect and professional background was inspiring and provided me with the best tutelage and mentorship a young person could hope to find in a Chairman.

We have shared in each other's success, failures and pushed each other to the brink over the years and come out the other side as great friends which above all else is most important.

A big thank you to Colin Hair and his wife Nancy also. The day you took over as Chair you challenged me to take ownership of the role on my own accord and I hope I repaid your faith also.

Being able to share in some way what you are currently accomplishing as a breeder and owner with Sundeels Son has been awesome. I do wish Bolt beat you a few more times but it probably didn't hurt the chain of command for the junior to learn to bide his time!

I have an enormous amount of respect and appreciation for the volunteers that make a kindred body like the Standardbred

Breeders a viable one.

It takes a village and it cannot be understated the amount of time, effort and energy the Executive and affiliate committees put in to each day to contribute and grow the body of work required to see the breeding sector flourish.

Katrina Price, Cathie Shaw, Cleland Murdoch & Jay Abernethy have been main stays on the Executive for a number of years now and you all have had incredibly positive influences on my own development and that of the Association.

With breeding numbers in decline, it would be entirely feasible to suggest that we are failing in our quest. I wear my heart on my sleeve and take the breeding numbers very personally but have had to learn to understand there is only so much one can control.

That was extremely difficult to accept in my early days and the overwhelming feeling of despair can easily set in, especially when there are plenty of people willing and eager to tell you of all the problems of the world and very few capable of providing any meaningful solutions.

The bottom line is the economic realities of breeding bloodstock is tough and we aren't the only sector facing those very challenges.

***I feel fortunate in my new role to be coming in at a time where widespread and monumental change is before us.***

Gary Woodham and Catherine McDonald have hit the ground running and have done a wonderful job of bringing the various sectors that make up the sport along for the ride as we set about revitalising the harness racing calendar.

With the changing of the birthdays as the catalyst for said change, the flow on effect and benefits for the breeding sector are encouraging, but the proof will be in the pudding.

***They say the only thing money can't buy is time.***

The proposed changes however will give every horse in this country their chance to be a 'classics' horse by essentially extending their season by a further five months and I believe this will have an enormously positive impact on the Sires Stakes Board.

Despite a reduced foal crop, a record percentage of the crop of yearlings just paid up and I believe that will only continue to grow as more breeders and owners realise the late maturing type or December and January foals have every chance to develop.

More payments into such series means more stake money and increased opportunities for the participant with the Sires Stakes Board looking to further develop their portfolio of races as we are already seeing.







*Brad, Too Much To Do & Bolt For Brilliance,  
9 November 2016 at Dancingonmoonlight*

We know for a fact that wagering around key carnivals such as the Miracle Mile and the Breeders Crown were up significantly with these races dates placed strategically to take advantage of the better climate and gaps in the sporting calendars.

***One thing I have learned is that stake money is the fuel that keeps this sport alive.***

Like it or not, but it stops and starts with wagering and without a product that the consumer is willing to invest in, an army of volunteers and all the resources in the world are still going to struggle to deliver a healthy breeding sector.

***Over 60% of breeders have an ownership interest in this sport.***

While we cannot undermine the importance of the flourishing export market for breeders, owners and license holders in our sport. We also need to create an environment where it is viable and attractive to race your horse in this country.

The only way to do that is to work to lift the stakes and increase opportunities with clever programming and handicapping and that is what the change of birthdays will endeavour to provide.

I had to laugh as a member of the working group when I read a submission that asks we be less 'idealistic' in some of our intent around placement of races and utilisation of resources.

Try telling that to a breeder who outlays \$25,000 before their yearling turns two with no guarantee of ever seeing their horse race.

***There is very little logic involved in breeding when you boil it all down.***

You make some genetic decisions that you hope at the very least increase your odds of success but so much of OUR investment is in good faith and the ideal that we can all breed that one good horse.

The resources available to the industry are extremely limited and we can't reinvent the wheel entirely. What should be of greater concern is that those resources shrink even further should we not do anything about the predicament we currently find ourselves in.

***I Moving parts, huh.***

From my own perspective this breeding season, I have decided to take the hobbles off and breed a trotter again this season.

I've got a 50% share in a blue blood trotting mare by the name of Anguish (Angus Hall – Sungait Reb).

My partner and I are expecting a colt (human) on the ground in early November, so it strikes me as an affordable way to still be involved while navigating the early stages of parenthood (which I'm told is also expensive).

I managed to strike gold with Toomuch To Do and while I have no doubt the Muscle Hill factor put the odds in my favour considerably, it takes two to tango and the mare herself was largely overlooked when I secured her to a free lease.

On paper, Anguish has been extremely disappointing for her previous owner, Keith Gibson.

However a couple of her foals have died. Three of her matings have been to Sundon despite Anguish being out of a half-sister to Sundon which was an experiment well worth a try, however it hasn't delivered more than a solitary win for the progeny of Anguish as of yet.

She does have a few younger stock to come through with her last three fillies by Muscle Mass, Aldebaran Eagle and Royal Aspirations yet to be seen.

The family is way too good to be written off and I look forward to experimenting myself and seeing if we can get the best out of her, and hopefully another filly as her daughters might be the ones to fly the flag with time not on her side.

***Breeding to race opens up a lot of different options to breeders with stallion selection not limited to what is commercial at the time, or what may be in the future.***

If you're anything like me, that decision could change at least half a dozen times by the time the mare is served which is a testament to the selection of stallions we have available to us.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Breeding Matters with a few stylistic changes thanks to the genius that is Graeme Hobbs.

Graeme is responsible for the design of the stallion register for the last decade and has done a wonderful job bringing vision into reality with this bumper edition.

*Brad Reid, Breeding Manager*





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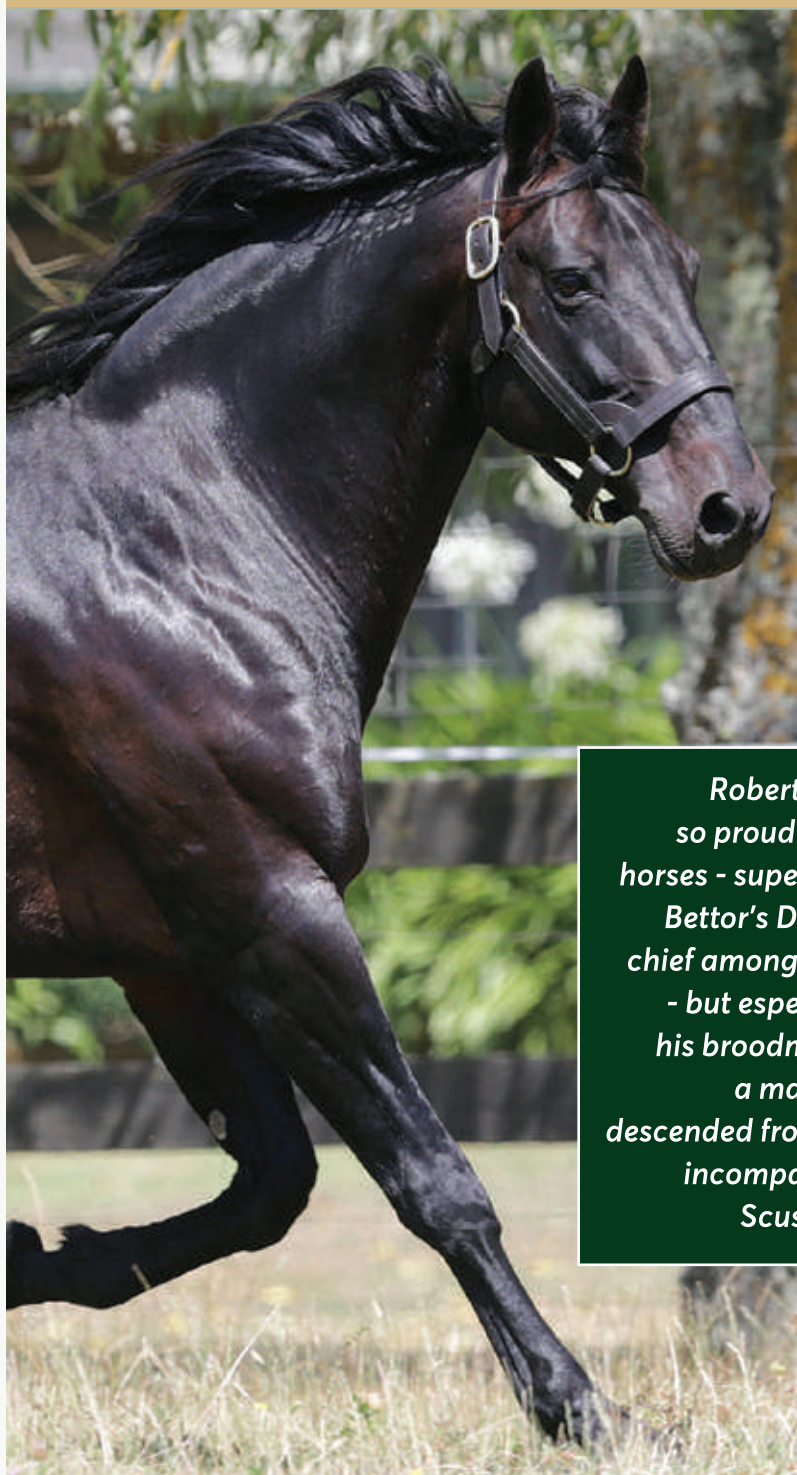


# Roberts' legacy remains strong at Woodlands Stud

Garrick Knight



The passing of Charles Roberts last year saw the final chapter written in one of the more remarkable success stories in New Zealand harness racing history.



*Roberts was so proud of his horses - super stud Bettor's Delight chief among them - but especially his broodmares, a majority descended from the incomparable Scuse Me.*

**Bettor's Delight**

Yes, the last couple of years had seen Roberts' mental faculties wane under the impost of dementia.

But even as he approached his mid-90s just a few years prior, he was still capable of holding court to discuss his prized stallions at Woodlands Stud and the broodmare band he had cultivated that was the envy of every breeder in the country.

Roberts was so proud of his horses - super stud **Bettor's Delight** chief among them - but especially his broodmares, a majority descended from the incomparable **Scuse Me**.

The 'Me' family had become a heavily-protected commodity by Roberts and, more recently, his daughter Mary Kenny and her husband Paul, the latter of which took over Roberts' role as a director of Woodlands Stud in 2018 as his mind became less cognisant.

And who could blame them? Colts out of the family have become the hottest items at the Karaka sales. What meagre fillies that were put to auction as yearlings were usually from the less sexy branches of the family and they still sold through the roof.

One filly, that will remain nameless, was offered as a yearling at the start of the last decade and was purchased for a decent sum by a prominent veteran owner.

She got injured and never made it to the race track and was put in foal. By this stage the likes of **Adore Me**, **Christen Me** and **Have Faith In Me** were dominating on the track and that owner got a call to buy his now-broodmare.

The offer was in to the six-figure range - more than he had paid for her as a yearling - and he was allowed to wean the then in-utero foal first.

This is just one example of how commercial breeders would hustle to get access to the family any way they could.

But once Roberts finally passed last year, at 96, the Kennys, one must assume along with Charles' son Mark, took over a massive portfolio of land, thoroughbreds and standardbreds.

They had no plans to divert the course of Roberts' vision but equally, they simply could not entertain his concept of continuing to add more and more fillies to the broodmare band every season as the 'Me' family grew exponentially.





"Physically – and financially – we simply could not maintain a band of horses that had reached the number it had and was continuing to expand every year," said Paul Kenny.

"Charles could keep everything and afford to do so, but the nature of the industry and how we operate, we simply could not.

"So we had to thin a few out. There will be horses you regret selling at the end of the day and there are a lot of fillies and mares we've parted with that have gone to new owners.

Some have gone to Australia while others were sold locally including **Sing To Me**, a winner at Ashburton on Sunday for new owner, Graeme Beirne.

"Sentiment comes in to it a little bit as well," he admits.

"There are certain ones we just can't sell because either Mary or I – or both – have an attachment to them."

For Paul that's now-retired super mare **Dream About Me**, who won 11 Group 1

races, behind only Lazarus and **Adore Me** amongst horses trained by Mark Purdon in his career.

"For me it's her because, when she was racing, what we were going through personally was pretty significant."

The family matriarch, June, had died in 2016 and Charles had gone in to full-time care with dementia.

Then both Paul and Mary were given sobering cancer diagnoses.

"I'd been diagnosed with prostate cancer but it turned out mine was relatively minor compared to Mary, who had breast cancer and then an unrelated brain tumour at the same time.

"I was supposed to have a biopsy under general anesthetic but it got deferred three times because I was determined to go to Sydney to watch **Dream About Me** race.

"Her racing well was so helpful for us at such a difficult time.

"In the end the surgeon that was doing it got really annoyed but for me you

couldn't put a price on the joy we were getting from watching her."

Kenny says he was "terribly lucky and fortunate" to only have to endure daily radiation for eight weeks.

"That was easy compared to what Mary was going through with her brain tumour; I was just minor really.

"Mary was supposed to be my driver to the hospital but I ended up having to take myself every day. I was so worried for her though that I barely gave a second thought to myself."

Thankfully both are passed their run-ins with 'the big c' and that's allowed them to re-focus on family and fostering the next generation of horses.

One thing they had really been hoping for were colts out of all-time-great **Adore Me** and her first daughter, the prematurely-retired Group 1 winner, **Sweet On Me**.

And just a few days ago, that wish come true, though it was also tinged with sadness.



**American Ideal**



"**Adore Me** had had five foals for five fillies and we just so desperately want to get a colt out of her.

"She did have a colt this year, by **Sweet Lou**, but unfortunately he was born dead."

**Adore Me** is now being bred using embryo transfers to protect her long-term well-being; this most recent foal was her sixth and third using a surrogate mare.

"She got quite sick on one occasion during her second pregnancy (with **Darling Me**) but then in her third one (with **Remember Me**), she was very, very sick for a lot of the time.

"So we made the decision that rather than risk losing her, we would utilize the embryo transfer technique."

While the loss of her colt was a brutal blow, Kenny says the family was overjoyed when **Sweet On Me's** first foal was a healthy Captaintreacherous colt last week.

"You'd honestly think we'd just won powerball, such was the smile on our faces.

"When the call came that she was foaling, I was on a zoom conference and I dropped that like it was a hot potato so we could get to the stud immediately to see the foal."

Paul says while he wants to race it, the Karaka sale ring is where the colt will end up.

"Mary's quite firm about that, and for the right reasons. We sell all our colts."

The Woodlands brand has, undeniably, been the strongest pillar of our breeding sector for more than a decade.

Standing the greatest and most dominant sire of all time underpins that, but a willingness to leverage it in to an all-star roster of new sires to compliment **Bettor's Delight** mares has been a masterstroke.

American Ideal, for the longest time an over-achieving sidekick to 'the King', is going through an unparalleled resurgence since his shift to an Australian base.

**Downbytheseaside's** first crop is due to hit the tracks in January and, if a recent large-scale consultation with most of the country's leading trainers by this writer in recent weeks is any indication, his stocks are only going to go up and up and up, a belief supported by Kenny.

"He's the exciting new kid on the block. I know success in the northern hemisphere has to be transmitted to the south and that doesn't always happen but there is too many good things happening with him there for him to 'miss' down here."

The trotting boys **What The Hill** and **Speeding Spur** are just starting to make tracks as is **Lather Up**, who stands his second sold-out season in Victoria this season.

Together with stud co-owner Andrew Grierson, Roberts and the Kennys have assembled a huge broodmare band to service their roster every season. And it hasn't been all about the yearling sales.

They've made a conscious decision in recent years to put dozens of weanlings up for auction by their newest sires in an effort to get them in to a wide variety of stables and to make them accessible to those with a more modest budget.

A minute pocket of online cynics make the case that it's counter-intuitive to good business and insulting to breeders who patronize their stallions by paying full service fees when ready-made foals can potentially be bought for the same price or in rare cases even less than the service fee 18 months later.

But the fact remains that in the face of an ever-dwindling foal crop, Woodlands has been doing its very best to combat that convergence by breeding well over 120 foals a year and making over half of them available

on the free market as weanlings and another third, at least, as yearlings.

Kenny says he, Mary and Grierson are aware of that criticism and it is quite hurtful.

"When you read stuff like that on the internet, being criticized for selling weanlings, it does take its toll.

"The breeding game is all about numbers – everybody knows that – and when we get a new sire in with something different in the sire line, we've been prepared to put 100 mares of our own to them."

Case in point is **Sweet Lou**, who was deemed the great white outcross hope for the stud, and who has enjoyed huge support from breeders recently with crops of 122, 229, 214 and 106 in the last four seasons.

He was a late arrival in his first season and only had 70 New Zealand foals but the statistics from that crop match up with the best out there, including 34 winners.

**Sweet On Me** gave him a dream start by winning two Group 1 races and 2YO Filly of the Year but she never raced after that and the Kennys are waiting patiently for that really big star to stamp him as a long-

term sire.

"We were so confident that he would make a name for himself that I went and bought a whole new batch of mares for Charles both in the North and South islands.

"It was a process just to benefit him and we've actually come out of it with a couple of really nice broodmares for the longer term out of it.

"Plus it's helped put runners on the track for him, and that's what every sire badly needs.

"He's got two things in his favour and that's that his two biggest and you would have to think best crops are just

*"The breeding game is all about numbers – everybody knows that – and when we get a new sire in with something different in the sire line, we've been prepared to put 100 mares of our own to them."*





arriving now (turning two and one on January 1).

"A heap of the older ones are running around and winning races from limited crops (less than 80 foals), which is important to keep his name out there with breeders."

Among **Sweet Lou's** current race track stars are **Sugar Me, Cantfindabettorman, Aladdin, Fasika, Marathon Man, Mighty Looee, Spirit Of St Louis, Sweet Affinity** and My **Ultimate Chevron**.



**Sweet Lou**

**Paul Kenny has a background in law but also a storied history in racing administration. Oddly, though, he's never been on the Auckland Trotting Club or Harness Racing New Zealand board.**

Perhaps an argument could be made that with such a heavy involvement with the country's leading stud, potential conflicts of interests could arise. But he says the reason is far more personal than that.

"There's a very easy answer to that - I made a promise to Mary.

"I spent 14 years on the board of the Auckland Racing Club, including the last five as Chairman, and before that I spent 16 years as a steward and on the committee of the Counties Racing Club.

"After 30 years, and given what we'd been through in the last few years, I promised her I wouldn't get involved in racing administration any more. I just want to enjoy breeding and racing them."

***"I'm on record as saying that harness racing has two key motors in New Zealand – Addington and Alexandra Park. And when one of those motors is not running properly, as is the case at present, the whole industry suffers."***

There's no doubt that the mired Auckland Trotting Club could have done and still could do with a man of Kenny's nous, business acumen and experience as they try and navigate their way to survival after the besieged apartment complex development.

But Kenny, with a large dollop of modesty, believes he's past the point of being useful.

"I'm 67 now and you can't do everything and I'm not sure either horse code needs someone of my age injected in to racing administration."

The Kennys live in rural South Auckland and thus Alexandra Park is their local track. Kenny admits they do fear for the medium and long-term survival of harness racing in Auckland.

"I'm on record as saying that harness racing has two key motors in New

Zealand – Addington and Alexandra Park. And when one of those motors is not running properly, as is the case at present, the whole industry suffers.

"There are huge challenges ahead for the club. Unfortunately, with hindsight, taking the developers route didn't go well and it's going to be a big ask turning that around."

Woodlands Stud isn't going anywhere, though.

"The business is huge and both Mary and I enjoy it, as does Andrew. Andrew has worked so incredibly hard to build the stud up to what it is today."

The Kennys' two children – a son also named Andrew and a daughter, Sarah, are both willing fans of the industry and regulars at the racetrack, along with Sarah's two sons.

"I've got not the slightest doubt that they'll all want to continue it on one day. And not because they have to. Because they want to.

"One of our grandsons is very, very strongly connected to racing and horses. The other one is only eight and already knows the value of a dollar so he might go in a different direction.

"We're just so blessed with the people we have around us – not just our family but all our staff, too.

"Over the years we have assembled a great group of staff that are all actively involved and help in the decision making processes at the stud."





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## New Season Pacing Sires

### BETTOR'S WISH

5h Bettor's Delight – Lifetime Star, by Western Ideal | 2, 1.51.2; 3, 1.47.4; 4, 1.47.3 | \$2,601,233



**Bettor's Delight** has a number of sons at stud which are top sire prospects and the latest to be announced is **Bettor's Wish**.

He will be standing at Alabar's Auckland stud alongside Lazarus this season with the brothers Bettor's Delight brothers in Ultimate Machete and Ultimate Sniper standing for them in Victoria.

**Bettor's Wish** is well remembered as the horse who put Dexter Dunn on the map two years ago.

He was the 3YO Colt Pacer of the Year in 2019 when he recorded 13 wins and six seconds from his 19 races, earning over \$1.6m.

He won numerous Stakes races and elimination heats, while being runner up in the finals of the North America Cup, Meadowlands Pace, Breeders Crown, Cane Pace, Messenger and TVG.

That campaign made him the leading overall stakes earner in North America for the season.

He returned as a four-year-old last year and won six of 13 starts, including the TVG and McKee Memorial or U.S. Pacing Championship, and took his lifetime earnings past \$2.6m.

He reduced his lifetime record to 1.47.3, one of nine wins in 1.49 or better, while he was also last season's Aged Pacer of the Year.

Dunn described **Bettor's Wish** as "just the perfect racehorse – he knew just what to do and I was just along for the ride".

**Bettor's Wish** was bred to 58 mares last year while still racing, and stood this year at Diamond Creek Farm in Pennsylvania at a fee of \$10,000.

**Bettor's Wish** has an interesting

pedigree in that his dam Lifetime Star is a Rasmussen – 4x4 to the sisters Ambiguity and Angel Hair (Bret Hanover-K Nora).

Western Ideal was out of the top mare Leah Almahurst (\$1m), while Lifetime Star is a granddaughter of the brilliant filly Three Diamonds, who produced Life Sign.

The family of Three Diamonds has also led to the champion mare Eternal Camnation (\$3.7m) and the brilliant filly American Jewel (\$1.8m) along with Luck Be Withyou (\$1.4m), Caviart Ally (\$1.9m) and American Ideal along with numerous other top class performers.

American Ideal was himself a 4x3 Rasmussen to Angel Hair and Ambiguity and sired American Jewel, an outstanding filly who was therefore a 4x5x5, or more to the point a 3x4 Rasmussen to Three Diamonds.

She is certainly an example that multiple crosses to a 'superior individual' can have startling results and already her first foal is the top colt US Captain (3, 1.49).

Lifetime Star is in fact a three-quarter sister to American Ideal, both being by Western Ideal.

American Ideal is from Lifetime Success (Matt's Scooter-Three Diamonds), while Lifetime Star is an Artiscape daughter of Lifetime Success.

Therefore breeding an American Ideal mare to **Bettor's Wish** would bring in three close strains of the same great family and there can be several variations upon this theme.

### McWICKED

10h McArdle – Western Sahara, by Western Ideal | 2, 1.52f; 3, 1.47.6f; 1.46.2 | \$4,930.967

**McWicked** has been a rugged performer over the years and went to stud as the richest pacing stallion in history.

He was the U.S. 3YO Colt Pacer of the Year back in 2014, when he won 12 races and almost \$1.5m, including the Breeders Crown.

**McWicked** was subsequently injured but returned as a six-year-old to win another 25 races and \$3.2m during the next

three seasons.

He won all of the big races for aged pacers, some on multiple occasions.

He was the 2018 U.S. Horse of the Year when he won 12 races and almost \$1.6m.

He has also been an inductee into the Canadian Hall of Fame and stood at Winbak Farm in Ontario last year for \$6500.

In Australia he served a full book of 150 mares last season and then 154 mares in Canada this year.

McArdle was renowned for bringing a speed factor to the table and **McWicked** brings that and also size and toughness.

He certainly appeals for a mare needing a bit of 'bottom' in the equation.



## CAPT MIDNIGHT

4h Captaintreacherous – It Was Fascination, by American Ideal | 2, 1.49.8; 3, 1.48.3 | \$551,567



The brilliantly-bred and performed Captaintreacherous has been a sensation at stud and already the young son of Somebeachsomewhere has several sons at stud.

Captain Crunch was the first to arrive Down Under last year and was rushed by breeders, covering 179 mares from Nevele R Stud at Prebbleton.

Now Becky Satorius' Rangiora Equine Clinic can offer another son of Captaintreacherous in **Capt Midnight**, a multiple Stakes winner who is available via frozen semen.

Rangiora Equine has done a deal with Luke and Belinda's McCarthy's Cobbity Equine Farm in NSW to offer **Capt Midnight** along with McWicked, the rugged son of McArdle who won 40 races and close to \$5m.

The plan was to have fresh semen available to **Capt Midnight** and McWicked, but the unpredictable Covid situation at present means it will be frozen semen for the time being.

**Capt Midnight** and **McWicked** are both standing at \$5000 in New Zealand and Rangiora and Cobbity Equine have reached an agreement which will see vet fees for both capped at \$1000 should a mare not get in foal on the first serve.

Former McCarthy-trained star For A Reason has been doing a fine job at stud and now Bling It On is also siring winners.

They've been joined on the siring roster at Cobbity by Australia's recent standout performer Lochinvar Art (Aus1.48.6), Chariots Of Fire winner Jilliby Kung Fu (Aus1.48.8), the brilliantly-bred Rock N Roll World (US1.48.6) and now **Capt Midnight** and **McWicked**.

**Capt Midnight** was a \$350,000 yearling purchase at Harrisburg and is from the well-performed filly It Was Fascination, a daughter of American Ideal who has also produced Captain Trevor, a brother to **Capt Midnight** who has also been a multiple Stakes winner.

**Capt Midnight** stood at stud this year in Indiana and Captain Trevor stood in Illinois.

Both took records of 1.49 and change as two-year-olds with **Capt Midnight** winning six of his 10 races in 2019, including a heat of the rich Metro Pace in Ontario, where he was third in the final.

**Capt Midnight** reduced his record to 1.48.3 in winning the Somebeachsomewhere last year while he was also second in the Cane Pace along with the Tattersalls and Bluegrass Stakes and a heat of the North America Cup.

**Capt Midnight** paced his last quarter in 25.2 in his first lifetime start and was often timed in 25 and change quarters at the start and finish of his races.

He was the regular drive of Andrew McCarthy who said "I rank him probably op top of all the two-year-olds I've ever driven. Once you asked him to go he gave you goose bumps".

## TALL DARK STRANGER

4h Bettor's Delight – Precocious Beauty, by Art Major | 2, 1.49.2; 3, 1.47.2 | \$2,020,195

**Tall Dark Stranger** is perhaps the most exciting pacing prospect to become available in a while.

He does not appear to have any flaws at all in his armour and ticks all the right boxes.

The only negative that one can observe is the fact that being by Bettor's Delight, he can't be bred to all those good Bettor's Delight mares out there, like his competitors can.

Those mares will serve to 'promote' stallions from other sire lines, but that is hardly a criticism that can be levelled at **Tall Dark Stranger**.

There will certainly be enough mares from other sire lines to serve **Tall Dark Stranger** well enough.

As mentioned, as a stallion prospect, it is virtually impossible to fault **Tall Dark Stranger** and as such, he will simply be competing with other high profile sons of Bettor's Delight at stud.

He is from a mare by Art Major, so one would just need to be wary about sending those mares to **Tall Dark Stranger**, in the same way one must be wary of sending Christian Cullen mares to Lazarus.

We know **Tall Dark Stranger** must be a very good individual and have no conformation faults because he sold as a yearling for \$330,000. In other words he was a standout yearling at Lexington.

*Continued on page 18*



## New Season Pacing Sires



### TALL DARK STRANGER | Continued from page 17

He must have a top drawer pedigree and he does – his dam Precocious Beauty (2, 1.50.1, \$838,000) was an outstanding youngster and a Canadian and U.S. 2YO Filly Pacer of the Year.

She earlier produced a top filly performer in Beautyonthebeach (3, 1.49.4, \$540,000).

The grand-dam Jate Lobell mare Precious Beauty was a two-year-old Sires Stakes winner in Kentucky and produced the top juvenile colt Sportswriter (2, 1.49.2, 3, 1.48.3, \$1.65m), whose career was cut short by injury as an early three-year-old after winning the North America Cup.

Precious Beauty also produced a well-performed sister to Precocious Beauty in Prescient Beauty (2, 1.50.4, \$464,000) in a family which goes back to Romola.

**Tall Dark Stranger** belongs to the branch coming through Hobby Horse Tar, the dam of Landslide and Silent Majority.

Also close by in **Tall Dark Stranger's** maternal line are the filly Soto (1.48.4, \$617,000), who is from a sister to Precocious Beauty, and

Downbytheseaside (3, 1.48.3, \$2.18m).

The latter's third dam is the Big Towner mare Dominique Semalu, who is also the third dam of **Tall Dark Stranger**, which could make for some interesting Rasmussens one day.

**Tall Dark Stranger** certainly lacks for nothing on the score of performance either.

He made an immediate impression when he won his debut as a juvenile in 1.51.3 with a last quarter in 25.4 and that season he won eight of nine starts and \$717,000.

His only defeat was a second in a Breeders Crown heat but he won that final along with the Metro, the latter in a race record 1.49.1.

He won 11 of 13 races and \$1.3m as a three-year-old, taking out the North America Cup and Meadowlands Pace, lowering his record to 1.47.1 in the Cane Pace.

He is the only horse to win those four features at two and three and only the second horse to be 2YO Pacer of the

Year and then Horse of the Year at 3. The other horse was Somebeachsomewhere.

**Tall Dark Stranger** was also renowned and much admired for his tremendous will to win, coming back from seemingly certain defeat on several occasions.

That aspect of his make-up should not be underestimated when it comes to his siring prospects either.

The four-year-old stood at Hanover Shoe Farms in Pennsylvania last year at a fee of \$20,000 and covered a full book of 140 mares.

His book included the likes of \$2m winners My Little Dragon and Put On A Show along with Kissin In The Sand (\$1.7m) and last season's 3YO Filly Pacer of the Year, Party Girl Becky.

Clearly everything is pointing in the right direction for the handsome **Tall Dark Stranger**.



## ULTIMATE SNIPER

5h Bettor's Delight – Reality Check, by Armbro Operative | 3, 1.52.9 MR1980m; 4, 1.52.6 MR1700m | \$842,792



### Ultimate Sniper is very much a case of what might have been.

He made an indelible impression when he won the Sires Stakes 3yo Final from barrier 12 in a 1.52.9 mile rate in just his fourth lifetime start.

That was an all-age national record and a time only marginally bettered a few days later when Cruz Bromac won the NZ Free-For-All.

He was only beaten once in his first eight races, when fresh up and resuming in a lead up race to the Great Northern Derby, and a month later he just as easily won the New Zealand Derby.

**Ultimate Sniper** seemed a little out of sorts the following spring, but he hit his straps in no uncertain terms for the Inter-Dominions in Auckland, sweeping through the three heats and final in outrageous style.

That would be the last time he was sighted however – a leg injury which sidelined him last year flared up again this year and led to the decision to retire him to stud in Victoria, where New Zealand breeders get the benefit of the significant Vicbred Breeders Bonus Scheme as well as being eligible for the Breeders Crown and also the NZ Sires Stakes etc.

So while there were only glimpses of just how good **Ultimate Sniper** was in a brief 12-month career, his loss in that respect is a gain for breeders looking for

a top class son of Bettor's Delight at a stud fee who can only be considered exceptional value.

**Ultimate Sniper** could have easily raced in top company as a two-year-old, having won two trials as an early juvenile.

But Mark Purdon had been a little regretful of racing **Ultimate Machete** as a juvenile, and took a more

patient approach with his brother.

That policy paid off handsomely with **Ultimate Sniper's** campaign as a three-year-old and ultimately at the Inter-Dominions, where it must be remembered the four-year-old had no favours at all with the draws or luck in the running.

But it simply made no difference – he was just too good.

On the first night, **Ultimate Sniper** was three wide for much of the 2200m and beat Chase Auckland in a national record 2.35.4 (MR1.53.6), beating the record of 2.36.1 set by **Ultimate Machete** in the Sales race.

On the second night, he was trapped three wide for the entire 1700m, but came home in 54.8 to beat Cruz Bromac in a 1.52.6 mile rate.

On the third night, **Ultimate Sniper** was planted three wide for the last lap with the Aussies San Carlo and Colt Thirty One going at it and scooting a quarter down the back in 27.

**Ultimate Sniper** looked to be struggling on the home turn, but he picked himself up and went on to down the trailer Chase Auckland in the passing lane as they went a half in 54.8 again.

In the final, **Ultimate Sniper** improved to sit parked for the final two laps and went on to score in 3.14.7, a mile rate of 1.56 and a time only bettered by Christen Me in the Auckland Cup.

At that point, **Ultimate Sniper** seemed to have the world at his feet, but in the end he would not race again.

**Ultimate Machete** and **Ultimate Sniper**, both 3yo and 4yo Pacer of the Year with the latter also being Horse of the Year, were the first two Bettor's Delight foals from the top filly Reality Check, who won the sales race in Auckland as a two-year-old.

Reality Check's dam in Maureens Dream was a half-sister to Tuapeka Knight, who would have been a top sire in his own right but for fertility issues.

Reality Check earlier produced the well performed filly Major Reality (23 Aus wins, \$462,000), whose first foal the Bettor's Delight filly Bettor Than Mum sold for \$300,000 at Karaka this year.

As one of the best sons of Bettor's Delight along with Betting Line, Lazarus, **Tall Dark Stranger** and now **Bettor's Wish**, **Ultimate Sniper** must hold strong appeal for those looking to 'breed to race' at a \$4000 stud fee.

There remains a question mark over Lazarus' stud career for the moment, while Betting Line and **Tall Dark Stranger** are limited to what they can do in NZ by being frozen semen only.

In other words the commercial breeders will soon book them out.

**Ultimate Machete** was also a very powerful horse, but he was a much bigger and almost top heavy individual or type and it remains to be seen whether his progeny can go early.

But **Ultimate Sniper** is a much neater type who perhaps threw to a Lordship grandam.

He is also line-bred 3x3 to Cam Fella which would go a long way towards explaining his toughness and staying power.

As such he appeals for mares which can bring a speed factor to the table.

**Ultimate Sniper** was also not an overly big horse, a bonus in this day where the sire landscape seems to be dominated by rather large stallions for the moment.





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## The return of the King sparks excitement at Alabar

Joshua Smith



**The return to New Zealand of one of the most revered pacers in modern harness racing history is adding an air of excitement to the 2021 breeding season.**

Dual New Zealand Horse of the Year, Australian Horse of the Year, and 15-time Group One winner Lazarus has returned to New Zealand after standing at stud in North America and Australia for the last few years.

He will stand for the first time in New Zealand at Alabar Stud in South Auckland and Alabar NZ General Manager Graeme Henley said it is one of the most exciting times of his career.

"I have been doing this for a long time and I am really excited about it. Everyone knows Lazarus, so it is pretty cool to have him here," Henley said.

The farm had tried on several occasions to secure the Bettor's Delight entire for stud duties but was unsuccessful, however, he has found his way to the stud after initially standing in New South Wales where he struggled with fertility issues.

The world-class pacer faced no such issues when standing in North America, and with exhaustive testing unable to unearth the underlying cause his owners, Taylor Made Stallions, have elected to chance their arm and try him in the more temperate climate of his homeland.

"Ourselves and Nevele R have tried on several occasions to buy the horse and we got blown away," Henley said.

"After his issues in Australia his owners have reached out to us and asked if we could help. We said we will give it a crack, and if it works out how cool would that be?"

Lazarus has received strong support from New Zealand breeders already and Henley said while pleasing, that has come with a lot of pressure given his prior fertility issues across the Tasman.

"We have got to make it work because he is getting the support, but if we don't get those mares in-foal he will never come back again," Henley said.

"He looks well positioned to do the job in North America because he has had the support of all of the big studs.

"If you look through the entries at the 2021 round of yearling sales, there are a lot of Lazarus' in there by top mares. Being a Kiwi-bred, it would be pretty galling if he was up there as a successful stallion and we couldn't breed to him down here, so we have got to fix it."

Henley said there are several advantages about standing Lazarus in New Zealand, particularly around environmental conditions and proximity to breeders.

"The fact that he is in New Zealand, New Zealand breeders will get his semen a lot fresher and he is not going to be in Wagga where it can be over 40 degrees with the dust and the flies," Henley said.

"He is here in a nice green paddock and hopefully those things make a difference.

"He is going to get good support, which we are really pleased with. Virtually every commercial breeder in New Zealand has something booked so that is a good sign.





"I think once we can get some good news out there on how his semen is looking and his early results, he will serve as many mares as he wants."

While Henley doesn't expect to receive similar support from Australian breeders this season, he said that is understandable.

"He is not getting a lot of bookings in Australia, which makes sense because they are probably waiting to see how things go," he said.

**LAZARUS will stand for a fee of \$7,500+GST.**

### **Adding some extra crunch to the South Auckland farm's stallion offering this year is Captain Crunch, the richest and fastest son of Captaintreacherous.**

The 2018 US Two-Year-Old Pacing Colt Of The Year stood his debut season in New Zealand at Nevele R Stud in Canterbury last year, however, logistical issues with semen has resulted in the entire transferring to partner Alabar's Auckland base.

"For logistical reasons of shipping semen, predominantly to Australia, we decided with Nevele R to stand him in Auckland this year," Henley said.

"With the lack of flights available and the timing of them, to add in the extra leg of getting the semen from Christchurch to Auckland made it really difficult.

"That is one of the advantages of being in partnership with Nevele R - between ourselves, Nevele R, and our farm in Victoria, we have got three options where we can stand these horses, so it just made sense to stand him here."

Captain Crunch proved a popular stallion last year on both sides of the Tasman and is once again garnering plenty of interest this year.

"He was really popular last year, he served a full book in Australia and a full book in New Zealand as well. I am really looking forward to seeing his first foals," Henley said.

"He is already getting another nice book again, he is already full in Australia."

While he is fully subscribed in Australia, New Zealand breeders still have the opportunity to send their mare to the exciting young stallion.

"It is always a bit trickier in their second year but we think he can go well," Henley said.

"I think breeders just need to recognise that nowadays for these stallions that have also served mares in America, the second year is often the best year to breed to them commercially.



**Captain Crunch progeny**

"If you breed to them in their second year, by the time you are selling a yearling, they will have had a crop of two-year-olds to race in North America. We are seeing that with Always B Miki and Woodlands are seeing it with Downbytheseaside.

"If that crop fires up, you are selling off the back of them and that makes a big difference.

"He served nearly 180 mares (in New Zealand) last season, he won't get that amount this year, but he will serve well over 100 mares, which is a great book for a second year."

**CAPTAIN CRUNCH is available to New Zealand breeders for a fee of \$6,500+GST.**



## **Henley has also welcomed the addition of Bettor's Wish to Alabar NZ's stallion roster.**

The US Three-Year-Old Pacing Colt of the Year and US Aged Male Pacer of the Year is already fully subscribed in both New Zealand and Australia, and Henley has been buoyed by the early support from breeders.

"He is full in both New Zealand and Australia, which is great," Henley said.

"We weren't aiming for a big target with him, he has only got one testicle. He is very fertile but can't serve big numbers, so we are accommodating that.

"He is a lovely horse that was a top racehorse in North America. He is a known horse in New Zealand because he was trained by (expat Kiwi) Chris Ryder, who a lot of people know, and he was the horse that set Dexter Dunn on his way in North America.

"Between here and Australia he will serve a total of 130 mares. It is not a big number, but that makes him a good commercial option for people because there is not going to be a mountain of them around."

## **Rounding out Alabar NZ's stallion roster is champion trotting stallion Majestic Son.**

The leading trotting sire in both New Zealand and Australia had another dominant year on the track, led by New Zealand Horse of the Year contender Sundees Son and multiple Group One winner Majestic Man.

"Sundees Son was a major highlight of the season," Henley said. "Winning the Dominion and getting the quinella with Majestic Man was great. An added bonus was the fact the race was sponsored by the owners of Majestic Son.

"Coming back to win the Rowe Cup was also a big highlight.

"He is the obvious choice for Trotter of the Year but being in contention for Horse of the Year is huge."

Majestic Son is starting to leave a legacy in the trotting ranks, with his name now being whispered in the same breath as the great Sundon.

"Majestic Son had winners of more than \$2 million for the season, the only other (trotting) horse other than Sundon to do that," Henley said.

"He is easy to take for granted because some of the horses offered by frozen semen are great horses. But look at the job Majestic Son is doing day in and day out, he keeps leaving good horses in Australia and New Zealand.

"He has been the leading sire in New Zealand for three or four years in a row, and in Australia five or six years in a row. It is quite a legacy he is leaving.

"His mares are starting to leave a lot of nice horses as well,

so he is going to be remembered pretty fondly, and he has still got a few more years left in him."

Despite his level of success, Alabar has elected to maintain his fee this season at \$5,000+GST.

While Henley said he is deserving of a higher service fee, the level of competition among the trotting stallions has dictated his price.

"Sundon struck the same thing," Henley said. "He always found it difficult to increase his fee even though he was a dominant trotting sire.

"There are not a lot of trotting mares in total and when a stallion has served a few big books, like Majestic Son has, a lot of the mares have already been to him one or two times so they are looking to something else.

"With a small pool of broodmares it is really hard to sustain those large numbers.

"If Majestic Son was a pacing sire he would probably be standing at \$15,000 but it is just one of the anomalies. It is hard to get those trotters to a higher fee unless you are one of the ones offered via frozen semen and you are only looking to get a small book.

"That is the benefit for trotting breeders, they can breed to the champion sire for \$5,000."

## **While Majestic Son has long been the trotting flagship sire for Alabar, they are hoping he will be ably assisted this year by new addition Elite Stride.**

The son of Muscle Hill was purchased out of America as a yearling by owners Emilio and Maria Rosati and was trained in Australia by Anthony Butt and Sonya Smith for whom he won 9 of his 14 starts.

He won the Gr.1 Need For Speed Prince Final (1720m), Gr.2 NSW Trotters Derby (2300m), and Gr.2 Holmfield (1720m) on his way to being crowned Australian Three-Year-Old Trotting Colt of the Year.

"He was a horse that Emilio Rosati bought at the yearling sales in North America," Henley said. "He paid \$200,000 for him and brought him back to Australia where Anthony Butt trained him and he was Three-year-old Trotter of the Year.

"He is by Muscle Hill and his grandmother is Housethatruthbuilt, who is one of the top trotting mares of all time, so he has got a heck of a lot going for him. We think he is a huge chance at stud.

"We need another trotting stallion to complement Majestic Son, and we think he fits the bill."

**ELITE STRIDE is standing at Alabar's Victoria farm for a fee of \$3,000+GST.**





**While Elite Stride is the new kid on the block, veteran stallion Art Major is entering the twilight of his career and Henley said breeders have a limited opportunity to get their mares covered by the proven stallion.**

"He has been the flagship for Alabar for a few years. He is getting down to his last year or two as a commercial sire," Henley said.

"He is a horse that a lot of people have made a lot of money out of. We love him because he has paid a lot of bills for us. He has gone head-to-head with Bettor's Delight his entire sire career.

"This year or next year will be the last year he is available, so for people who are wanting to breed to Art Major, and there are plenty of them, it is coming down to the last opportunity or two.

"He is a really safe bet at the yearling sales, they consistently sell so well."

**ART MAJOR stands in Victoria and is available to NZ breeders for a fee of \$14,000+GST.**

**Art Major's heir apparent, Always B Miki, is in for another busy season after the success of his juveniles on the track in both hemispheres, led by 2020 Dan Patch Two-Year-Old Pacing Colt of the Year Perfect Sting in North America, and Group One winners Tricky Miki and The Miki Taker in Australia.**

In New Zealand, he was well-represented by Montana Glory who placed in the Gr.1 Caduceus Club Fillies Classic (2200m), Gr.1 NZ Sires Stakes Championship (1700m), and Gr.1 Harness Jewels 2YO Diamond (1609m).

"He has done a great job in North America. The horsemen really like them up there, and they like them down here as well," Henley said.

"He has done a really nice job with his first crop of two-year-olds and all the horsemen feel whatever they have done as juveniles, they are going to improve on as three-year-olds.

"He is really well positioned for the future. He has got good crops and the way he is bred, and the type of horse he is, he is ideally placed to be the horse to really step up and do a great job.

"He crosses really well with Bettor's Delight mares, which is a huge asset."

Always B Miki is already fully subscribed this season in both New Zealand and Australia.

"He is fully booked," Henley said. "Just about every phone call we get is someone wanting to breed to Always B Miki. He is really well positioned and it is really exciting to see how it evolves."

New Zealand breeders also have access to several other stallions standing at Alabar's Victoria farm, including Ultimate Sniper.

**New Zealand Horse of the Year and New Zealand Three-Year-Old Male Pacing Male of the Year Ultimate Sniper will make his debut at stud this year where he will be available to New Zealand breeders for a fee of \$4,000+GST.**

"He was a great horse. He cleaned them up in the Inter Dominions and when he was on his A-game he was just unbeatable," Henley said.

"The reason he is in Australia is because of the Vicbred scheme. If you are New Zealand or Australian bred and you stand in Victoria, and your foal races in Victoria, the first race you win the Vicbred scheme will pay you a \$12,000 bonus. That is a huge incentive for a horse like him.

"We also own his full-brother (NZ Three and Four-Year-Old Pacing Male of the Year Ultimate Machete) with Nevele R."

**Henley also believes four-time Group One winner Vincent has a big future ahead of him, but acknowledged breeders are now waiting for his progeny to perform on the track.**

"He is in a bit of wait and see point of his career," Henley said.

"He has had really good books and they have sold really well at the yearling sales. He had one yearling that sold for \$215,000, which is a record for a first season sire.

"His new season two-year-olds are around a lot of the good stables and we are receiving good support.

"We have bought a couple ourselves, which we have got with Hayden Cullen, and he has four other Vincents and he said he likes them all.

"If his two-year-olds get up and running, which they look like they are going to, he is a horse with a big future."

**Alabar have a couple of other stallions available to New Zealand breeders, including ...**

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# Horse of the Year Categories: A SEASON IN REVIEW

## Jonny Turner



Akuta

### Two-Year-Old Pacing Colt or Gelding of the Year

**Freakish is the only fair way to describe Akuta's two-year-old season.**

There was plenty of word around for the Hayden Cullen trained two-year-old ahead of his winning debut in the Group 3 Kindergarten Stakes.

Next came a solid second behind his arch-rival and stablemate Cosmic Major in the Group 2 Welcome Stakes before things got really serious.

Akuta set himself apart from his counterparts with a powerful win in the Group One Sires Stakes Final before cruising to the most comfortable of victories in the Listed Harness Million Final.

But it was his incredible display at the Group One Harness Jewels that suggested owners Mark Purdon and Ian Dobson might have something a little bit special on their hands in the strapping son of Bettor's Delight.

Last early and seemingly going nowhere at the back of the field, Akuta unleashed a breath-taking burst of speed to put on one of the most incredible wins by a two-year-old in New Zealand's recent history.

Quite simply, he's a lock for Two-Year-Old Pacing Colt or Gelding Of The Year.

### Three-Year-Old Pacing Colt or Gelding of the Year

**Joining names like Lazarus, Elsu, Changeover and Have Faith In Me makes Krug the short priced favourite for Three-Year-Old Pacing Colt or Gelding Of The Year.**

The Cran and Chrissie Dalgety trained put his name alongside those stars by becoming just the sixth horse since the turn of the century to win both the Group One New Zealand and Northern Derbies.

A COVID impacted season offered more chances than ever before for three-year-old pacing boys to cash in.

Krug certainly did that by winning the rescheduled Listed Two-Year-old Harness Million, the Group 2 Welcome Stakes and the Redcliffe Derby.

Three Group 1 placings seal his claim at the top of the three-year-old charts.

American Dealer, B D Joe and It's All About Faith were each Group One winners and had outstanding seasons but ultimately they stand behind Krug in the awards queue.

### Four-Year-Old Pacing Colt or Gelding of the Year

**They say it takes a special four-year-old to win a New Zealand Cup and the history books back that up.**

While its well-known Copy That never got a fair crack at putting that theory to the test he proved early in the season he was in for an incredible twelve months.

The Ray Green trained entire stamped his class by beating many of his New Zealand Cup rivals before his four-year-old birthday in the Group Two Ashburton Flying Stakes.

Outstanding performances in open class throughout the season including wins in the Group Two Waikato Flying Mile and Group Two City of Auckland Free For All and placings in the Group One Auckland Cup the Group One The Rising Sun were topped by his barnstorming win in the Group 1 Sunshine Sprint at Albion Park.

In between that outstanding run Copy That put his age group rivals to the sword in both the Group One Taylor Mile and New Zealand Messenger Championship.

A puzzling performance at the Harness Jewels did little to take the shine off an outstanding season.

Copy That



But it did plenty to boost the ever-growing profile of South Coast Arden

With the Harness Jewels being his only Group One win the Brent Mangos trained pacer isn't a match for Copy That on awards night but they are set for some stirring open class battles this season.

### Five-Year-Old & Older Pacing Entire or Gelding of the Year

**The biggest question over Self Assured's award claims are over whether he has done enough to win horse of the year.**

Undoubtedly New Zealand's best open class pacer, the only minor blemish on his nearly perfect season came when a minor issue ruled the Hayden Cullen trained pacer out of the Auckland Cup.

The domination started early with wins in the Group Three Maurice Holmes Vase and Group Two Canterbury Classic before he cruised to his New Zealand Cup victory.

Back on track in the later summer and autumn, the Group One Easter Cup and the Group Two Superstars Championships came next before Self Assured capped his season with a Group Three Rangiora Classic win.

Spankem had an outstanding season in his own right, but ultimately played bridesmaid despite his Group One win in the New Zealand Free-For-All.

Seven times a Group race placegetter, four of those came behind Self Assured.



### Two-Year-Old Pacing Filly of the Year

**True Fantasy winning her first Group One in a 1.59.9 mile-rate in the Caduceus Club Classic might not sound too impressive, but it certainly was.**

The Hayden Cullen trained filly powered through a soaking wet track with an incredible finish.

A week later she did it again, flying home to win the Group One Sires Stakes Championship.

Speed proved to be the filly's best asset as she tasted defeat in her next Group One outings after sitting parked in both.

The first of those came in at the hands of Cover Girl who showed her true ability by winning after trialling well but then not featuring in her previous starts.

A Bettor You ended a frustrating season in the best possible style when running down True Fantasy and Montana Glory to win at the Harness Jewels.

The Group 1 victory positions A Bettor You as the main rival to her stablemate True Fantasy in the Two-Year-Old Pacing Filly Of The Year race.

Montana Glory deserves recognition despite not looking like a winning contender.

The Barry Purdon and Scott Phelan trained filly placed three times in Group One company behind True Fantasy and A Bettor You.

### Three-Year-Old Pacing Filly of the Year

**Bettor Twist didn't just completely dominate last season's three-year-old pacing races, she did it the hard way.**

Six group one titles, many earned working hard from the parked position and then willing herself to victory with the grit and determination rarely seen in horses of her age.

Incredibly, her Group One wins in the Northern Oaks and New Zealand Oaks proved to be regulation victories compared to what was to come in the Harness Jewels.

There, the Hayden Cullen trained filly was three wide for the first lap, four wide down the back, it had to be seen to be believed.

She undoubtedly wins this category and is right in the picture for the overall Horse Of The Year title.

There were others who were able to clinch big race victories in a talented crop of fillies there.

Among them were Enjoy Me who downed Bettor Twist in the Sires Stakes Championship, while Off N Gone and La Rosa both clinched Harness Million victories.

### Four-Year-Old Pacing Mare of the Year

**A COVID impacted season saw Amazing Dream go on the most incredible of rides through to the top of Australasia's open class ranks.**

The first of Hayden Cullen trained pacer's five Group One came with a tough staying performance working three and four wide in the rescheduled Sires Stakes Championship, clocking a national record.



Open classed beckoned and the mare stamped her class with a decisive Auckland Cup win before going on to claim the Group One The Rising Sun and the Group One Blacks A Fake.

The latter two should clinch Amazing Dream this category and put her right in the farm for the overall horse of the year title.

Much has been made of the mare's defeat in several Group One mares races.

Ultimately those Group One placings add to an outstanding season.

Two Group One wins against allcomers and one against the boys in the Rising Sun – Amazing Dream's season can only be described as outstanding as she is right in contention for the Horse Of The Year title.

Beyond Words and Watch Me Now both made giant strides to the top grade last season but have to bow to Amazing Dream's superior record

Beyond Words beat Amazing Dream in the Group One Queen Of Hearts and she also won the Listed Southern Mares Classic during her short tenure in New Zealand.

Watch Me Now ran a national record to beat Amazing Dream in the Group One NZ Standardbred Breeders Stakes before also heading to America.

### Five-Year-Old & Older Pacing Mare of the Year

**This category will come down to the wire with a range of formlines and accomplishments set to provide award judges with plenty to ponder.**

Callie's Delight arguably raced higher graded opposition throughout the season, which included two wins at Alexandra Park.

The Joshua Dickie trained mare chased best behind Beyond Words and Amazing Dream to run third in the Group One Queen Of Hearts at Alexandra Park.

Enchantee and Callie's Delight both won two races last season and notched Group One placings.

Enchantee made it back-to-back wins in the Roxburgh Cup before beating a handy field of fillies and mares including Group One winner Need You Now at Addington.

The Nick Le Lievre trained mare went onto run third in the Group One NZ Standardbred Breeders Stakes.

Cheezel was a durable and consistent performer with three wins and 11 placings helping her get the best prizemoney of the category nominees at \$65,310.

The lion's share of that came when the Regan Todd trained mare clinched victory with a huge late finish in the Listed Uncut Gems Mares Classic.



### Highgrove

Folklore won more races than any of her rivals and is a worthy category contender.

And she did it at each end of the country, starting at Winton before winning three at Addington and another at Alexandra Park.

The Jonny Cox trained mare was third behind Cheezel in her Listed Uncut Gems Mares Classic win.

The closest of categories to call, how the judges rate Cheezel's Listed win compared to the Group One placings of Callie's Delight and Enchantee might decide it.

### Two-Year-Old Trotting Colt or Gelding of the Year

**This category sees a fascinating two-horse battle between Mystic Max and Highgrove.**

Highgrove stamped his class early in the season, showing untapped ability and that he was far from a polished product.

Winning five of his eight starts, the Robert Dunn trained trotter took out the Listed Harness Million and the Group Three New Zealand 2YO Trotting Stakes.

Mystic Max was disqualified in the latter before going on to defeat Highgrove who also galloped in the Group 2 New Zealand 2YO Trotting Championship.

The Michael Purdon trained juvenile, who also earlier won a minor event, then went on to run second to Double Delight at the Group One Harness Jewels as Highgrove galloped out on the home turn.

Mystic Max arguably has the edge with his black-type record but Highgrove won more than two times the races he did and 50% more stakes with his \$76,186 compared to Mystic Max's \$51,202.

Whichever way the judges go, either would be a worthy winner.



### Three-Year-Old Trotting Colt or Gelding of the Year

**There are plenty of locks among this year's award categories but few are more certain than Five Wise Men.**

The Craig and Aimee Edmonds trained squaregaiter showed ability in winning three of his first five starts in minor events before going on a feature race march.

First came the Group Three Hambletonian Classic before he showed incredible toughness to win the Group One New Zealand Derby.

The domination continued with right-handed wins in the Group Two Sires Stakes Trotting Championship and the Group One Northern Trotting Derby.

The Whitewash was complete when Five Wise Men ran to victory after sitting parked at the Group One Harness Jewels.

Leaf Stride and Mufasa Metro deserve mentions for their big race placing behind last season's star.

So too does Outamyway who won the rescheduled two-year-old and the three-year-old Harness Million Finals.

### Four-Year-Old Trotting Entire or Gelding of the Year

**The battle of New Zealand's four-year-old trotters was a highlight for many last season.**

It started off with Bolt For Brilliance versus Cracker Hill in the rescheduled three-year-old features.

Hotly anticipated, the races surpassed their hype.

Bolt For Brilliance first broke the national 2200m record in the Sales Series Final before running a stunning 54.8 last half with his sulky tyre wrapped around its rim to win the Sires Stakes Championship.

The all comers 2200m standing start record also fell as the star four-year-old then went on to rack up open class placings in the Group One Anzac Cup, Group One National Trot.

The Group Three Easter Classic at Addington came next defeating his late season rival Muscle Mountain.

The Greg and Nina Hope trained Muscle Mountain emerged in the spring with three classy wins in minor events before running second in the New Zealand Trotting Free-For-All.

He then returned an even stronger force in the autumn, winning the Group Three Summer Free-For-All.

After his defeat by Bolt For Brilliance in the Easter Classic the four-year-old produced a stunning effort to beat Sundees Son in the Group One New Zealand Trotting Championship.

Meanwhile, Bolt For Brilliance ran second to Sundees Son in the Group One Rowe Cup before the star four-year-olds had their final showdown at the Harness Jewels.

Bolt For Brilliance took final honours with Muscle Mountain second to complete an epic season for both horses.

The scales tip towards Bolt For Brilliance with his more extensive black-type record and his nearly doubling of his rival's stakes (\$269,505 compared to \$138,975).

Again, either would be fitting winners given their status among New Zealand's best trotters.

### Five-Year-Old & Older Trotting Entire or Gelding of the Year

**Completely and utterly dominant is the only way to describe Sundees Son's season.**

New Zealand records fell as he produced displays of stamina and speed worthy of New Zealand's greatest trotters of the past.

In full flight and at full fitness no other trotter could get near him.

The Group One Dominion and the Group One National Trot both won in national record time.

Group One Rowe Cup and Group One ANZAC Cup wins came too.

Beaten just once at Group One level when second in Muscle Mountain's New Zealand Trotting Championship win.

Despite the huge differential between pacing and trotting purses Sundees Son's \$400,000 in earnings rates right up there with the award's pacing contenders.

**Bolt For Brilliance**





---

If the judges rate Group One domination above all else, the Robert Dunn trained star will take home three trophies on award night with this category, Trotter Of The Year and Horse Of The Year.

A three-time Group One winner this season, Majestic Man deserves mentioning but ultimately he won't be in contention in a year of domination by Sundees Son.

---

### Two-Year-Old Trotting Filly of the Year

**Double Delight wasn't meant to be able to trot, but trot she did, and very fast.**

Another clear cut category, this time to Tony Herlihy's pacing bred daughter of Captaintreacherous.

She looked smart in minor events in her first two starts before showing her true class in the Harness Jewels.

Swooping down the outer to beat the boys, Double Delight is a serious and untapped talent with just three starts to her name.

Lock her in.

---

### Three-Year-Old Trotting Filly of the Year

**There is plenty for award judges to consider when lining up the contenders for this category.**

Time Up The Hill will be the obvious pick for many after footing it with male category favourite Five Wise Men throughout last season.

Second in the Group One New Zealand and Northern Trotting derbies and third behind him in the Group Three Hambletonian Classic is outstanding form for any filly.

The Michael Ward trained trotter picked up two minor wins before getting a well-deserved black-type win in the Group Three Northern Trotting Oaks.

Though the Joshua Dickie trained Mexicana rates behind the category favourite on her New Zealand form despite placing in both the Group Three New Zealand and Northern Trotting Oaks but her Aussie form gives her a realistic shot.

A Group One win against the boys in the Redwood Classic in the extended Australian season rates as the biggest single race achievement of this category.

Group Three New Zealand Trotting Oaks winner Aldebaran Floss and the rescheduled 2YO Trotting Championship winner and Sires Stakes 3YO Fillies Classique winner Wanna Play With Me deserve a mention for their efforts last season, too.

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### Four-Year-Old Trotting Mare of the Year

**The older mares categories in the trotting section of the award are among the most even of this year's awards.**

I Dream Of Jeannie puts herself in contention courtesy of three wins including one on Show Day at Addington.

Majestic Chick was a durable and consistent campaigner last term winning four times in Canterbury across the season.

Rain Mist And Muscle took her game up a notch after moving to the North Island, going on to win four times and running second behind Emma Frost in the Group Three Northern Trotting Breeders Stakes.

Patently handled, Vacation Hill won in August before being set aside and then returning to win at Addington in February.

Next came her most crucial run – third behind two genuine stars in Bolt For Brilliance and Muscle Mountain in open class company in the Group Three Easter Trotters Classic.

That performance and the Kevin Townley trained mare racing a better quality of opposition throughout her short season (only seven starts) should capture the judges' attention.

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### Five-Year-Old & Older Trotting Mare of the Year

**If any other the other categories looked even this must be the spirit level used to judge them.**

A plethora of formlines, stretched across the country.

The injury prone Dark Horse was on the fringes of open class as she was managed carefully to see out her career.

Winning five of just ten starts, the Nathan Williamsons trained trotter ran Group Three placings in the Southern Lights Trot and Summer Trotting Free-For-All, effectively junior free-for-all type events.

Emma Frost was a newcomer to the north and made the most of her new home when producing consistent middle-grade performances for trainers Michelle Wallis and Bernie Hackett.

The mare's major upgrade in form was complete when she ran second in the Waikato Trotting Breeders Stakes and then won the Group Three Northern Trotting Breeders Stakes.

The award could come down to how the judges rate those two wins against Dark Horse's black-type placings and her superior win record (five compared to three).

Other trotting mares won more and they're certainly right in contention despite not clinching black-type.

Gold Chain and Time In The Bottle won a staggering seven and eight races respectively in the south and She Reigns won seven in the north.

The most even of categories any one of these mares could take out the title.

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# STUD PARTNERSHIP FLOURISHING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

JOSHUA SMITH

With Nevele R Stud's pacing line-up standing at partner Alabar Stud's South Auckland and Victoria farms, the Prebbleton operation has become a bastion for their trotting stallion offering.

Nevele R Stud offer six pacing stallions in partnership with Alabar Stud, including **A ROCKNROLL DANCE**, **ALWAYS B MIKI**, **CAPTAIN CRUNCH**, **ULTIMATE MACHETE**, **ULTIMATE SNIPER**, and **VINCENT**.

With COVID-19 wreaking havoc on travel, Nevele R Stud General Manager Ged Mooar said it was a no-brainer to send **CAPTAIN CRUNCH**, who stood his debut season at Nevele R last year, to stand at Alabar in Auckland due to easier access to international shipping.

"With the way things are at the moment, it is just so difficult exporting from the South Island," Mooar said.

"With the unknown of flights and semen transport we decided to stand him (Captain Crunch) up in Auckland with all the other stallions."

Mooar has been rapt with the success of the partnership between Nevele R and Alabar, and the way it has benefitted both operations.

*“It is a fantastic relationship with both Graeme (Henley) in New Zealand and Brett Coffey in Australia, and the ability to stand stallions at all three farms.”*

Ged Mooar

While there is plenty of excitement surrounding the partnership's stallion line-up, Mooar is also animated by the stud's trotting sire roster.

He has particularly been buoyed by the success of frozen semen offering **FATHER PATRICK**, both on the track and in the sale ring.

The US Two-Year-Old and Three-Year-old Trotting Colt of the Year has

already left six Group One performers from his first southern hemisphere crop of just 38 live foals, including Gr.1 Breeders Crown 2YO Trotting Fillies Final (2240m) winner Sangreal and Gr.1 Need For Speed Prince Final (1720m) winner Have No Fear.

In North America, Father Patrick has left US 3YO Male Trotters of the Year Amigo Volo and Greenshoe, with the latter also crowned US Trotter of the Year.

Mooar said Father Patrick offers commercial trotting breeders great value for money with a service fee of \$9,000+GST POLF (Pay On Live Foal).

"He has been very commercial," Mooar said.

"He topped the Australian sale this year with a colt that Alabar bought for \$170,000. He topped the New Zealand yearling sales averages, in both Auckland and Christchurch, and his top lot sold for \$120,000.

## CREATINE





"He is one of the best trotting sires in the US and the good thing is they are only three here (Australasia).

"He had a couple of runners in the Jewels – Son Of Patrick and Mufhasa Metro."

Son Of Patrick, who is part-owned by Katrina Purdon and Chris Ryder, ran third in the Gr.1 Harness Jewels 3YO Ruby (1609m), and also placed in the Gr.1 Northern Trotting Derby (2700m), Gr.1 New Zealand Trotting Derby (2600m), and Listed NZB Standardbred Harness Million 1 Trot (1980m).

Mufhasa Metro also had a pleasing season, finishing runner-up behind Five Wise Men in the 3YO Ruby, while he also placed in the Gr.2 Sires Stakes Trotters Championship (2200m).

While Father Patrick is already kicking goals as a sire, with his largest crops in New Zealand yet to arrive on the track, there is plenty to look forward to with the son of Cantab Hall.

"He served 120 mares a couple of seasons ago and they are rising yearlings. He has had a lot of high-quality trotting mares to him," Mooar said.

"I am looking forward to another season with him. We have more of his semen coming over from America."

Mooar is also pleased to be able to once again offer Muscle Mass to New Zealand breeders, albeit in a limited capacity.

"He is world-class and he is proven," Mooar said of the undefeated World Champion Two-Year-Old.

"We have sold out of his semen, he is very limited this year. He has always had good demand and has been a good sire for a number of years."

**MUSCLE MASS** has sired the two fastest three-year-old trotters of all-time in Six Pack and Plunge Chip, with the former available to New Zealand breeders via Stallions Australasia.

In New Zealand, Muscle Mass has been well-represented by Group One winners Heavyweight Hero and Massive Metro.

"Bob Butt's horse (Heavyweight Hero) has been a super horse (winning the Gr.1 New Zealand Trotting Free-For-All,

*I have  
particularly been buoyed  
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FATHER PATRICK,  
both on the track and  
in the sale ring.*

**Ged Mooar**

1980m) and Michelle Wallis and Bernie Hackett's good trotter Massive Metro has also performed well," Mooar said.

"Muscle Mass can also leave a young horse as well, he is top quality."

**ANDOVER HALL** completes Nevele R Stud's frozen semen offering, and while the veteran sire has received minimal support in the last few seasons, Mooar said the sire of 12 millionaires is still a safe bet for trotting breeders.

"He is an older stallion, but he is well-proven and is world-class," Mooar said.

"He has left a couple of horses that have won over \$3 million – Donato Hanover (US Horse of the Year) and Nuncio (Swedish Horse of the Year).

"He is getting older and is not so popular, but with new boys on the block that happens.

"We have had him for a number of years and he has been good."

While Andover Hall is in the twilight of his career, Mooar is pleased to stand one of his best performed sons, Creatine, in the flesh in New Zealand this season.

The Breeders Crown champion and multiple European Group One winner is already starting to make his mark as a sire, highlighted by the deeds of his son Jujubee who holds the Meadowlands Three-Year-Old Trotting Colt track record and is the equal second fastest three-year-old trotter of all time.

"I am excited about him. The feedback has been terrific," Mooar said.

"His oldest are only two here in New Zealand. Mark Jones has qualified three and he told me he would like a stable full of them.

"He had a couple of starters at the Jewels (Kowhai Sunset and Faith In Manchester) but I think they will generally be better three-year-olds."

Mooar said he has received a positive response from trainers about the progeny of **CREATINE**, with the general consensus being that they are sensible, natural trotters.

"The feedback has been that they have got really neat temperaments and are fluent in their trotting gait," he said.

"He has had six winners out of eight starters in Australasia, we are really excited about him.

"He should get a good book this year. He is standing in the flesh with fresh semen, so that always helps too."

Creatine is standing at Nevele R Stud for a fee of \$3,000+GST.

Rounding out Nevele R Stud's stallion roster is Sundon's richest and fastest entire son, **MARCOOLA**.

He was an exciting horse on the track, winning 16 of his 49 starts, including the Gr.1 Dominion Trot (3200m), Gr.1 New Zealand Trotting Derby (2600m), Gr.1 Northern Trotting Derby (2700m), Gr.2 Sires Stakes Trotters Champs (2200m), Gr.2 Trotters Flying Mile (1609m), Gr.2 Lyell Creek Stakes (2200m), and Gr.3 Ashburton Trotters Flying Mile (1609m).

The eight-year-old served 32 mares in his debut season at stud last year and while there is plenty of competition amongst trotting stallions, Mooar said Marcoola offers value for discerning breeders wanting to access fresh semen and support a colonial-bred stallion.

"He is the best son of Sundon – he can sprint, he can stay," Mooar said.

"He won the Dominion and set a record in the Ashburton Trotters Flying Mile.

"He is only \$2,000 so he is pretty good value. It is hard to get these (trotting) mares and there is a lot of choice around with the trotters.

"But he has got the credentials and there is no reason why he shouldn't leave something early either."





# CREATINE

t, 1:51.4 \$2,182,138

**HIS FIRST TWO CROPS (CURRENT SEASON YEARLINGS AND 2YO'S) ARE IMPRESSING SOME PRETTY ASTUTE JUDGES...**

"I love the Creatines, I'd have a stable full of them. They have great temperaments, fluent in their gait and are willing. I've already qualified three 2yo's. Kowhai Sunset won as a 2yo, raced in the Jewels and will be even better as a 3yo." – **MARK JONES**

Kowhai Sunset



"I bought a Creatine colt at the Yearling Sales in Christchurch for some owners. He impresses me in his work, he's great to deal with and trots well. He's not the benchmark though. We have a yearling filly by Creatine, out of the dam of Didjabringthebeers, who would be our best yearling at this stage. They look like they'll both race as 2yo's."

– **COASTER HOWE**

"We bought a colt at the Yearling Sales in Christchurch this year and I can't fault him. He broke in a treat and does everything asked of him. Lovely nature."

– **BARRY PURDON**

"We have a lovely 2yo filly out of Begin, the dam of Tornado Valley, by Creatine. She's impressed me all the way along. Begin is in foal to Creatine once again."

– **TERRY MCMILLAN**

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# Classic Connection set to provide a bonus for breeders

Dave Sanders

**The first multiple group winning European-bred trotting stallion to be shuttled to Australasia served fresh with an innovative breeders bonus.**

Plus France's richest ever trotting stallion are among the offerings of Haras des Trotteurs this season for New Zealand breeders.

Race proven on the major tracks of trotting powerhouse Europe, and the very latest stallion off the production line of revolutionary breeder Jean Pierre Dubois.

M. Dubois who has been the brains behind game-changing sires such as Cocktail Jet, Love You and Varenne comes up with yet another "Franco-American" trotter in Classic Connection.

The exciting newcomer combines the very best of French and American bloodlines and will stand his debut season at Haras des Trotteurs in Cardigan, Victoria, with his chilled semen available to New Zealand breeders.

**And breeding a mare with Classic Connection in 2021 comes with a one-off \$3000 cash breeder's bonus, should the resultant offspring win as a 2 year old in an official race in Australia or New Zealand.**

Haras Des Trotteurs and Pat Driscoll wish to reward breeders so this bonus – all of it – is going directly to the people that support our business the BREEDER.

Classic Connection is by internationally successful sire Love You, who sired last year's USA 2YO C&G Trotter of the Year and is well known in New Zealand for producing 2YO champion trotters who have won three NZ 2YO Trotting Stakes, two Harness Jewels and the Australasian 2YO C&G Crown. His dam – Crys Dream was the USA and Canadian 2yo of the year and it is anticipated that his stock will hit the tracks running.

The new racing calendar has seen a significantly larger number of individual 2yo's racing and Haras des Trotteurs believe they will be paying out plenty of bonuses.

The bonus will be payable on any 2YO race which is part of an official race meeting in any state of Australia and New Zealand and will be paid to the breeder that paid the service fee and account details nominated on the signed service contract.

Separately from the bonus, all NZSBA members will also receive \$500 off Classic Connection's Service Fee.

A group winning son of French supersire Love You out of the US 2YO trotting filly of the year Crys Dream, the aptly named Classic Connection boasts a stunning modern International pedigree combining the best bloodlines off both sides of the Atlantic.

By an established sire of sires Love You, Classic Connection provides Australasian breeders with the latest in the dominant Cocktail Jet Franco American sire line, which has taken France by storm and appears to possess all the credentials needed for any trotting sire Down Under.

Love You

His dam Crys Dream was also one of North America's top 3YOS, with wins in divisions of Casual Breeze Stakes, and eliminations of the Elegance Stakes and Hambletonian Oaks Stakes.

She was second in Breeders Crown final at Woodbine and third in the Hambletonian Oaks final at The Meadowlands, and the Kentucky Filly Futurity final at The Red Mile.

By the ill-fated Speedy Crown stallion Taurus Dream, who is from a French maternal family, Crys Dream has Balanced Image as her second damsire, which is good news for "Down Under" breeders, looking for duplications for the likes of Majestic Son, Angus Hall and Andover Hall mares.

**Love You has been champion sire in France three times and in Sweden on four occasions and has been twice the top stallion in the world on earnings.**

Worldwide Love You's progeny have won more than 100 million Euros and he still figures in the top five stallions in Europe's three biggest markets, even as he enters his 18th season at stud in France.

Love You was fourth last year, and is currently lying in third place, the same position he currently enjoys in the trotting powerhouse of Sweden, while in Italy, which is the third biggest industry in Europe and is still producing world class trotters, he is currently lying second place.

**A son of breed changing stallion Cocktail Jet, Love You is also proving to be a sire of sires.**

In last season's French stallion standings, Love You was fourth (3.307M), one place behind his Prix d'Amerique winning son Royal Dream (3.332m), while another of his sons, Village Mystic (2.548m), was in eighth place.

Quaker Jet was 19th on the list with his French progeny winning 1.714M last year, while Booster Winner (1.6M), Rocklyn (1.222M) and Un Amour d'Haufor (1.449M) were in the group of 49 stallions who had progeny earn over a million euros in France last year.

Other sons such as Ulysse, Bolero Love, Quatre Juillet and Un Charme Fou also had multiple winning progeny in France, last year, while in Italy Love You's son Orupuro Bar has quickly jumped into fifth place, with only two crops of racing age.





In Sweden, Love You is currently in third place, ahead of Ready Cash and Muscle Hill, while his sons Nu Pagadi, Royal Dream and Quaker Jet have had winners there this year.

With so many Love You sons doing well wherever they stand, Classic Connection, is perfectly placed to continue the legacy in Down Under, where Love You himself has proven so successful.

Classic Connection's owner Jean-Pierre Dubois is one of the greatest breeders in the world, and a legend in his native France, where he has driven, trained, owned and bred multiple winners of the nation's greatest trotting races, as well as the winner of France's greatest steeplechase and the winner of the French Oaks in thoroughbreds.

He was a true pioneer in Franco-American breeding and its world beating mix of speed and stamina producing champions such as Cocktail Jet, who was trained by his son Jean-Étienne to win the world's greatest staying test Prix d'Amérique and Sweden's sprint classic Elitloppet in the same year.

Dubois also bred the legendary Italian trotter, Varenne, who also won the Prix d'Amérique and Elitloppet in the same year, and then went on to become the champion sire of Italy for more than a decade.

Dubois stallions dominate French breeding to the extent that seven of the top 10 sires in France last year were from his bloodlines.

By standing Down Under at Haras des Trotteurs in Victoria before returning to Europe for breeding, Classic Connection adds the latest chapter of this remarkable story, one that now has an Down Under edition.

**Also available for the first time to most New Zealand breeders is one of world trotting's true legends, Timoko, France's richest ever trotter and a double Elitloppet winner, whose frozen semen arrived too late in the season last year to be bred to any New Zealand mares, although he did serve a handful in Australia.**

Timoko was a superstar on the track, the winner of 15 Groups ones including two Elitloppets, three French Critériums at 3 and 4 years old, one Prix de France, and ran 2nd and 3rd in the Prix d'Amérique, for more than €5M in earnings.

His sire, Imoko, comes from the same Viking's Way sireline as leading sires Ready Cash and Niky while his dam Kiss Me Coulonces, by And Arifant (damsire of Love You), is the dam of six €100k earners and is herself a granddaughter of the Prix d'Amérique champion and matron Vanina B.

Currently ranked sixth on the French general sire's classification, Timoko is already the sire of more than 230 winners internationally which have earned more than €11 million to date.

Etonnant, winner of this season's French triple crown jewel, the Group I Prix de Paris, is Timoko's current flagbearer among trotting's elite in Europe.

Timoko also sired Elitloppet finalist Dreammoko, and raced against his son on the Scandinavian Summer circuit in his final year.

A French Group II winner, Dreammoko has been placed in trotting strongholds Italy and Sweden's greatest races, running second in the G.P. della Lotteria and fourth in the Elitloppet final.

Timoko also sired France's top 2YO filly of 2017, Folleli, who won the Prix Une de Mai, France's top 2YO fillies race, and then took out the first Criterium for the famed "F" crop (which includes superstar Face Time Bourbon), when she won the Criterium des Jeunes, defeating some of France's top colts who have since begun stud careers.

Proving to be outstanding at stud, Timoko has sired no less than 36 others who have earned over €100k, nicking well with mares by Love You, with whom he has already produced 16 stakes-winners to date.

Timoko, who shares And Arifant as a damsire with Love You, has also worked well with mares sharing similar maternal profiles in Sweden, that is with Speedster or with Speedy Crown line damsires, with Stars Pride line as second or third damsires, such as an Armbrø Invasion, Muscles Yankee, or Gee Whiz mare out of a mare by Game Pride or Tuft.

Haras des Trotteurs chilled-semen roster also contains the French group winner Used To Me, who is also out of a Cocktail Jet mare, who has been successful in Australia over a wide variety of mares, producing the likes of last season's Group 1 Australasian Breeders Crown 2YO final winner Don't Care, and the multi-group winner Imsetto.

The third stallion on Haras des Trotteurs chilled roster is En Solitaire, who is standing in Southland at Macca Lodge for his third season, and has produced some exceptional yearlings already, which have already prompted bookings.

And on the books of the frozen roster is Quaker Jet, who is still Love You's greatest son, a triple winner at Group I level, and twice placed in the Prix d'Amérique, and has consistently been among the top echelon of stallions in France.

Down Under he has quickly become a Group 1 winning sire, with limited numbers on the ground, producing the current open class star mare Im Ready Jet, a Group 1 Australasian Breeders Crown champion at both 2 and 3 years among his 21 winners to date.

Quaker Jet has nicked with a wide variety of mares while of particular interest for Down Under breeders is that two of his top three progeny, including the Group 1 winning Im Ready Jet, are out of Victory Song line stallions, which are especially prominent here, in Monarchy and Angus Hall.

As with his father Love You, he has been successful with Sundon and other Speedster line stallions such as Pine Chip.

Orlando Vici and The Best Madrik have both continued to compile an impressive percentage of winners Down Under despite limited opportunities and are also available on the frozen roster.

**Haras des Trotteurs expects to receive limited shipments of Bold Eagle and Eridan frozen semen in the coming weeks but is only taking expressions of interest until it actually lands in the country.**





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# NZ Sires' Stakes Board update

**It would be fair to say the Sires' Stakes Board has had a bit on of late.**

Foal, yearling and three-year-old sustaining payments were due on July 1st and saw a record percentage of payments made for the foal crop available.

It comes on the back of last season when the Sires' Stakes Board was the catalyst for getting feature racing back on track for the Harness code and what followed was some incredible racing involving our countries best emerging talent.

The prudent management of the Sires' Stakes Board for close to five decades ensured that despite the challenges faced by the racing sector, it was still able to deliver what was laid out in the conditions of each series.

That inspires confidence and has translated to an increase in nomination and sustaining payments, despite their being a smaller population of horses to call upon.

"We are really thrilled with the uptake of nominations and payments this year," said Pierson.

"We all know the foal crops have been in decline so to see the number of payments being made actually going up is a strong vote of confidence in what we are doing," he said.

Hand in hand with the nomination and sustaining payments are that of the stallion nominations.

New Zealand breeders and owners can rest assured that with exception of only a few, virtually every foal registered in this country is eligible for the Sires Stakes Series 42.

"I have to thank the stallion owners for their continued support of us and I like to believe that this series is as good as any in the Southern Hemisphere.

"The board are continually looking at opportunities to grow all sectors of the sport and I believe we have made good strides in recent years with more conditioned races and helping grow the trotting side also," he said.

Just as important is the transitional period through to the new year with standardbreds no longer turning a year older on the 1st of August.

"The Sires' Stakes Board met back in May and decided to run the Sires' Stakes programme in the spring as business as usual," said Pierson.

## BRAD REID

"That means the Woodlands Stud sponsored Sires' Stakes final for Colts & Geldings Series 38 will not be run as a three-year-old race, but heats will be run through October as they have traditionally and will finish up on Cup Day at Addington," he said.

It could be interpreted that this will set a precedent for future series to be run on Cup Day as a two-year-old final becoming the norm, however that is yet to be determined.

Dunstan Horsefeeds who have become prominent supporters of the Harness Racing code have re-signed for a second year with the Sires' Stakes Board having taken over what was formerly the Alabar Fillies Series.

"The Dunstan Horsefeeds Fillies Series 38 is also business as usual with the first heat being at Ashburton during Cup Week and finishing on New Years Eve at

Alexandra Park in Auckland. The only change being we will not be calling it a three-year-old series," said Pierson.

The popular NZ Yearling Sales Aged Classic Race at Kaikoura has undergone a minor tweak to reflect the change also.

"We are going to allow the running of three-year-old's this year, as if we had of excluded what would have previously been early season four-year-old's, it could have had a negative impact on the field size with

several runners in each of the last few years falling into that category," he said.

"The same will apply for the Nevele R Southern Mares Classic to be run on Show Day," he said.

The only other minor change to the pacing series being administered is that of the Harness Million 'Series 2' which under the old terms was a three-year-old race to be run at Alexandra Park on New Year's Eve.

"NZB Standardbred had indicated to us prior to the birthdate change that they would like to try and tie that race into their Yearling Sales at Karaka so that race will definitely be moved into the new year with Harness Racing New Zealand and the NZ TAB confirming the 12th of February as the new date.

Changes for the trotters at this stage are minimal with the Lone Star Sires' Stakes Series 38 to be run in 2022 as was originally intended, however dates are to be confirmed.





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# The North American Breeding Scene

John Curtin



*Somebeachsomewhere*

**When we say North America we mean Canada and the United States so in this article we will cover all of North America.**

**Currently in the harness racing breeding business there are some States of North America struggling and others on the improve, some dramatically!**

For commercial breeders, not only in North America but also down under, these trends matter when it comes to the time of selling your yearling.

A stallion can be popular one year and the next he can become not wanted. There has been many of examples of first season sires dominating the sires list with their first two crops and then disappearing off the scene for example, Niatross who produced one of the greatest of all time Nihilator (\$3,225,653) and followed up that in his next crop with two super stars of 1985 Barberry Spur (\$1,634,017) and the super mare Caressable (\$1,006,380) but he failed to produce another superstar and the breeders deserted the stallion at that point. His great son Nihilator produced three millionaires in his first three crops and the breeders deserted him quickly as well. Then there was Beach Towel who left the super horse Jenna's Beach Boy but not much else of any note but Beach Towel has become the dam sire of Somebeachsomewhere who is changing the dynamics of the entire breed worldwide. There are more recent examples but we will not mention them here.

*It is a tough business this breeding business and not one for the faint hearted!*

I have a great saying - "If it was easy as some of the so called breeding theories and money making programs are, and there are many of them, then the Arabs and the rich would own it all." Not so thank goodness!

When looking at the North American breeding scene you have to understand the way the different States operate, for example how many stallions and how many mares bred and what do they offer breeders before you can get an idea of how to really judge a stallion's value. This is slowly changing right across North America especially the localised Sire Stakes programs in each State.

States operate like individual Countries and I want to explain here what each State has produced so as you can get an idea of what is available for the progeny of certain stallions as it is not a very even playing field when looking at money won for most stallions until the progeny hit the Grand Circuit which starts in September each year.



Remember that every State has a different amount of money to race for in that individual State therefore as I say it is not a level playing field for all stallions as some great stallions do not have much money to race for in their own State. Some stallions have massive amounts of money for their own Sire Stakes Programs like Ohio and New York for example.

Their programs and money available to race for has increased tremendously over the last few years coinciding with the Casinos coming into their States.

Another example is how the State of Kentucky has changed the rules for who is eligible for their Sire Stakes. To make a horse eligible for the Kentucky Sire Stakes the mare in foal has to be a resident of the State of Kentucky for 180 days for the resultant foal to be eligible. Therefore the smart commercial breeders move their mares between two States annually, six months in each. This gives the breeder two options with the progeny of their mare. Also it adds value for the progeny of the mare when selling at the Yearling Sales. The Kentucky Sires Stakes go for five \$40,000 legs with a \$250,000 Final to be held on the 19th of September.

Big money in today's market and a valuable addition for money won to any stallion's progeny.

When reading the following statistics, take into account that normally the Sire Stakes have little impact on a stallion's progeny but the way different States are increasing the amount of money for their local programs, this is slowly changing to the point that the money for Sire Stakes now has a direct impact on a stallion's progeny.

*The Grand Circuit is under siege as the amount of money for staking payments for the individual horse owner is coming under fire with less and less stake payments made.*

More owners are opting for their localised Sire Stakes programs with an option to send their mares to Kentucky for additional money.

**Okay here we go, first of all we look at Canada** where in 2021 a total of 121 stallions were used to service 3,124 mares. The numbers of mares bred and number of stallions used have dropped slowly over the last four years from a high of 3,393 mares bred from 154 stallions used. Canada has 12 individual states but the only significant one is Ontario where 2,477 mares were bred in 2021 from 72 stallions used. The leading money winning stallions (Top 20 in North America in order of money won) of note in the State of Ontario as at the 12th of September are;

## Two-year-old pacers

**Sunshine Beach** - 149 foals - 65 starters - \$878,915

**Sportswriter** - 140 foals - 53 starters - \$866,357

**Bettor's Delight** - 116 foals - 49 starters - \$714,175

**Betterthancheddar** - 69 foals - 26 starters - \$562,133

**Artspeak** - 80 foals - 28 starters - \$410,886

**Big Jim** - 40 foals - 13 starters - \$390,212

**He's Watching** - 65 foals - 33 starters - \$346,558

## Three-year-olds pacers

**Shadow Play** - 91 foals - 63 starters - \$2,338,089

**Bettor's Delight** - 121 foals - 88 starters - \$1,650,165

**Sunshine Beach** - 147 foals - 90 starters - \$1,142,771

**Sportswriter** - 137 foals - 110 starters - \$999,173

**Betterthancheddar** - 68 foals - 79 starters - \$873,275

## All-aged pacers

**Bettor's Delight** - 600 starters - \$13,835,446

**Mach Three** - 328 starters - \$6,317,966

**Shadow Play** - 265 starters - \$5,521,811

**Sportswriter** - 412 starters - \$5,093,643

**Sunshine Beach** - 268 starters - \$3,899,689

**Betterthancheddar** - 206 starters - \$3,432,808

**Big Jim** - 153 starters - \$3,291,753

(N.B. Bettor's Delight stood in the USA for 12 of the 19 years at stud)

## Two-year-old trotters

**Muscle Mass** - 92 foals - 48 starters - \$890,947

**Resolve** - 37 foals - 18 starters - \$462,166

**Kadabra** - 58 foals - 23 starters - \$449,030

## Three-year-old trotters

**Muscle Mass** - 101 foals - 68 starters - \$1,492,482

**Archangel** - 43 foals - 22 starters - \$1,003,436

**Kadabra** - 79 foals - 35 starters - \$600,779

**Royalty For Life** - 126 foals - 31 starters - \$547,450

## All-aged trotters

**Muscle Mass** - 233 starters - \$4,440,349

**Kadabra** - 159 starters - \$2,987,856

**Archangel** - 91 starters - \$2,532,447

**E L Titan** - 72 starters - \$1,563,490



Muscle Mass



## Now we move to the United States

where the number of mares bred continue to increase. In 2020 there were 12,229 mares bred by 623 stallions compared to 11,513 in 2019.

The top four States for mares bred were; Ohio - 2,860; Indiana - 2,497; Pennsylvania - 2,216; New York - 1,181

**Ohio** There were 87 stallions registered for the 2021 Ohio Breeding Season.

There are five major racing tracks in this State, Northfield Park, Scioto Downs, Hollywood Dayton, Delaware (home of The Little Brown Jug) and Miami Valley.

### Two-year-old pacers

**Downbytheseaside** - 116 foals - 69 starters - \$2,016,630

**Fear The Dragon** - 135 foals - 70 starters - \$721,235

**Racing Hill** - 75 foals - 40 starters - \$362,342

### Three-year-olds pacers

**Racing Hill** - 93 foals - 66 starters - \$1,241,018

**McArdle** - 48 foals - 30 starters - \$975,988

**Well Said** - 64 foals - 48 starters - \$718,252

### All-aged pacers

**Well Said** - 252 starters - \$4,236,218

**McArdle** - 183 starters - \$3,515,438

### Two-year-old trotters

**What The Hill** - 102 foals - 63 starters - \$1,158,551

**Triumphant Caviar** - 30 foals - 17 starters - \$579,385

**Uncle Peter** - 78 foals - 39 starters - \$571,860

**Long Tom** - 65 foals - 45 starters - \$541,044

**Creatine** - 32 starters - \$459,805

### Three-year-old trotters

**Uncle Peter** - 88 foals - 44 starters - \$1,005,814

**Triumphant Caviar** - 42 foals - 27 starters - \$849,461

**Creatine** - 47 foals - 30 starters - \$825,309

### All-aged trotters

**Uncle Peter** - 149 starters - \$3,072,586

**Triumphant Caviar** - 76 starters - \$2,038,661

**Dontyouforgetit** - 65 starters - \$1,412,940

## Indiana

In the top 20 in North America in order of money won.

### Two-year-old pacers

**JK Endofanera** - 95 foals - 51 starters - \$809,893

**Rockin Image** - 102 foals - 60 starters - \$719,626

**Luck Be Withyou** - 69 foals - 42 starters - \$376,717



### Three-year-old pacers

**Rockin Image** - 96 foals - 66 starters - \$1,414,452

**JK Endofanera** - 95 foals - 73 starters - \$1,255,500

**Always A Virgin** - 102 foals - 71 starters - \$1,213,302

### All-aged pacers

**Rockin Image** - 272 starters - \$5,310,291

**Always A Virgin** - 283 starters - \$4,466,773



**Pennsylvania** This State is the home of the world's premier Stud Farm Hanover Shoe Farms and the rising major player on the North American breeding scene Diamond Creek Farm. Obviously this State has always been regarded as the toughest State to stand a stallion in. The major tracks are Pocono Downs, Harrahs Chester and The Meadows.

This State is in real trouble with the Democratic run Politicians. The Governor of the State is doing everything he can to abandon harness racing as a scourge on the State. He wants all funds given by the State for racing to be given to their Schools and has a major campaign to achieve his ends. This will be a tragedy for harness racing if he gets his way!

21 stallions stood in this State in the 2021 breeding season. Nine of those were trotting stallions.

In the top 20 in North America in order of money won.

## Two-year-old pacers

**Captaintreacherous** - 103 foals - 58 starters - \$1,604,443

**Sweet Lou** - 101 foals - 61 starters - \$1,205,724

**Always B Miki** - 115 foals - 53 starters - \$909,280

**Betting Line** - 110 foals - 61 starters - \$852,209

## Three-year-old pacers

**Somebeachsomewhere** - 116 foals - 92 starters - \$3,272,200

**Always B Miki** - 112 foals - 78 starters - \$3,158,992

**Captaintreacherous** - 110 foals - 74 starters - \$2,691,017

**Sweet Lou** - 84 foals - 61 starters - \$2,106,757

**Betting Line** - 119 foals - 87 starters - \$1,653,397

## All-aged pacers

**Somebeachsomewhere** - 417 starters - \$13,560,296

**Captaintreacherous** - 239 starters - \$9,298,584

**Sweet Lou** - 231 starters - \$6,129,619

**Always B Miki** - 131 starters - \$4,068,272

## Two-year-old trotters

**Bar Hopping** - 67 foals - 33 starters - \$914,300

**Cantab Hall** - 104 foals - 59 starters - \$809,638

**Father Patrick** - 88 foals - 53 starters - \$805,830

**Explosive Matter** - 61 foals - 34 starters - \$417,911

**Andover Hall** - 37 foals - 16 starters - \$403,686

## Three-year-old trotters

**Bar Hopping** - 61 foals - 40 starters - \$2,040,371

**Cantab Hall** - 88 foals - 52 starters - \$1,386,664

**Father Patrick** - 90 foals - 58 starters - \$1,338,294

**Southwind Frank** - 50 foals - 25 starters - \$1,067,382

**Donato Hanover** - 75 foals - 37 starters - \$1,012,168

**Googoo Gaagaa** - 14 foals - 9 starters - \$886,202

## All-aged trotters

**Cantab Hall** - 215 starters - \$4,475,884

**Explosive Matter** - 167 starters - \$3,204,190

**Bar Hopping** - 73 starters - \$2,954,671

**Father Patrick** - 151 starters - \$2,921,132

**Donato Hanover** - 143 starters - \$2,744,713

**Andover Hall** - 88 starters - \$1,642,607

*Captaintreacherous*



*Father Patrick*





**New York** There are many tracks in the State of New York, mostly half-mile tracks with the main track Yonkers Raceway. Others are Vernon Downs, Tioga Downs, Buffalo Raceway, Monticello Raceway and Saratoga Raceway.

In the top 20 in North America in order of money won.

### Two-year-old pacers

**Huntsville** - 111 foals - 66 starters - \$1,242,989

**American Ideal** - 122 foals - 69 starters - \$1,17,959

### Three-year-old pacers

**American Ideal** - 113 foals - 75 starters - \$2,514,854

**Art Major** - 69 foals - 56 starters - \$1,361,029

**Roll With Joe** - 71 foals - 57 starters - \$1,305,538

**So Surreal** - 58 foals - 37 starters - \$828,298

### All-aged pacers

**American Ideal** - 451 starters - \$10,361,463

**Art Major** - 289 starters - \$6,648,613

**Rock N Roll Heaven** - 179 starters - \$4,373,435

**Roll With Joe** - 196 starters - \$4,340,427

### Two-year-old trotters

**Chapter Seven** - 88 foals - 49 starters - \$1,598,986

### Three-year-old trotters

**Chapter Seven** - 85 foals - 54 starters - \$3,059,028

**Credit Winner** - 55 foals - 38 starters - \$717,140

**E L Titan** - 30 foals - 20 starters - \$652,988

### All-aged trotters

**Chapter Seven** - 170 starters - \$6,565,749

**Credit Winner** - 130 starters - \$2,302,273

**E L Titan** - 72 starters - \$1,563,490

**Conway Hall** - 107 starters - \$1,545,071

**New Jersey** New Jersey also gets a mention as this State is recovering from almost dying until a few years ago when The Meadowlands was sold to Jeff Gural. Harness racing is now in full swing again especially the trotting stallions Muscle Hill who was resident from day one, as owners did not worry about Sire Stakes programs as they felt that the Grand Circuit was the place for Muscle Hill progeny to be. And rightly so as he is one of the all-time greatest trotting stallions on the Planet. There are 13 stallions now standing in New Jersey once the premier State for all of harness racing. Six are trotting stallions. There is not a lot of Sire Stakes money yet but the promise of a lucrative Sire Stakes program is underway. In 2021 American History, Cattlewash and Lazarus were the main pacing stallions standing in New Jersey for the first time. There are only two tracks in New Jersey, The Meadowlands and the half-mile Freehold Raceway.

In the top 20 in North America in order of money won.

### Two-year-old trotters

**Walner** - 93 foals - 57 starters - \$2,224,326

**Muscle Hill** - 100 foals - 53 starters - \$1,025,61

### Three-year-old trotters

**Muscle Hill** - 110 foals - 69 starters - \$2,442,771

### All-aged trotters

**Muscle Hill** - 197 starters - \$5,565,749

**The State of Kentucky** once a premier State for harness racing that nearly died completely is now underway and will enhance the harness racing scene substantially in the years ahead. The recent addition of Video gaming of harness racing at the Casinos has really changed the future of harness racing in the State and will change it in North America as well. Speaking recently to a major player in the State who told this writer that one of the new tracks just opened up in Kentucky is turning over \$115 million monthly on these machines and a percentage is for harness racing. Already they have a very good Sire Stakes program operating and growing fast each year. The Grand Circuit is held annually at their The Red Mile race track, the main track for the State of Kentucky. Stallions will start to be placed in the State as the money returns to the tracks. There are big plans for Kentucky in the years ahead.

*There is light at the end of the tunnel for harness racing in North America.*



# European Update

Dave Sanders



## LAST ORDERS FOR THE FRENCH COCKTAIL THAT RAISED THE BAR

***Cocktail Jet was champion sire in France on seven occasions (2002, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) and with his last crop of 2YOs now hitting the track, his legacy is set to last for a long time to come.***

Of the 49 stallions who had progeny who won over a million euros in France last year, six were sons of **Cocktail Jet** while a further eight grandsons of **Cocktail Jet** were on that list, six of them sons of Love You including Village Mystic and Royal Dream, who were in the top five on the general sires list.

**Cocktail Jet** is also the leading broodmare sire of all time in France, having produced six of the eight richest crops and counting, while as a sire he served a full book for each of the 24 seasons he stood at stud, beginning with the "I" crop of 1996.

His last is the "J" crop, this season's French 2YOs, those born in 2019, for **Cocktail Jet** died in late December 2018, at the ripe old age of 28, having completed a full season at stud the previous spring.

This is the final chapter of a journey which started when his breeder Jean Pierre Dubois purchased at auction, the standardbred mare Armbro Glamour, a daughter of Super Bowl and the Speedy Count mare Sug, a sister to the great Elma who had raced with distinction in Europe, winning both the Elitloppet and Lotteria in 1965, the richest races in Sweden and Italy (then a genuine trotting powerhouse).

Elma finished second to the mighty Roquepine in the 1966 Prix

d'Amerique but went on to win the second leg of the French triple crown, the Prix de France shortly after.

Elma is known to New Zealand breeders as the dam of the stallion Elmas Lad, who was lightly patronised when he stood here in mid 1990s leaving just 35 foals in 7 seasons for just 8 minor winners.

But her other stallion son Texas went on to far greater things in both USA and Europe, and also has a New Zealand connection, being the sire of Grades Singing, whose grand dam was Interdominion Consolation winner Le Chant, who was exported to Canada.

Grades Singing was an international superstar, winning more than \$2 million in Europe and North America including the Elitloppet, Lotteria and multiple US Breeders Crowns.

Dubois bought Armbro Glamour to take part in an agreement the French trotting association made with the US Trotting Association in the late 1980s that allowed some American mares to be imported to France to be bred

to French sires (French mares were shipped the other way, with 10 matings allowed to each set of stallions each year) and more crucially allowed entry into each other's studbooks.

Armbro Glamour was bred to the French stallion Quouky Williams and the resulting foal was one of just 20 foals out of the 12,000 born in France each year.

But while the odds were stacked against them, the pioneering French breeders hit the jackpot, as the first mixed blood trotters hit the track.

### COCKTAIL JET

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Buvetier d'Aunou (Royal Prestige) and Carpe Diem (Workaholic) won the Criterium des 3 Ans in 1992 and 1993, Buvetier d'Aunou and Cygnus d'Odyssee (Workaholic) won the Criterium des 4 Ans in 1993 and 1994, while **Cocktail Jet** himself and Defi d'Aunou (Armbro Goal) won the Criterium des 5 Ans in 1995 and 1996.

Such was the dominance of this new breed, the French authorities abruptly abandoned the project after only a handful of years, but the French revolution had begun with **Cocktail Jet** proving to be one of its biggest guns on the track and in the breeding barn.

**Cocktail Jet** took a lifetime mark of 1.54.1 and finished in his career with earnings of 1.9 million Euros from 24 wins in 63 races, 8 at group 1 level including the Prix d'Amerique-Elitloppet double in 1996, the sixth horse in history to do so. But only Varenne (2001 and 2002) has managed the feat since.

By then he was already covering his allotted 100 French mares each year, and as his last crop began qualifying this year as 2YOs, he had sired 1949 foals, with 71 percent of them (nearly twice the average) having already qualified, and the French earnings alone topping 88 million euros.

His richest son is Love You, the three-time champion sire in France but his list of champion offspring is long, with 18 of his French offspring winning at Group 1 level, which expands to 29 when his European progeny are added.

Six are millionaires and he has become a sire of sires through Love You, The Best Madrik, Naglo, Yarah Boko, Magnificent Rodney and Kerido du Donjon to name just a few, while his grandsons are now also expanding his influence.

It is perhaps fitting that, in the year that his last crop hits the tracks, an emphatic reminder of the influence of **Cocktail Jet** is delivered in the arena in which he himself dominated, Vincennes.

It is at Vincennes that each year the cream of each crop of French trotters rise to issue challenge, and where the championship races, the blue riband Group 1s which add lustre to each stallion (and mare's) credentials are decided.

There are just 14 Group 1 races in France, headed by the five Criteriums, of which four are restricted to those eligible for the Trotteur Francais studbook, the other, the Criterium Continental is an international Group One open to all 4-year-old trotters, and held just before the New Year.

It also hands the winner the first ticket into the upcoming Prix d'Amerique, the most prestigious race in open-class trotting, which **Cocktail Jet** won in 1996 (the same year he won Sweden's Elitloppet).

With the 21st of his 24 crops conceived when he was 25, **Cocktail Jet** sired the winner of the most recent Criterium Continental, Gu d'Heripre and the dam of the runner up, Goldy Mary (Ready Cash) who is out of Mara Bourbon, a five-time international group 1 winner.

Gu d'Heripre was **Cocktail Jet's** second Criterium Continental winner, following Love You who in turn sired Qualita Bourbon, a ¾ sister to the dam of super star Face Time Bourbon and a ¾ sister to the aforementioned Mara Bourbon.

Gu d'Heripre went on to place a meritorious third in this year's Prix d'Amerique behind Face Time Bourbon (Ready Cash) and Davidson du Point (Pacha du Pont) who also quinellaed the race the previous year.

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## COCKTAIL JET

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**Cocktail Jet's** grandson Village Mystic (by Love You) sired Hana des Molles the winner of the Criterium des 3 Ans which was also held in late December (and the first Criterium won by a son of **Cocktail Jet**, Jain de Beval in 2000).

Another **Cocktail Jet** son Cristal Money sired the winner of the first Criterium of the year, with In The Money winning the Criterium des Jeunes, now known as the Prix Comte Pierre de Montesson for early 3YOs, in February. (**Cocktail Jet** had previously sired the winner of the 2004 Cri des Jeunes in Look de Star and in 2010 with The Best Madrik).

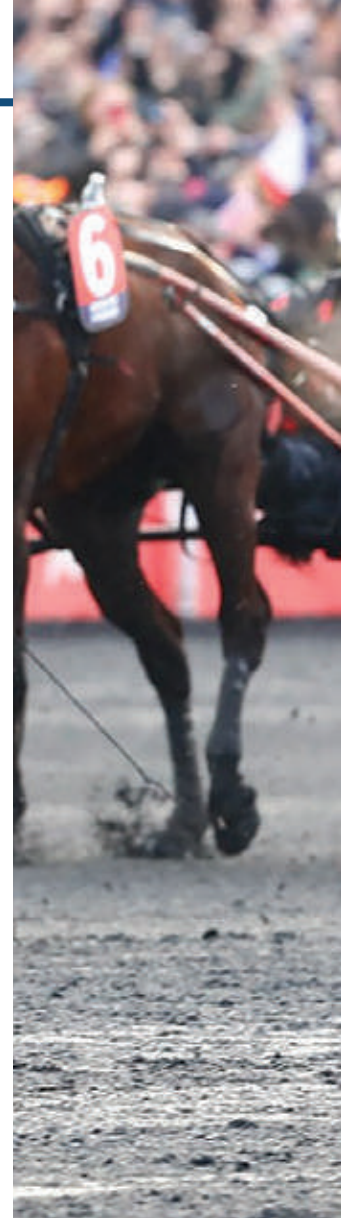
Very recently the Criterium des 4 Ans was won by Hastronaute another grandson of **Cocktail Jet** and yet another son of Love You in Booster Winner while in the same week the Criterium des 5 Ans was won by Galius a son of Love You.

For the record **Cocktail Jet** had also earlier sired both a winner of the Criterium des 4 Ans, in 2018 Enino d'Pommereux and the Criterium des 5 Ans in 2012 The Best Madrik, a race **Cocktail Jet** won himself in 1995.

While **Cocktail Jet** and his line has dominated the Criteriums this season, they have also contributed to the rise of another phenomenal stallion, Ready Cash, whose dominance in recent years is in no small part due to his nick with mares by **Cocktail Jet**, and his sons, particularly Love You.

As mentioned previously Face Time Bourbon won his second Prix d'Amerique making it five of the past six to have been won by Ready Cash sons, four of them out of Love You mares (two each to Face Time Bourbon and Bold Eagle), while the other was won by a daughter of Love You, Belina Josselyn.

The Prix d'Amerique is the first leg of the French triple crown, with the second leg, the sprint leg Grand Prix France (over the







### Face Time Bourbon

Vincennes sprint distance of 2100m), was won by Delia du Pommereux (Niky) who beat home Face Time Bourbon (Ready Cash) and Aetos Kronos (Bold Eagle).

The third leg, the marathon 4150m Grand Prix de Paris was won by Etonnant (Timoko) from Diable du Vauvert (Prince d'Espace) and Moni Viking (Maharajah).

There are two Group 1 inter-generational races each year in France, equivalent to thoroughbred weight for age races, with the older horses racing off a 50m handicap, and this year's Prix de Selection, held in the spring over 2200m was won for the third time by Face Time Bourbon, the first time any horse has won it as a 3, 4 and 5YO. Face Time Bourbon also won last year's Prix de l'Etoile (held in the Autumn, again over 2200m) and will defend the title later this month.

Face Time Bourbon also won the international Group One Prix Rene Balliere, the feature open class race at the Summer Meeting for the second time, following Bold Eagle who won it four times in a row.

The other two of the country's Group Ones were won by international horses. The Prix Albert Viel, which is the 4YO feature of the Summer Meeting, was won by Sweden's Alfredo Sauce (by Sweden's leading sire of the past 3 seasons, Maharajah) who beat Impressionest (Ready Cash) and Ifante Perrine (Atlas du Jourdes, another son of Ready Cash out of a Love You mare).

The Prix de l'Atlantique, the only Group One not run at Vincennes and a sprint over 2150m, but at the other Parisian track at Enghien was won by Italy's Vivid Wise As (Yankee Glide) who beat home Etonnant (Timoko), who showed his versatility, having as aforementioned, won the nation's premier distance event earlier.

Ready Cash currently tops the French sires list (at September 9) ahead of Prodigious (2), Love You (3), Royal Dream (4), Village Mystic (5), Timoko (6), Niky (7), Un Mec d'Heripre (8), Cocktail Jet (9) and Booster Winner (10).

The 3YO sires, which perhaps reflects the upcoming sires, is currently headed by Ready Cash from Prodigious (2), Love You (3), Bird Parker (4), Charly du Noyer (5), Carat Williams (6), Booster Winner (7), Dollar Macker (8), Bold Eagle (9) and Cristal Money (10) while other younger sires in the top 20 include Django Riff (11) and Brillantissime (15).

**Cocktail Jet-line** stallions, which represent the "Old American" line account for seven of the newer breed of stallions while Ready Cash and sons, representing the "New American" Stars Pride-line of Mickey Viking has six stallions in the top twenty, while Very Nice Marceaux is also of that line.

Of interest to New Zealand breeders is that a Victory Song line is also well in play here, although one that has not been seen in North America since the 1960s and passes through the champion





**Calgary Games**

Italian sire Sharif di Iesolo, a son of the imported Quick Song, who ran second in the 1960 Hambletonian before being sold to Italy but only moderately successful as a stallion.

Not so Sharif d'Iesolo, who was outstanding at stud and is the sire of And Arifant, who in turn sired Goetmals Wood, 12th on both the general sires and the 3YO list and in turn the sire of Prodigious (2nd in both) and Saxo de Vandel (16th and 13th, respectively) and the grandsire of the up and coming Dollar Macker, Carat Williams (7) and Doberman (20).

And Arifant is also the damsire of both Love You and Timoko, who are third and sixth on the sires list.

There are two representatives of the uniquely French line stretching through to the so-called French Hambletonian, Fuschia, still hanging on in the general sires list, although Gazouillis (18th) is now deceased, while Prince Gede (20th) is advancing in years and their progeny survive on in monte racing. There are a few sons of both still active but this proud old breed, sadly, hangs by a thread.

The other line that is still active, is that of the "Old American" Axworthy line, the last surviving link to Hambletonian son George Wilkes, which survives through Orlando Vici and his son Un Mec d'Heripre, the latter currently 7th on the general list and 16th on the 3YO list.

Orlando Vici is 21st on the French sires list but is still punching above his weight in Sweden, where the French influence continues to be felt strongly, albeit with a far heavier helping of American bloodlines.

Orlando Vici is still well inside the top ten on the Swedish sires list ranking, seventh, while five of the six ahead of him also have French bloodlines.

Top of the list are the Swedish pair of Maharajah and Ready Express, both Prix d'Amerique winners in their own right, the former a son of Italian-bred "American" Viking Kronos, from a half-French mare, and Ready Express, the royally-bred son of Ready Cash and a Viking Kronos mare whose grand-dam is a sister to superstar Mack Lobell.

Ready Cash is third on the list ahead of another Swedish-bred Franco-American, Zola Boko, a son of Goetmals Wood and the Pine Chip mare, Big Blue Kitten.

The top five is rounded off by Muscle Hill, who at 15 is the junior member of the North American stallions who make up the next three in the top 10.

Scarlet Knight (8), SJ's Caviar (9) are well into their 20s and Chocolatier (10) is 18.

Bold Eagle is poised at 11, followed by another Swedish-bred Raja Mirchi (another son of Viking Kronos from a half-French mare).

The 3YO list tells a similar story very early in the season, with Maharajah and Ready Express again at one and two, with Orlando Vici third, ahead of Ready Cash and Raja Mirchi. Muscle Hill is again 6th, ahead of Uncle Lasse (Donato Hanover), Django Riff (Ready Cash), SJ's Caviar and Beer Summit rounding out the top 10, although the major 3YO programme is still ahead of them.

Ready Express has had a flying start to his stud career with his progeny taking out the two most prestigious races on the age group calendar

The Swedish TravDerby (for 4YOs) was won by the very impressive Calgary Games (Ready Express) who sat parked the entire 2640m trip and then just powered away in the straight while Onas Prince (Chocolatier) just got up to pip a game Sam Moteur (Panne de Moteur).

A superstar in the making, the lightly raced Calgary Games, is trained by Timo Nurmos, who also guided Ready Express throughout his career, and remains unbeaten in his seven starts, and is bred to be good, being out of Swedish 3YO Breeders Crown winner Olympia Tilly.

Earlier in the season, the other two 4YO classics, the King Gustav V Cup and the the Sprintermasteren were won by Onas Prince (Chocolatier out of half-French mare).

The 4YO equivalent for the fillies, the Derby Stoet was won by Honey Mearas (Ready Express) who outstayed pacesetter Global Brilliance (SJ's Caviar) while Sayonara (Donato Hanover) rushed home far too late for third.

Honey Mearas also won the Mares Championship while the Queen Silvias Cup, for the same age group was won by Fifty Cent Piece (Muscle Hill).

The 3YO Classics, the Trav Oaks and the TravKriterium will be held in the coming weeks, with Orlando Vici colt Korta Felix having taken out both the Group 1 E3 series races, the Korta (sprint) and Langa (stayers) classics for the 3YO age group.

Yet another Ready Express progeny, Red Lady Express won the fillies E3 sprint, while Silay Mist Sis, by Beer Summit took out the stayers fillies classic.

Finally, an interesting twist to the breeding discussion which may resonate down under given the number of horses with pacing or dual gaited blood in their pedigrees.

The first two home in the Swedish Breeders Crown 4YO colts and geldings race, held at the end of last year, Hail Mary (Googoo Gaagaa) and Brother Bill (From Above, the 2003 Elitloppet winner who was by half-pacer Zoot Suit) were both by sires with Pacing bloodlines.

Not to be outdone, the winner of this year's Elitloppet, Don Fanucci Zet, also had pacing blood, although through the winner dam, being by Hard Livin (Cantab Hall) out of a pacing-bred mare by Western Terror.

***Perhaps, Kiwis and Aussies have been trendsetters in this game after all.***



# Ground breaking season for colonial stallions

John Coffey and Peter Wharton



**The 2020 Australian breeding season was a ground breaking one for the respect shown by breeders in every State to our home grown stallions.**

Maybe it coincided with Harness Racing Australia's decision to limit stallion books to 150 mares. Whatever the reason it was great news for our Industry and the various stallion owners.

Breeders should be congratulated and many will be rewarded down the track for their loyalty to our 'down under' stallions.

So let's look at those numbers - there were around 30 Australian and New Zealand bred pacing stallions who were advertised for stud duties. Twelve of those stallions bred in excess of 50 mares in Australia, while five of those actually covered 100 or more mares in Vincent (Alabar Bloodstock) 145, Soho Tribeca (Llowalong Farms) 129, Poster Boy (Llowalong) 123, For A Reason (Cobbitty Equine Farms) 123 and Ultimate Machete (Alabar) 100.

Not to be forgotten is the Kiwi-bred son of Christian Cullen in Alta Christiano, who sadly passed away in early 2020. In the 2019 season he bred 164 mares and with him continuing to churn out quality winners in every State, there is no doubt he would have bred a full book last season.

In seasons gone by some of our home grown stallions have been enormously successful and Christian Cullen, Courage Under Fire and Classic Garry spring readily to mind. However, there has been more often than not a reluctance by breeders on both sides of the Tasman to discard our best racehorses as they retire from the racetrack.

*Left: Tiger Tara winning Inter Dominion. Right: Soho. Tribeca*



## Jilliby Kung Fu

So what is the reason now for the changing of the guard? Certainly the opportunity to breed to the best stallions in the world since 2005 via the shuttle stallions has improved our breed quite substantially.

We believe also when we see the success of so many of our 'down under' horses in North America (and not our 'A' graders) that our very best horses would be highly competitive in the elite company of the North American racing. There is no doubt that the horses mentioned above and then add the likes of Tiger Tara (Yirribee Pacing Stud), Bling It On (Cobbitty Equine), The Storm Inside (Alabar), Ohoka Punter (Egmont Park), Tintin In America (Yirribee) and Jilliby Kung Fu (Cobbitty Equine) to that list - they bred between 50 and 100 mares - that all these horses would have 1:47 and 1:48 records if they had raced in USA.

On the trotting side, Skyvalley (Aldebaran Park) covered 101 mares - his highest number in 11 seasons at the stud.

So the future is looking sunny for our home grown boys with another quartet of flying machines to join the pacing ranks this year - Ride High, Be Happy Mach, Ultimate Sniper (all Alabar) and Lochinvar Art (Cobbitty Equine), along with a gifted young trotter in Elite Stride (Alabar), who was foaled in America and raced in Victoria.

*John Coffey is the president of the Australian Standardbred Breeders Association and one of the world's leading authorities on standardbred breeding.*



# Bettor's Delight leads Aussie sires again

Peter Wharton

**Bettor's Delight has established a stakes lead of almost \$2.5 million over his nearest rival, Art Major, on the sires' list for the current season in Australia.**

The Woodlands Stud flagship has been Australia's top sire for the past nine seasons and looks certain to retain his hold on the sires' list again this term. The Cam's Card Shark horse is not likely to get any serious opposition for a year or two.

Bettor's Delight is poised to join the Adios horse Thor Hanover, who claimed 10 successive titles between 1975 and 1984, as the most decorated sire in Australian trotting history.

Art Major, who is in second place, has been the leading two-year-old sire on seven occasions and has topped the three-year-old list five times in the last 11 seasons.

Rock N Roll Heaven holds down third position while Mach Three and Somebeachsomewhere, fourth and fifth respectively, are dead. Sportswriter (7th) and Roll With Joe (10th) are no longer standing in this country.

The royally bred A Rocknroll Dance has made spectacular progress to eighth place. The influence of Artsplace, Western Hanover and Direct Scooter continues to be a feature of the sires' list.

Of the top 20 sires, 11 have either died, retired or been exported. And most of those at the top of the list are getting on in years. Bettor's Delight was foaled in 1998, Art Major in 1999, American Ideal in 2002, Mr Feelgood in 2003 and Rock N Roll Heaven in 2007. They represent five of the top 10 sires available to Australian breeders.

Cup class pacers in Amazing Dream, Stylish Memphis, Max Delight and The Black Prince, the Australian Pacing Gold 3YO Final winner Tasty Delight and the NSW Oaks winner Anntonia have been among his best winners this season.

Bettor's Delight also holds a commanding lead on the three-year-old list and is again the leading sire of two-year-olds,

\$15,000 ahead of the second sire Fly Like An Eagle to date.

Majestic Son, the leading sire of trotters in Australia since 2016, appears certain to claim his seventh consecutive title. He enjoys a lead of almost \$1.1 million over his nearest rival, the NZ bred Skyvalley.

Majestic Son is also the leading stakemoney sire of two-year-old trotters, while Love You sits atop the three-year-old list.

The Australian sires' list for the season is as follows (up to September 5):

	Wins	Placings	Stakes \$
<b>Bettor's Delight</b>	737	1,382	8,496,032
<b>Art Major</b>	639	1,254	6,001,472
<b>Rock N Roll Heaven</b>	383	679	3,945,458
<b>Mach Three</b>	369	752	3,785,598
<b>Somebeachsomewhere</b>	281	544	3,393,678
<b>American Ideal</b>	303	510	3,214,752
<b>Sportswriter</b>	312	655	2,516,881
<b>A Rocknroll Dance</b>	238	415	2,236,184
<b>Mr Feelgood</b>	266	601	1,879,762
<b>Roll With Joe</b>	179	353	1,799,903
<b>Rocknroll Hanover</b>	104	173	1,796,707
<b>Western Terror</b>	211	419	1,749,309
<b>Courage Under Fire</b>	189	371	1,742,543
<b>Majestic Son (tr)</b>	161	318	1,738,000
<b>Pet Rock</b>	179	382	1,570,364

Christian Cullen, Art Major and Bettor's Delight have outdistanced all others as broodmare sires this season. It was the fifth occasion that Christian Cullen has been Australia's top broodmare sire.

**Bettor's Delight**



This season his mares left 214 individual winners of 504 races and \$4,984,074 in stakes so far. Amazing Dream, Anntonia, Bundoran, Jerada's Delight, Yorkshire and so on were out of Christian Cullen mares.

Art Major, who has not topped the broodmare sire list, but has been in the leading group for some years, is again in second place with 221 individual winners of 456 races and \$4,970,778 in stakes. Wolf Stride, Tough Tilly, Max Delight, Bondi Lockdown and Ignatius were from Art Major mares.

Bettor's Delight ranks as a clear third on the broodmare sires' list, his daughters producing 174 winners of 4298 races and \$4,213,750 in stakes. Magnificent Storm, Mighty Ronaldo, Mach Dan, American Deal and Princess Tiffany were among those out of Bettor's Delight mares.



# First crop sires making a real impact in Australia

Peter Wharton



A feature of this year's Australian two-year-old sires' premiership is the strong showing of the highly credentialled first-season stallions **Always B Miki** and **Betting Line**.

The exalted pair are ranked fourth and fifth respectively, behind only **Bettor's Delight**, **Fly Like An Eagle** and **Captaintreacherous** and ahead of **Somebeachsomewhere**, **American Ideal**, **Art Major** and **Sweet Lou**.

**Bettor's Delight**, the leading two-year-old sire on three occasions, has left the winners of \$468,641, followed by the leading colonial sire **Fly Like An Eagle** (\$451,122) and **Captaintreacherous** (\$428,660).

Next on the list is **Always B Miki** (1:46), the co-fastest horse of all-time with \$427,841, followed by **Betting Line** (1:47.4), the **Little Brown Jug** and **North America Cup** winner with \$380,092.

**Somebeachsomewhere**, the premier juvenile sire in 2015/16, **A Rocknroll Dance**, **Sunshine Beach**, **Follow The Stars** and **American Ideal** round out the top 10.

Group winning youngsters in **Tricky Miki** (WA Golden Slipper), **The Miki Taker** (WA Pearl) and **Taking The Miki** (APG Gold Bullion Final) and placegetters **Uncle Miki** and **You're So Fine NZ** have been among **Always B Miki's** best winners this season.

**Betting Line's** progeny include the Group 1 \$104,000 APG Albion Park Gold Final winner **My Ultimate Levi** and the Group 1 placegetters **Whataretheodds**, **Saint Veran** and **Sovrana**.

On the score of winners, **Betting Line** is the clear leader with 18, followed by **Captaintreacherous** and **Always B Miki** on 16 and **Bettor's Delight**, **Somebeachsomewhere**, **Art Major** and **Sweet Lou** all on 15.

The former 2YO and 3YO of the Year **Bling It On** has made a solid start to his stud career with seven individual winners so far including the Group 3 APG Gold Sovereign winner **Madrid**, the Pink Bonnet placegetter **Finery** and the Bathurst Gold Tiara finalist **Oppenheimer Blue**.

With rich futurity series such as the NSW Breeders Challenge, Vicbred Super Series, SA Southern Cross and the Breeders Crown yet to be conducted, the title of 2YO Sire of the Year looks certain to go down to the wire.

The Australian two-year-old sires' list is as follows:

	Foals	Winners	Stakes \$
<b>Bettor's Delight</b>	81	5	468,641
<b>Fly Like An Eagle</b>	64	14	451,122
<b>Captaintreacherous</b>	77	16	428,660
<b>Always B Miki</b>	90	16	427,841
<b>Betting Line</b>	154	18	380,092
<b>Somebeachsomewhere</b>	64	15	295,128
<b>A Rocknroll Dance</b>	139	12	270,143
<b>Sunshine Beach</b>	114	10	218,521
<b>Follow The Stars</b>	54	8	217,220
<b>American Ideal</b>	86	14	189,686
<b>Art Major</b>	89	15	185,845
<b>Pet Rock</b>	104	7	177,841
<b>Sweet Lou</b>	65	15	176,569
<b>Sportswriter</b>	75	7	159,933
<b>Tintin In America</b>	56	5	144,083

*Harness Racing Australia statistics as at September 7, 2021*



**Betting Line**



# FULL STEAM AHEAD for 2022 YEARLING SALES | Brad Reid

**NZB Standardbred's Cam Bray anticipated being busy this time of year. Just not this busy.**

A typical spring would see Bray well underway with his inspections of the standardbred yearlings who have been entered in the national sale.

As we all know very well, these are far from typical times.

"The delta outbreak came at a terrible time as we had just begun inspections of the Standardbred catalogue when we went into Level 4 lockdown.

"Some clients would have had their yearlings inspected well over a month ago and some possibly wouldn't have had the phone call yet but we are working our way through it.

"I'm just finishing off the Canterbury inspections having completed Southland a week or so ago and James Jennings has completed inspections in the North Island which has us back on track," he said.

In previous years Bray and his team would be back out on the road in January for round two of inspections and to check on the progress of the catalogue but that is likely to change under the current climate.

"I think in a new Covid affected world, January is too late for us to be doing inspections. We will try and complete the majority of our second look at these horses in December," he said.

It goes without saying that New Zealand has the best pastures anywhere in the world for rearing bloodstock and despite a challenging winter in some parts

of the country, Bray has been thrilled with what he has seen.

"I don't think it's been that easy down in Southland, it's been wet and cold for the last few months and it was pretty bitter when I was down there a few weeks ago with snow on the ground. It's been a bit the same in Canterbury to be fair.

"All things considered the horses are looking super and inspected very well," he said.

The 2021 sales was a record breaker with almost every key indicator up from 430 yearlings catalogued.

The Sale Series ended with a combined aggregate of \$13,333,500, up 10% on 2020's overall aggregate of \$12,109,250.

*All things considered the horses are looking super and inspected very well.*  
Cam Bray

That aggregate was boosted by the three \$300,000 yearling sales purchases which was a first for any standardbred sale in the Southern Hemisphere.

Despite the inability to personally canvas the Australian buying bench in person due to the travel restrictions, the NZ bred, and in particular the NZB Sales Graduate, have continued to fly the flag across the ditch.

"Our oldest crop of graduates are only three and they won seven derbies last season which is pretty impressive when you consider we only have two here in New Zealand.

"It's great that the horses are doing the talking because we are going to have to think outside the box again as to how we canvas our Aussie contingent but it's the same predicament as last year.

"We will have a number of agents do inspections in November who will then make themselves available to the Aussie clients for recommendations, and no doubt some of them will have their own contacts doing the same," he said.

The buying bench will be spoilt for choice once again if looking for the next Krug, American Dealer, Aldebaran Floss or Outamyway.

It's looking like a strong mix of bloodlines with well over 400 yearlings give or take at this stage ready to take centre stage in February.

"We've got similar numbers to last year with Auckland pretty much the same around that 130 or 140 mark. The configuration will be slightly different in Christchurch with a few less pacers and a few more trotters to sell. We're probably only talking 20 or 30 horses," he said.

Bray doesn't sound surprised and has seen the change coming on the horizon for a while now.

"We made the call to run with a trotting only sale in Christchurch back in the Pynes days envisioning that it would grow. In the last three years at NZB we probably haven't seen that growth in terms of numbers at the yearling sale.

"In the past the trotting breeder is typically more of an owner/breeder type participant but as the gait has grown, so too have the opportunities and we are seeing more commercial breeders invest in a trotting mare as a result," he said.



The undisputed king of pacing has dominated proceedings at the sales for what feels like a lifetime now.

Bettor's Delight has taken all before him in New Zealand on the track and in the breeding shed with his stock in the highest of demand in the auction ring.

The fickle nature of the New Zealand buying bench has made it extremely difficult for emerging sires and their vendors to get any real footing in the market as the tried and true continues to be the preferred source of investment.

The guard is close to changing and we are seeing it happen before our very eyes in North America.

Bettor's Delight won his seventh Leading sire of Pacers by stake money crown in North America last season and even at the ripe old age of 23 managed to finish fourth in the 2YO Sires List.

Far from being disgraced, he currently sits 13th in the two-year-old sires list with the likes of Downbytheseaside, Captaintreacherous, Sweet Lou, American Ideal, Always B Miki and Fear The Dragon ahead of him.

The fact remains though, despite being in his twilight years, someone is going to have to step up and take the crown from the king because he shows no signs of slowing down!

"What we are going to see this year at the sales is probably one of the smaller crops for Bettor's Delight in a long time. What it has done is give reasonably full books for horses like Sweet Lou, Always B Miki and Art Major.

"We aren't talking about the huge drafts we had for Sweet Lou and Art Major last year, but more of an even spread of stallions represented throughout the catalogue. It's encouraging for

*The fact that we can parade the yearlings on the Saturday morning, go to Alexandra Park for the races and be back the next day selling at Karaka lends itself really well to kicking off the week in style and I think it is a great thing for both the vendors and purchasers alike.*

Cam Bray

those sires to get the numbers through the yearling sales," he said.

The big drafts for Art Major and Sweet Lou last year counted against them to some extent, diluting what were actually really solid drafts.

Art Major has never put a foot wrong his whole life and Sweet Lou seems to have taken the mantle for most overlooked sire off his Woodlands stable mate, American Ideal.

It's going to be a fascinating next few years for the pacing ranks to see the contenders sort themselves out from the pretenders.

Speaking of which, will we see any of the emerging stock step up and give their sires a lift on the eve of the Karaka Sale at Auckland?

A new date has been set for the Series Two - Three Year Old final with Harness Racing New Zealand and the TAB having secured the license to finalise the date just last month.

The Harness Million meeting will see six races staged at Alexandra Park on Saturday, February 12, the day before the yearling sales at Karaka.

The meeting will host all three Harness Million races for 3-year-olds (male pace, female pace and trot), the Group 1 Taylor Mile, the Lyell Creek for open class trotters and the first 2-year-old pacing race of the season to give buyers an early-season sight into what the juvenile crop stallions are doing.

"We are just trying to emulate a recipe that we know works very well with the thoroughbreds.

"The Karaka Million is a fantastic night and helps light the fire under the hype of the whole sales week and captures a lot of excitement leading into it.

"The fact that we can parade the yearlings on the Saturday morning, go to Alexandra Park for the races and be back the next day selling at Karaka lends itself really well to kicking off the week in style and I think it is a great thing for both the vendors and purchasers alike" said Bray.

People may remember the Weanling Sale back in 2018 held on the eve of the Harness Jewels. It was the catalyst it seems for giving the weanling sale a monumental shift in its own right and should give vendors optimism that holding a sale around a feature race day is a recipe for success.

With that said, keep an eye out in early December for the printed copies of the catalogue and start making plans to be in Auckland in early February.

Fingers crossed we are back to some sense of normality by then because we can all do with an excuse to let our hair down and who knows, buy a couple of yearlings the following day!



## New Season Trotting Sires



### CLASSIC CONNECTION

7h Love You – Crys Dream, by Taurus Dream | 1.54.1 | 388,350 Euros

**In the absence of Love You this year, attention will turn to his sons and Classic Connection is an interesting addition to those ranks this season.**

The seven year-old has actually been secured by Haras des Trotteurs to stand in Australia when most siring prospects out of Europe are far too valuable or expensive to make that option practical or viable.

**Classic Connection** was good enough to win a Group 1 Breeders Crown for three-year-olds in Germany and was also a multiple Group 2 winner in France.

He won 11 races and Eu388,350 while taking a record of 1.54.1.

Of interest is **Classic Connection's** pedigree in that he is one of just two foals from a quite brilliant juvenile trotting filly in Crys Dream, who took a record of 2, 1.54.3 back in 2010 when she was the U.S. 2YO Filly Trotter of the Year.

The Canadian-bred Crys Dream won almost \$1m as a two and three-year-old and her other foal in the Love You colt City Guide was also a good performer in Europe.

Crys Dream was by Taurus Dream, a son of Sir Taurus (Speedy Crown) who was also a case of 'what might have been'.

He was shaping as a revelation at stud in Ontario for Love You's breeder-owner, Jean Pierre Dubois, when he was lost while shuttling to Europe.

Crys Dream was also a half-sister to Brigham Dream (3, 1.53.4, \$639,000), who produced a top Swedish performer in Tae Kwon Deo.

So **Classic Connection** is yet another example of combining North American and European bloodlines, all of which began with a bang when Dubois bred the champion Cocktail Jet, the sire of Love You.

Haras des Trotteurs is offering a 10% discount on **Classic Connection's** stud fee if the breeder is a member of the NZSBA, while there's also a \$3000 bonus if a foal by him wins a two-year-old race in either Australia or New Zealand.





## ELITE STRIDE

5h Muscle Hill – Real Babe, by Donato Hanover | 3, 1.55.8 | \$118,840



**Muscle Hill has been such a sensation at stud that the demand for him has pretty much taken him out of the picture for Down Under breeders.**

Only once beaten in a 21-start career where he won pretty much everything and around \$3.3m, Muscle Hill stands at stud in New Jersey upon application and the demand for his services in Europe means there is nothing left for Australia or New Zealand these days.

But he has several sons at stud Down Under and Woodlands' shuttle stallion What The Hill has been popular having covered books of 82, 94 and 81 mares in his first three seasons.

Other sons of Muscle Hill available

this year are Trixton (sire of Kiwitrix), the brilliant juvenile Southwind Frank, \$800,000 yearling Tactical Landing and the equally exciting Propulsion.

Muscle Hill did produce around 100 foals when he was available in New Zealand and has proved his worth here in siring 57 winners to date, headed by the Group 1 winners Bolt For Brilliance, Muscle Mountain, Cracker Hill, Lotamuscle and Five Wise Men among many other classy youngsters.

Now we have **Elite Stride**, the American-bred horse who was bought at the yearling sales by Emilio Rosati and who proved a top class three-year-old in Australia last year before going amiss.

He won nine of his first 10 starts including the Group 1 Need For Speed at Melton in 1.55.8, while being upset by the brilliant filly Pink Galahs in the Victoria Trotters Derby.

Elite Stride lacks for nothing on the score of pedigrees either as he is the first foal from a top filly performer in Real Babe (1.52.2, \$384,000), a daughter of Donato Hanover and the \$1.2m winner Housethatruhbuilt.

The latter was by Muscles Yankee meaning **Elite Stride** carries a close 2x3 reverse sex cross to him.

So here we have another Blue Blood American-bred trotter only this one is proven under local racing conditions.

## PROPULSION

10h Muscle Hill – Danae, by Andover Hall | 3, 1.52.6; 4, 1.52.2 | \$920,029

**Propulsion will probably be forever remembered as the horse that was robbed of 11 Group 1 wins and almost \$3m in Sweden last year.**

Not to mention a record of 1.49.6, making him the only trotter to have broken 1.50 in Europe.

He did that in winning the Elitloppet last year and to put this into context, Ready Cash's champion son Bold Eagle took his record of 1.50 in the event.

But the Elitloppet proved a huge

controversy for **Propulsion** as it came to light afterwards that he had been 'nerve blocked' in America before his sale at an auction to Swedish horseman Daniel Reden.

Swedish authorities were basically to blame for not noticing this had happened when his transfer documents were lodged, but as their rules stipulate that the procedure is banned, they disqualified **Propulsion** from every race he had competed in there.

So his record as it appears above hardly indicates what a great horse **Propulsion** has been in recent times.

His record was basically left in tatters, with what he achieved in America and in brief campaigns in Finland and France, where he was a Group 1 winner.

But what can't be denied **Propulsion** is a Blue Blood American pedigree and the fact that he has been one of the best trotters in Europe in recent years.

*Continued on page 62*



## New Season Trotting Sires

### PROPULSION | Continued from page 61

One of the best performed sons of champion trotter and sire Muscle Hill (3, 1.50.2, \$3.3m), **Propulsion** is from a Hambletonian Oaks winner in Danae (3, 1.54.2, \$529,099) and he is a brother to Dream Together (1.51.3, \$801,782).

Danae is by Andover Hall from Deanella Hanover, by Valley Victory from Della Hanover, a Speedy Count sister to the great Delmonica Hanover.

As such, **Propulsion** also carries a 3x3 reverse sex cross to one-time siring sensation Valley Victory.

It is a pedigree that can't be taken from **Propulsion**, nor can the knowledge that he was indeed a top class performer in Europe.

**Propulsion** is being brought to Down Under breeders by Australia's Trump Bloodstock, which is also offering a value son of Muscle Hill in Muscle M Up along with the European star Up And Quick.

Muscle M Up won 12 races and \$195,000 while taking a record of 1.51.4 and being race timed in 1.50.

Up And Quick, a son of the Royal Prestige horse Buvetier d'Aunou, is a multiple Group 1 winner in France including the 2015 Prix d'Amerique, the New Zealand Cup of European trotting.

He took a record of 1.51 in his last season of racing as a nine-year-old and earned over 2.3m Euros.



### SIX PACK

6h Muscle Mass – Pleasing Lady, by Cantab Hall | 2, 1.55.8f; 3, 1.49.2 | \$1,939,604



The latest offering from Stallions Australasia is **Six Pack**, the fastest three-year-old trotter in history and a winner of almost \$2m.

A multiple Stakes winner at two, **Six Pack** had an outstanding three-year-old season in 2018 when he won 11 of 15 races and over \$1.1m and was the U.S. 3YO Colt Trotter of the Year.

That season he broke Muscle Hill's long standing three-year-old world record when he won a division of the Stanley Dancer at The Meadowlands in 1.50 flat. Then he reduced that record to 1.49.1 when winning the coveted Kentucky Futurity at The Red Mile, about an hour after winning his elimination heat in 1.50.8 for a two-heat world record.

**Six Pack** returned for a light four-year-old campaign where he set another world record in winning the Allera Farm Stakes at The Red Mile in 1.49.8, while he also set a track record of 1.50 in winning the TVG at The Meadowlands.

**Six Pack** is a son the brilliantly-bred Muscle Mass, an unbeaten juvenile who has also been very good at stud in Ontario, siring the world champion filly Plunge Blue Chip (3, 1.49.4, \$1.5m) along with Riveting Rosie (\$903,000), a Canadian 2YO & 3YO Filly Trotter of the Year.

Muscle Mass shuttled to New Zealand for one season, producing 53 foals which included Heavyweight Hero, Massive Metro, Credit Master and the good mares Bonnie Highlander and Ruthless Kayla.

With other foals from frozen semen, Muscle Mass has sired 53 winners

so far in New Zealand with other good performers including Custodian (2YO Ruby), Chevron Express (NZ Trotting Oaks), Muscles Galore, K D Muscles, Aldebaran Floss (NZ Trotting Oaks) and Arnold (1.55).

Muscle Mass was bred on 2x3 reverse sex cross to Valley Victory and the dam of **Six Pack** in Pleasing Lady has another cross to him.

Pleasing Lady was a good trotting filly by Cantab Hall, himself an unbeaten juvenile in 10 races back in 2003 and the best trotting sire in North America during the last two decades outside of Muscle Hill.

He has sired 11 \$1m plus winners including the outstanding two-year-old performers in Father Patrick and Pastor Stephen, who are also available at stud Down Under.

In other words, **Six Pack** has a top drawer pedigree and also a performance record which is second to none.



## TIMOKO

14h Imoko – Kiss Me Coulonces, by And Arifan | 1.51 | 5,011,851 Euros

**The French-bred Timoko has been a giant of European trotting for the best part of the last decade.**

A two-year-old winner back in 2009, **Timoko** retired from the track in 2017 after nine seasons of racing having won 36 races from 101 starts for stakes worth over 5m Euros.

He is France's all-time biggest stakes earner having won multiple Group 1 events there over staying trips while also twice winning the Elitloppet in Sweden in 2014 and 2017, Europe's premier sprinting event.

He took his record of 1.51 in the second of his Elitloppet victories at Solvalla.

He won a total of 16 Group 1 races around Europe competing against the very best aged trotters in the world.

A true iron horse who averaged over half a million Euros per season throughout his career.

**Timoko** won the Group 1 Criterium des Ans as a three-year-old, which is essentially France's Derby and a race also won by other champions in Face Time Bourbon, Bold Eagle and Ready Cash in recent times.

He won three Group 1s as a four-year-old to be the leading stakes earner in France that season, before an injury forced him off the scene, but he came back as a six-year-old to win another 23 races and the bulk of his prizemoney.

As is customary in France, **Timoko** was also at stud following his three and four-year-old seasons on the track and he has already sired the winners of over 13m Euros.

Among his progeny are Etonnant (E928,400), a four-year-old who won the Group 1 Prix de Paris at Vincennes this year, along with Group 1 winner Folelli (Criterium des Jeunes for 3yo fillies), Group 2 winners Dreammoko (E664,014) and Elite du Ruel and Danish star Dortmund.

European trotters don't have the sexy pedigrees of their American counterparts, but European pedigrees are still essentially American blood.

**Timoko** traces in male line through Imoko, Viking's Way and Mickey Viking to Bonefish, while his dam is by And Arifant, a son of the Italian champion trotter and sire Sharif Di Iesolo, a son of Quick Song.

*Six Pack winning the 126th Kentucky Futurity in 1.49.1*





## New Season Foals



^ Captaintreacherous x Splendid Me filly



^ Sweet Lou x Carpen Dior filly

v Captain Crunch x River Polka filly



Bettor's Delight x Gladamare colt



v Art Major x Christanna filly



v Sky Major x Langham Lobell filly



< Speeding Spur x Mekong Princess filly

Downbytheseaside x Mhairi filly







**Southern Bred Southern Reared**  
*Rich Pedigree Rich Pasture*



**AMAZING DREAM – SBSR Millionaire**

*"Our Dreams can come true if we have the courage to pursue them"* WALT DISNEY

***Amazing Dreams begin with SBSR...***

**World's FIRST Millionaire Standardbred – Cardigan Bay**  
**Southern Hemisphere's FASTEST Standardbred – Field Marshal**  
**New Zealand's RICHEST Standardbred – Themightyquinn**

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- Invest in a SBSR Yearling at the NZB National Yearling Sale
- Enter your Southern Bred progeny in the SBSR draft for industry-leading results





# A SEASON OF SUCCESS.

## Breckon Farms Sustained Investment in Quality

Producing 50 individual winners in a 12 month period is an exceptional achievement at anytime, producing these results during a worldwide pandemic is a whole different achievement to digest and appreciate.

Australian State border restrictions, Trans-Tasman bubble / no Trans-Tasman bubble, all played a part in the ever-changing landscape over the last "traditional" racing season. These challenges were faced and tackled with aplomb by the Australasian trainers and saw the Breckon Farms bred bloodstock produce the Ohaupo farm's best season yet.

The Te Awamutu property continues to go ahead in leaps and bounds through continual investment and diversification.

This investment is paying dividends. While there may be 40 to foal this year, the phenomenal success on track has come from crops with less than half of that.

Every Breeder strives for excellence and the Breckons are no different. This Season has seen the farm breed; **a New Zealand Oaks winner**, in many commercial breeders' eyes more significant than a New Zealand Trotting Cup, **a Miracle Mile winner** for the second year running, a New Zealand record setting trotter and complete **a rare Group 1 Harness Jewels double**.

New Zealand Oaks winning filly **Bettor Twist** and Harness Jewels 2YO Diamond winner **A Bettor You** will eventually join the broodmare band.

A formidable broodmare band littered with Group 1 performers, Group 1 producers and iconic Australasian bloodlines.

Wander around the rolling hills of Breckon Farms and you'll find Group 1 winners **High Gait, Luby Lou, Tickle Me Pink, Daenerys Targaryen, Dead Cat Bounce, Onlyforyou, Twist and Twirl, Elle Mac, PartyOn, Linda Lovegrace** and **Willow**. Some sight indeed.

It's not all about excellence, but also about consistency, and producing stock that are best prepared to do the job on the track.

That's not only through great blood, but ensuring they are given the best start in life, balanced nutrition, and exceptional handling.

Of the success the farm has had in the past 12 months, it may surprise, but the results from those that aren't making the headlines have delivered the most satisfaction.

Horses like **Stress Factor, Pace N Pride, Smart Fortune, Simply Shaz, Max Phactor** and **Giddy Heights** who have all had multiple wins.

Purchased for reasonable sums they continue to reward their owners by racing consistently and soundly. **They have contributed to the 116 non group races won by Breckon Bred horses.**

Farm Manager Nigel Fahy oversees the 200 acre property and leads a team who are just as passionate and invested in Breckon Farms success as Ken and Karen themselves.

The annual yearling draft presented at the New Zealand Bloodstock Karaka Sales now numbers 30+ and whilst the 2021 sale saw Breckon Farms lead the way, the 2020 sale did not.

*Ken & Karen Breckon*



As all Vendors know, the Sales can be a fickle beast, 90 seconds at the mercy of buyers, where expectations are sometimes met and sometimes not.

Beyond the sales ring, away from the marketing and the hype, is where the actual proof lies.

**Over 66% of that 2020 draft have now been to a trial or raced,** Group 1 winner **In the Spotlight** came from the draft, as well as Group 2 winner **Cosmic Major** and the Group placed trotter **Wy Fi**. Add in to the mix **Willow Bay** and their confidence was bang on.

Not to be outshone, the 2019 draft have all had their fair share of headlines.

**Kyvalley Hotspur** is a multiple Group 2 winner. **Hot & Treacherous**, an IRT Harness Jewels placegetter and Winter Cup winner. **I See Fire**, a NZ record holder.

**Allamericanlover, BettorCallMe, Settle Petal, Regal Attire** – all winners, and the list of winners goes on.

**92% of that draft have made it to the races and only one of the Breckon Breds in that draft haven't had a top three finish.**

At Karaka in February, the Breckons believe you will find their best draft yet on paper and on type.

With progeny of **PartyOn, Willow, Regal Volo, Classic Armbr, OnlyForYou, Rozelski** and **Goodlookingbabe** crossed with the best stallions on the market, there's no shortage of Group 1 potential.

With formidable results and arguably their best drafts yet to hit the track Breckon Farms truly is cementing itself as Australasia's pre-eminent breeding establishment.

Learn more - [www.breckonfarms.co.nz](http://www.breckonfarms.co.nz)

## BRECKON FARMS HOME OF

# *Worldclass Families | Elite Performers*

### 2022 NZB Standardbred Sales colts



*Art Major -  
Hot Hooves,*

*Bettor's Delight -  
Holly Madison*

*Bettor's Delight -  
Diamond Lace,*

*Bettor's Delight -  
Double Twist*

*Always B Miki -  
Rozelski*





*American Dealer  
Anthony Butt*

# Kiwi Standardbreds dominate Australasian tracks

**For decades, New Zealand-bred standardbreds have performed at an elite level on the world stage, demonstrating their strength, stamina and Group One-winning abilities in both hemispheres.**

In recent seasons, NZB Standardbred's very own graduates have added to that lineage of success, dominating on racetracks across Australasia.

Featured below is a seasonal review of the outstanding accolades achieved by the New Zealand standardbred.

## NZB Standardbred Graduates

- With the oldest just three years of age, NZB Standardbred graduates claimed 14 G1 wins and 27 stakes wins in the 2020-21 season.
- A source of classic winners, NZB Standardbred graduates won seven Derbys across Australasia last season.
- Showing early talent, two-year-olds purchased from NZB claimed six G1 and eight stakes races in the 2020-21 season.
- Trans-Tasman G1 winner American Dealer (NZ) cost just \$23,000 and has since won over A\$305,000 – almost 14 times his purchase price at NZB Standardbred's National Yearling Sale.

## New Zealand-Breds

### Australia and New Zealand – Both Gaits

- New Zealand-bred horses claimed 51% of all eligible stakes races in Australia and New Zealand combined last season.
- 67 eligible G1 races were won by New Zealand-bred standardbreds in Australasia last season.
- During the 2020-21 season, kiwi horses claimed 33% of all eligible G1 races in Australia (both gaits).
- New Zealand-bred horses defended 100% of all Stakes races in New Zealand last season, claiming all 39 G1 pacing and trotting races on the calendar.

## Pacing Races

- New Zealand-bred pacers won 54% of all eligible G1 pacing races in Australasia during the 2020-21 season.
- NZ standardbreds claimed 51% of all eligible Australasian pacing Stakes races last season.
- 40% of all eligible Australian pacing Stakes races were won by kiwi horses during the 2020-21 season.

## Trotting Races

- New Zealand-bred trotters won 33% of all eligible G1 trotting races in Australia during the 2020-21 season.
- Kiwi horses were responsible for 52% of all eligible trotting stakes races in Australasia last season.
- Seven individual NZ-bred trotters won nine Group One features last season in Australia, including three Group One wins for champion trotter Majestic Man.

NZB Standardbred's upcoming 2022 National Yearling Sale will feature a standout crop of youngsters destined to add to the success of their previous alumni.

NZB Sales Representative Cam Bray, who has been busy inspecting catalogued yearlings over the last few months, commented on the pool of talent set to hit the grounds at Karaka and Canterbury Agricultural Park next February.

"So far, our team has been very impressed by the yearlings we have inspected to-date."

"The quality found in the paddocks around New Zealand is a testament to our fertile pastures and expert preparation carried out by kiwi horsemen and women, a process that begins long before the foals hit the ground.

"The sound environment our horses grow up in is reflected by the prolific results they continue to achieve year after year on race tracks across the globe.

"We look forward to releasing another standout catalogue late November to showcase these yearlings to potential buyers around the world," Bray said.

## NZB Standardbred Sales Calendar

**Auckland Parade of Pacers & Trotters:** *Saturday 12 Feb 2022*

**Auckland Sale of Pacers & Trotters:** *Sunday 13 Feb 2022*

**Christchurch Parade & Sale of Trotters:** *Monday 14 Feb 2022*

**Christchurch Parade & Sale of Pacers:** *Tuesday 15 Feb 2022*

**Christchurch Parade & Sale of Pacers:** *Wednesday 16 Feb 2022*



# New Zealand National Standardbred Yearling Sale

## AUCKLAND

13 February  
At Karaka

## CHRISTCHURCH

14 - 16 February  
At Canterbury Agricultural Park

# 2022

# 14

### GROUP ONE RACES

With the oldest just three years of age, NZB Standardbred graduates claimed 14 Group One wins and 27 stakes wins in the 2020-21 season.



American Dealer (NZ)  
(American Ideal x Maddison's Delight)  
Multiple G1 Winner  
2019 Christchurch Yearling Sale, NZ\$23,000  
Purchaser: Lincoln Farms Bloodstock  
Consignor: White Stables

 NZB  
Standardbred

[www.nzbstandardbred.co.nz](http://www.nzbstandardbred.co.nz)



## Breckon Farms

57 NZ Wins | 25 NZ Individual Winners

NZ Group Wins: 7 G1 | 2 G2

Australian Group Wins: 3 G1 | 3 G2 | 10 G3

*Ken & Karen Breckon*



**When Ken and Peter Breckon ventured to the Karaka Sales Complex back in 1995 with little more than a chequebook and a cracking hangover to purchase a racehorse, I wonder if the brothers dared to dream of years like this.**

Since acquiring Breckon Farms in 2007 from Sandy & Jan Yarnldley, Ken & Karen Breckon have poured a significant investment into the sport of harness racing and standardbred breeding.

Their investment has yielded success at the highest level having earned the coveted owner and breeder of the year title in 2011/12 on the back of the great **I Can Doosit's** incomparable achievements that year.

The 2020/21 racing season may have eclipsed even those dizzy heights with incredible results on both sides of the Tasman.

It really isn't any surprise to see their broodmare gem, **Twist And Twirl** (Artsplace – Giveitawhirlgirl), nominated for Pacing Broodmare of the Year given she was the source of nine Group One winners herself.

**King of Swing's** (Rocknroll Hanover) late heroics in the back of the extended 2020 racing season in Australia were enough to see him secure Harness Horse of the Year. Wins in the G1 Miracle Mile, Schweppes Sprint & Blacks A Fake and he also had two Group One placings in the Hunter Cup, Victoria Cup and Sunshine Cup respectively.

His half-sister, **Bettor Twist** didn't have a half bad year either! She claimed six Group One victories on her way to establishing herself as one of the greatest race fillies ever seen in this country.

The only three fillies to have earned more New Zealand stake money in a single season are Carabella, Adore Me & Spanish Armada.

Both Carabella and Spanish Armada had the advantage of winning significant stake money as Sales Series eligible fillies. Had the Covid19 impacted Harness Jewels not had the stake reduced by \$50,000 for the pacing races, **Bettor Twist**, who like the fillies mentioned won the three-year-old Diamond, would have eclipsed them all.

So when you boil it down, this season **Bettor Twist** is right there with the greatest we have ever seen. So much so, few pundits would even remember she started her year with a couple of fourth placings!

Incredibly, she has at the very least put herself into discussions for Horse of the Year which if she happened to win would give her dam **Twist And Twirl**, Horse of the Year titles in the same season with two different progeny in two different countries which is a feat I doubt has ever happened before.

A wonderful year was capped just down the road from their farm in Ohaupo when the Breckon breds were in force at Cambridge Raceway for the Harness Jewels with 8 runners lining up.

**Bettor Twist** was otherworldly in never seeing the pegs in winning her Diamond, her time was 3 seconds faster than that of BD Joe winning the male equivalent of their age group. **A Bettor You** was fantastic in downing Montana Glory and True Fantasy to take the two-year-old diamond. If that wasn't reason enough to celebrate, **American Pride**, **Cosmic Major** and **Hot and Treacherous** were Group One placed in their respective features.

Across the ditch, **In The Spotlight** (Bettor's Delight – Goodlookinbabe) was undefeated and the winner of the G1 2YO Fillies Diamond in Western Australia.

Trotting broodmare **Love Ya Doosie** (Love You – Sheezadoosie) whose first three foals have all been purchased by Aldebaran Farms principal Duncan McPherson all raced with serious distinction also.

**Kyvalley Chief** (Muscle Hill) was the winner of the G2 Winter Cup Final and G3 Breeders Crown Graduate while his younger full brother **Kyvalley Hotspur** was the winner of the G2 Tatlow Stakes and G2 NSW Trotters Derby.

**Cash N Flow** also carried on his rampant ways over the short course races in NSW winning three Group 3 races respectively.

## NZ Bred Winners:

**A Bettor You** 7 starts, 2 wins, 2 placings, \$70,274.  
Incl: 1st (G1) 2YO Diamond.

**Allamericanlover** 6 starts, 3 wins, 2 placings, \$25,530.

**American Pride** 11 starts, 4 wins, 5 placings, \$51,900.  
Incl: 3rd (G1) 4YO Ruby.

**Bettor Call Me** 16 starts, 1 win, 8 placings, \$30,000.  
Incl: 3rd (G3) South East Derby.

**Bettor Twist** 16 starts, 11 wins, 3 placings, \$453,175.  
Incl: 1st (G1) 2YO Sires Stakes fillies Final, (G1) 2YO Caduceus Classic, (G1) Great Northern Oaks, NZ Oaks, (G1) Nevele R Fillies Final, (G1) 3YO Diamond, 1st (G2) Ladyship Stakes. 2nd (G1) Sires Stakes 3YO fillies Final.



**Cosmic Major** 6 starts, 2 wins, 4 placings.

Incl: 1st (G2) Welcome Stakes, 2nd (G1) Sires Stakes 2YO Final, 2nd (Listed) NZB Harness Millions, 3rd (G1) 2YO Emerald.

**High Flying Harry** 11 starts, 2 wins, 6 placings, \$17,240.

**High On Love** 2 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$1,350.

**Hot And Treacherous** 17 starts, 6 wins, 4 placings, \$86,845.

Incl: 3rd (G1) 3YO Emerald.

**I See Fire** 13 starts, 4 wins, \$38,336.

**Imelda May** 6 starts, 1 win, \$7,758.

**Lovesomewhere** 6 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$6,305.

**Ned Kelly** 10 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$8,605.

**Needamargarita** 9 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$7,230.

**On A Roll** 15 starts, 1 win, \$15,673.

**Pace N Pride** 17 starts, 5 wins, 4 placings, \$81,278.

**Passion And Power** 13 starts, 2 wins, 1 placing, \$22,160.

**Regal Attire** 8 starts, 1 win, 3 placings, \$35,351.

Incl: 2nd (Listed) Harness Million 3YO Final.

**Rocknroll Roulette** 5 starts, 1 win, \$5,410.

**Sertorius** 11 starts, 2 wins, 3 placings, \$27,275.

**Settle Petal** 16 starts, 3 wins, 5 placings, \$26,962.

**The Peacemaker** 14 starts, 1 win, 5 placings, \$12,765.

**Willow Bay** 5 starts, 1 win, 2 placings, \$21,500.

## Woodlands Stud

**116 NZ Wins | 55 NZ Individual Winners**

**NZ Group Wins | 2 G1 | 3 G2 | 1 G3 | 1 Listed**

**Aussie Group Wins | 1 G1 | 1 G2 | 2 G3 | 1 Listed**

In the last five years Woodlands Stud have significantly ramped up their own breeding operations as they set about giving their next generation of stallions a boost at the yearling sales and on the race track.

The business model of breeding the likes of **Bettor's Delight** and now **Sweet Lou**, **Downbytheseaside** and **Lather Up** to their elite band of mares has had an indelible footprint on our racing crops in both volume of wins and the quality of them.

In the 2019/20 season, Woodlands Stud was responsible for 73 New Zealand race wins.

In the 2020/21 season they have eclipsed that mark by a whopping 43.

It would be easy to overlook the enormity of such an effort given the volume in which Woodlands Stud have produced bloodstock in recent times. Given the reduction of our foal crops in recent years, the reality is that without Woodlands Stud producing quality standardbreds the industry would be much poorer as a result.

The flagship horse in the 20/21 season for Woodlands Stud the breeder was the remarkable Ray Green trained four-year-old, **Copy That** (American Ideal – Lively Nights).

He was the form three-year-old heading into the classics cut



*Need You Now winning the Four Year Old Diamond*



## Breeder of the Year Nominees

short by Covid19 and never got the opportunity to contest a New Zealand Derby in which he would have most likely started favourite having dominated the Vero Flying Stakes earlier that year.

He returned in sublime fashion as a four year old winning three races and a second in the Spring Cup before heading south and dominating the Ashburton Flying Stakes after finding the front with a lap to go. Such was the performance that he went into the New Zealand Cup as the favourite, but the less we talk about what unfolded there the better with the entire being somewhat unfairly hampered at the start.

His effort to run third in the Auckland Cup after sitting parked for two laps and finishing a length from Amazing Dream and Spankem was easily his best run without winning a race.

He flexed his muscles against his own age group in winning the G1 Taylor Mile and New Zealand Messenger before going to the Queensland carnival and winning the G1 Sunshine Sprint.

To win three G1's and \$410,000 in stake money in a four-year-old campaign that started in early August in open company and closed in Queensland in late July against some of the best pacers in Australasia shows the toughness and quality of this gritty son of American Ideal.

For every champion in any code of sport, they wouldn't reach those dizzy heights were it not for a worthy competitor breathing down their necks and pushing them beyond the limits they ever thought capable.

The performance of the Woodlands bred and owned **Need You Now** in the rescheduled Nevele R Fillies Final on Cup Day was about as gallant as they come. The bonnie mare put up some otherworldly performances to push Amazing Dream to her very limits throughout the year, and none more so than this spectacle.

She set up a New Zealand record for the 1980m from the front and went down less than half a length having truly had the champion mare Amazing Dream off the bit with 200m to go.

Therefore her win in the four-year-old diamond on Jewels day was the cherry on top of a wonderful year for the stud. She was a deserving winner on the day and gets the very much deserved black type to her name to go along with her five group & listed placings.

Other notable performers were the likes of **Aladdin** who won the Listed NZB Harness Millions for his up and coming sire **Sweet Lou**. So too another son of **Sweet Lou** in **My Ultimate Chevron** who won the time honoured Sapling Stakes on debut.

### NZ Bred Winners:

**Aladdin** 16 starts, 3 wins, 4 placings, \$155,109.

*Incl:* 1st (**Listed**) NZB Harness Millions, 1st (**G3**) South Australian Derby, 3rd (**G1**) Sires Stakes Final.

**Art Nouveau** 15 starts, 3 wins, 4 placings, \$37,800.

**Bankers Gold** 19 starts, 2 wins, 8 placings, \$21,545.

**Bizzie Lou** 10 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$11,920.

**Cantfindabetorman** 6 starts, 1 win, 3 placings, \$19,148.

**Captain Confetti** 13 starts, 1 win, 2 placings, \$8,225.

**Cherokee Jack** 1 start, 1 win, \$5,500.

**Constellation** 16 starts, 1 win, 5 placings, \$17,098.

**Copy That** 21 starts, 12 wins, 5 placings, \$410,000.

*Incl:* 1st (**G1**) NZ Taylor Mile, (**G1**) NZ Messenger, (**G1**) Sunshine Sprint, 1st (**G2**) Flying Stakes, (**G2**) Waikato Flying Mile, (**G2**) City of Auckland FFA, 1st (**G3**) Founders Cup, (**G3**) Wondias Mate. 2nd (**G1**) Rising Sun, 3rd (**G1**) Auckland Cup, 2nd (**G3**) Summer C1,660.

**Henry Hubert** 16 starts, 4 wins, 4 placings, \$83,332.

*Incl:* 3rd (**G3**) New Brighton Cup, 3rd (**G3**) Invercargill Cup.

**Idealinggold** 3 starts, 1 win, \$5,000.

**Im A Gigolo** 6 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$10,102.

**Italian Lad** 20 starts, 6 wins, 8 placings, \$70,595.

**Je T'Aime** 12 starts, 1 win, 2 placings, \$8,600.

**Leithen Burn** 12 starts, 2 wins, 5 placings, \$15,480.

**Lexi T** 8 starts, 2 wins, 3 placings, \$17,570.

**Lifes A Beach** 17 starts, 3 wins, 6 placings, \$62,350.

*Incl:* 2nd (**G1**) 3YO Diamond, 2nd (**G2**) Southland Oaks.

**Lottie Moon** 24 starts, 6 wins, 6 placings, \$35,000.

**Louie The Punter** 9 starts, 2 wins, 2 placings, \$17,162.

**Mahia** 27 starts, 4 wins, 9 placings, \$31,675.

**Marathon Man** 11 starts, 5 wins, 3 placings, \$42,265.

**Meetmeinsorrento** 16 starts, 3 wins, 5 placings, \$30,504.

**Mighty Monica** 15 starts, 3 wins, 3 placings, \$18,292.

**Miss Crazyed** 17 starts, 2 wins, 5 placings, \$20,330.

**My Ultimate Chevron** 6 starts, 2 wins, 1 placing, \$31,800.

*Incl:* 1st (**G3**) Sapling Stakes.

**Need You Now** 17 starts, 4 wins, 8 placings, \$125,755

*Incl:* 1st (**G1**) 4YO Diamond, 2nd (**G1**) Nevele R Fillies Final, 2nd (**G2**) Premiere Mares Champs, 2nd (**G3**) Southland Oaks, 2nd (**Listed**) Northern Mares Classic, 3rd (**Listed**) North Island Breeders Stakes.

**Our Pegasus Pearl** 15 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$7,845.

**Peregrine** 6 starts, 2 wins, 4 placings, \$16,400.

**Pocket Book** 27 starts, 2 wins, 7 placings, \$21,500.

**Roma Rosa** 17 starts, 2 wins, 4 placings, \$17,700.

**Romane** 19 starts, 2 wins, 2 placings, \$24,690.

**Ron McKinley** 1 start, 1 win, \$4,400.

**Santa Maria** 12 starts, 2 wins, 6 placings, \$21,020.

**Satchmo** 20 starts, 2 wins, 5 placings, \$19,262.

**Serg Blanco** 12 starts, 3 wins, 4 placings, \$23,470.

**Shanlou** 13 starts, 2 wins, 6 placings, \$15,400.

**Shes No Lady** 20 starts, 3 wins, 5 placings, \$57,790.

*Incl:* 3rd (**G1**) Sires Stakes Fillies Champs.

**Sheza Rose** 15 starts, 1 win, 3 placings, \$9,502.

**Simply Delicious** 6 starts, 2 wins, \$11,569.

**Some Do** 8 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$8,415.

**Spirit Of Anzac** 27 starts, 5 wins, 1 placing, \$31,130.

**Steel The Show** 14 starts, 2 wins, 4 placings, \$51,468.

*Incl:* 3rd (**G1**) Taylor Mile.



**Sweet Affinity** 4 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$7,410.

**Sweet Belle** 14 starts, 3 wins, 4 placings, \$39,815.  
Incl: 3rd (G1) NZ Oaks, 3rd (G2) Southland Oaks.

**Sweet Treat** 6 starts, 1 win, \$7,800.

**The Kaik** 16 starts, 3 wins, 2 placings, \$19,652.

**Tiger Lou** 21 starts, 1 win, 3 placings, \$11,572.

**Tommy Lincoln** 20 starts, 7 wins, 5 placings, \$90,000.  
Incl: 1st (G3) Summer Cup.

**Tommy Tukaa** 6 starts, 1 win, \$5,460.

**Toni Street** 4 starts, 1 win, \$8,460.

**Toodaloolou** 7 starts, 1 win, 2 placings, \$7,400.

**Triple Four** 2 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$5,640.

**Typhoon Stride** 19 starts, 2 wins, 7 placings, \$32,000.  
Incl: 1st (G3) Rising Stars Final.

**Who Made Who** 6 starts, 1 win, 1 placing, \$6,780.

**Woodlea Beaver** 7 starts, 1 win, 2 placings, \$11,835.

**Yossi** 10 starts, 1 win, 4 placings, \$14,365.

## Colin Hair

**10 NZ Wins | 2 NZ Individual Winners**

**NZ Group Wins: | 4 G1 | 1 G2 | 2 G3**

*Robert Dunn, Nancy  
and Colin Hair with  
the Dominion trophy*



**The remarkable rise of Sundees Son (Majestic Son – Stardon) from the naughty school boy to the best trotter in the Southern Hemisphere has given Colin Hair and his wife Nancy an incredible ride in recent seasons.**

This was a horse who a couple of years ago would have you holding your breath that he would simply get round in one piece. Fast forward to today and he is more often than not leaving you breathless such is the dominance and sheer speed.

In any given year, Hair is likely to have bred at the very most two mares from his North Canterbury property in Eyreton. Despite breeding nowhere near the volume of bloodstock as does the company he finds himself in for the Breeder of the Year honours, Hair must take great pride and satisfaction for being considered for such an accolade.

When comparing the overall quality of his breeding wins, Hair sits second in an Olympic style tally of New Zealand breeding success where G1 (gold) is given more weight.

And while one horse is responsible for all of the elite level success, it is important to remember that every breeder in the country puts their mare in foal in the hope to one day scale the mountain top, and with **Sundees Son**, Hair has done just that.

**Sundees Son** started the 20/21 season by winning his second Ordeal Trotting Cup in arrogant fashion sitting outside Majestic Man for the last 800m and crushing him into the dirt. He did the same again off 20m in the Canterbury Park Trotting Cup.

After a hiccup at Kaikoura where he galloped through no fault of his own, he came out and smacked their bums in the Dominion breaking Monbet's national two mile record in the process.

He then went north and won the Lyell Creek Stakes and National Trot before having a spell and bowing to a couple of nice four-year-olds in the Lamb & Hayward Classic and Fred Shaw as he worked back to peak race fitness.

He then went north and repeated the Anzac Cup, Rowe Cup double having done so previously when both races were last run in 2019 to cap off a phenomenal year.

In winning an incomparable 4 G1s and \$407,225 in stakes, **Sundees Son** broke three New Zealand all comers records across three distances (3200, 2700, 2200) which is a testament to his versatility and tractability that has taken him to the superstar status he finds himself.

It must be noted that **Sundees Son's** CV is such that he would be a deserving winner of not only the Trotter of the Year honours (a feat he accomplished in 2019) but also Horse of the Year.

**Sundees Son** wasn't winning from preferential barrier draws or cushy trips in the trail, he won his seven group races in a season by a combined margin of nearly 22 lengths. To put it in perspective further, a horse he beat by a considerable margin in many races went to Australia and won three Group One trotting races against the best square gaiters across the ditch.

While not in the same echelon, a close relative of **Sundees Son** is a little trotter by The Pres in **Yuri** (The Pres – Lara Lass).

He has been a bit of a work in progress since debuting as a two-year-old in 2019 and it was fitting that in a year when his relative swept all before him for his breeder owners, this little dude was able to get three wins in the year as well.

And although he failed to win a race in the 20/21 season, **Woodstone** (The Pres – Gemstone) must also get a mention. 'Woody' as he is affectionately known has been competing in Open Class and off long marks for a couple of seasons now and was good enough to run fourth in the New Zealand Trotting FFA earlier in the year. He came within a half head of getting a well-deserved win in the Listed Uncut Gems in June but it wasn't quite to be.

## NZ Bred Winners:

**Sundees Son** 11 Starts, 7 Wins, 2 Placings, \$415,792

Incl: 1st (G1) National Trot, (G1) Dominion Handicap, (G1) Rowe Cup, (G1) Anzac Cup, (G3) Ordeal Cup, (G3) Canty Park Trotting Cup. 2nd (G1) NZ Trotting Champs, 2nd (G2) Turf Bar Waikato Flying Mile.

Highest Stake Earning trotter.

3 National Records: 2200m Mob, 2700m Mob, 3200m stand.

**Yuri** 18 starts, 3 wins, 1 placing, \$20,366.



# Stallions Australasia bolster roster further for new season | Brad Reid

The frozen semen of the North American megastar son of Muscle Mass, **Six Pack**, will be distributed by Stallions Australasia alongside an already impressive roster that includes **Muscle Hill**, **Southwind Frank**, **Tactical Landing**, **Wishing Stone** and **Trixton**.

It can rightly be claimed of **Six Pack** that he is one of the best bred and best performed trotters to become available 'down under'.

During his career **Six Pack** won an unparalleled four races in 1:50 or better, established three world records and a track record and was the USA 3YO Trotting Colt of the Year in 2018 and Aged Trotting Horse of the Year in 2019.

"If your breeding to the best, you can expect the best. I'm always looking for something that is really high level and you will struggle to get a stallion that ticks the boxes more than him," said Stallions Australasia Principal, Peter O'Rourke.

"I like him all around. His sire line in Muscle Mass has worked great down here and I see he is currently fourth in the USA on the All Age Sires list.

"When you run 1:50 and faster three times, it obviously puts you right up there with the very very best," he said.

From only 35 lifetime starts he won 19 and was 12 times placed for \$1,939,604 – an amazing \$55,500 per start.

As a two-year-old he won in 1:55.8 in a division of the John Simpson Memorial at Harrah's Philadelphia's five furlongs oval. He also won a division and the \$225,000 final of the New York

Sire Stakes at Yonkers and won four of his eight starts at two.

At three **Six Pack** won 11 of his 15 appearances and \$1,159,648 – the highest for any trotter in North America in 2018 – set two world records, won two legs of the Triple Crown and was unquestionably the cream of his crop.

He hoisted a new world record for a three-year-old of 1:50, winning a \$181,000 division of the Stanley Dancer Memorial at The Meadowlands, before lowering his lifetime mark with a stunning 1:49.2 performance in the \$434,000 Kentucky Futurity at The Red Mile.

His 1:49.2 winning effort was put up only 77 minutes after his elimination win in 1:50.4 for the same race!

“When you run 1:50 and faster three times, it obviously puts you right up there with the very very best.”

Peter O'Rourke

Among his other successes at three were the \$500,000 Yonkers Trot by 7-3/4 lengths in a race record 1:54, the \$220,000 Empire Breeders Classic at Vernon Downs, the \$193,000 Matron Stakes at Dover Downs and an elimination of the Breeders Crown.

Returning as a four-year-old, **Six Pack** won a further four races and \$581,314 in stakes. He established a world record of 1:49.4 for a four-year-old trotting stallion winning the \$145,000 Allerage Farm by open lengths at The Red Mile and capped his career by capturing the \$350,000 TVG Open at The Meadowlands in a track record 1:50.

**Six Pack** raced against and defeated horses the calibre of Manchego 1:49 (\$2.7 million), Gimpanzee 1:50 (\$2.7 million), Crystal Fashion 1:50 (\$2 million), Guardian Angel AS 1:50.2 (\$1.4 million), Met's Hall 1:51.4 (\$1.2 million), Fiftydallarbill 1:50.4 (\$1 million) and Lindy The Great 1:51.2 (\$1 million).

"He was four year old and older Horse of the Year at four which is quite remarkable. Four year old's often struggle to make that leap into the open class in any country, but particularly North America where there is a lot of depth and rough and tumble.

"**Six Pack's** ownership were also involved in the likes of Gimpanzee while they didn't race each other all that often, he earnt more money and went faster times," said O'Rourke.

**Six Pack** stood his first season in 2020 at the prestige Deo Volente Farm, New Jersey where he served a full book of 140 mares.

Another Stallions Australasia sire likely to be in hot demand is **Tactical Landing**.

An \$800,000 yearling, **Tactical Landing**, a commanding individual, 16 hands, looks every inch the blood he represents. He is a son of the great Muscle Hill, the world's leading living trotting sire and sire of sires, while his dam, Southwind Serena, is a daughter of arguably the greatest trotter of all-time, Italy's Varenne.

Southwind Serena has stamped herself as one of the finest broodmares of all-time. Besides **Tactical Landing**, she is also the dam of a dual world champion in Mission Brief, winner of 19 races and \$1.5million and voted 2YO and 3YO Trotting Filly of the Year, Exemplar (1:53.2) and Earn Your Wings (1:54.8).



# The fastest 3YO trotter EVER!



## SIX PACK

t3,1:49.2 \$1,939,604

Muscle Mass - Pleasing Lady - Cantab Hall

### SIX PACK: The Racehorse

- Won \$1,939,604 from 35 Lifetime starts winning 19 races and placing in 12.
- Averaged \$55,500 earnings per lifetime start.
- He was the highest money winning trotter in North America in 2018 earning \$1,159,648 as a 3yo.

### SIX PACK: The Record Breaker

- Broke Muscle Hill's long standing 3yo World Record winning his \$181,000 Division of the Stanley Dancer Memorial in 1.50 flat.
  - Set a new 3yo World Record of 1.49.2 when he won the \$434,00 Kentucky Futurity Final just 77 minutes after winning his Elimination in 1.50.8.
- Established a 4yo World Record of 1.49.8 when he won the \$145,000 Allerage Farm Stake.
- Trotted in 1.50 at the Meadowlands winning the \$350,000 TVG Open when setting another track record.

### SIX PACK: The Award Winner

- Won the USTA 3yo TROTTERING COLT of the YEAR in 2018 with 11 wins 3 placings from 15 starts.
- Won the USTA 4yo and older TROTTERING HORSE of the YEAR with 4 wins and 7 placings from 12 starts.

### SIX PACK: Has a Proven Sires Pedigree

- By a World Champion 2yo and sire of World Champions in Muscle Mass which is proven in both Hemispheres. Muscle Mass has sired World Champions and Million Dollar plus winners while his sire Muscles Yankee, the sire of three \$3,000,000 earners was also a World Champion and a sire of world champions.
- This is a pedigree that will excite pedigree analysts looking for the perfect cross.



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[www.stallionsaustralasia.com](http://www.stallionsaustralasia.com) and also follow us on Facebook





"We've never had a lot of semen for him, but whatever we have has gone very early. He commands a fairly high service fee but you only have to read the advertisement to understand why and breeders know the real deal when they it," said O'Rourke.

"He has yearlings in the sales in North America next month and has served three full books in his first three seasons at stud. His book has almost doubled in Europe in the last season which would suggest that the breeders in both continents are already taken by what they are seeing," he said.

In New Zealand, **Tactical Landing** has eight live foals on the ground out of some of our elite broodmares and families it must be said.

Wilma's Mate, Wanna Play, Classic Ambro, Paramount Faith & Petite One are some of those to have produced live foals last season, and we can expect more of the same in the spring.

**Tactical Landing** was a top racehorse in his own right, winning \$812,300 from 16 starts – an excellent total in a brief career.

As a three-year-old he won nine races and was four times placed from 14 starts for \$810,800 and was one of the highest stakes-winning trotters in North America in 2018.

Undoubtedly the highlight of his stellar three-year-old campaign was his front-end win in the \$500,000 Breeders Crown Final at Pocono Downs, in which he defeated Met's Hall and Crystal Fashion by open lengths in 1:52.2 on a sloppy track.

**Tactical Landing** took his record of 1:50.4, winning a leg of the time-honoured Kentucky Futurity at Lexington and finished second in the \$434,000 Final in a world record 1:50. He also captured a

division of the \$240,000 Bluegrass Stake in 1:51.2 at Lexington and an elimination of the \$1.2 Hambletonian in 1:52.4 and was a strong third in the final.

*He is available by frozen semen for the fee of \$15,000+GST (POLF).*

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*From limited numbers, **Muscle Hill** has made a phenomenal impact on the New Zealand studbook just as he did in North America and Europe where his semen is more readily available.*

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Another son of **Muscle Hill** available for his third season down under is **Southwind Frank**.

**Southwind Frank** is out of the Stakes winning Flawless Lindy (tr 3 1:58.2), by Cantab Hall (tr 1:54) from Classically Designed (tr 3, 1:56.4), by Lindy Lane (tr 1:53) from a noted broodmare in Classic Casette, the dam of Giant Hit tr 3 1:54.4 (\$646,650) and the USA 2YO Trotting Filly of the Year and world champion Cayster (tr 1:55) (\$530,451).

**Southwind Frank** is making a real impact with his first crop racing as three-year-olds and was the second leading first season sire in North America in 2020 with only 49 foals.

"He had a close second in a \$250,000 race last weekend and has some classics horses. His slight handicap has been his low numbers in his first few seasons due to being a low production horse. His semen has now come back to where you would like it to be and he is able to serve very good numbers of mares now," said O'Rourke.

**Southwind Frank** has produced nine live foals in his first two years at stud and has around half a dozen expected in the spring.

When a champion race horse heads to stud with great expectations, history tells us it doesn't always work out the way one would like.

O'Rourke has been around the stallion business along time and seen his share of failures, but was on the right side of the ledger when securing the frozen semen rights to **Muscle Hill** in the Southern Hemisphere.

From limited numbers, **Muscle Hill** has made a phenomenal impact on the New Zealand studbook just as he did in North America and Europe where his semen is more readily available.

"That's what you always hope for when you secure a stallion but you don't get those results very often. We were very fortunate being in the right place at the right time and I had known the syndicate manager over the years and was up in North America having a look round and bumped into him at the trials.

"I suggested the idea of the frozen semen and pre purchasing it, expecting to be told thanks but no thanks. He said we might be able to do something and it all came from there.

"He was so dominant on the track the only knock prior to him standing at stud was that he was never tested on the racetrack. Had he had a horse in his crop who could have run him a bit closer, who knows how fast he might have gone. The only reason he wasn't undefeated is because they looked after him in his first race. After that, nothing got close.

"There are now a lot of his daughters at stud going to the hot new sires in North America which levels the playing field a bit for him as a lot of them were top race mares," he said.



# Dunn reunited with Christen Me after Yonkers claim

Gordon Waterstone, USTA Editorial Specialist



**Lexington, KY —** Prior to arriving in the United States in late summer 2018 and taking the North American harness racing world by storm with back-to-back Driver of the Year titles from the U.S. Harness Writers Association in 2019-20, Dexter Dunn was a 10-time Driver of the Year in his native New Zealand. One of the stars that propelled Dunn to quick success Down Under at an early age — he is still just 32 — was Christen Me N, who was named New Zealand's 2015 Horse of the Year.

And now Dunn owns Christen Me, claiming the now 13-year-old pacer for \$30,000 on Sept. 15 at Yonkers Raceway. And while it's likely Christen Me — who has earnings of \$2,396,484 racing on two continents — will now be retired by Dunn, he has left open the possibility of continuing to race the pacer.

"I've been thinking about (claiming him) for a while now, and I thought the time was right," explained Dunn, who has won nearly 1,300 races and \$33 million in purses since he came on the scene in August 2018. "I feel like I'm his family. He's from back home and I'm from back there. He was Horse of the Year one year and to say that I own him now, that's pretty cool.

"The horse means a lot to me as he won every major race in Australasia for me. When he was four and five he was unbelievable. His speed was phenomenal."

Christen Me was an 11-time Group One winner in New Zealand and Australia, with his 32 wins in 58 starts including the Miracle Mile, Auckland Cup, Victoria Cup, Hunter Cup and Easter Cup helping bring his Down Under earnings to \$1,987,614. The son of Christian Cullen was purchased at the age of nine in early 2017 by Richard Poillucci and sent to trainers Jim King Jr. and Jo Ann Looney-King, the

connections of another Down Under import, the 2019 Horse of the Year Shartin N.

Christen Me won his first-ever start in the U.S. on May 14, 2017, where he captured a Harrah's Philadelphia overnight in 1:51. Overall, Christen Me has won 17 times since his arrival, with earnings of \$408,870. His lifetime best of 1:49.2 came in a Preferred Pace on Dec. 7, 2017 at Dover Downs.

Ironically, Dunn claimed Christen Me after his 100th career start in the U.S. Interestingly, Dunn only drove Christen Me once in those 100 starts, that being an off-the-board finish on June 1, 2019, at The Downs at Mohegan Sun Pocono.

Christen Me has been racing primarily at Yonkers Raceway this year, where he had been claimed three times — twice for \$25,000 and once for \$30,000 — in his last six starts before Dunn made it a fourth time. Prior to the claiming binge that began on July 5, Christen Me had been in the barn of trainer Scott DiDomenico since the start of the year, and Dunn said that is where the pacer currently is before he sends the horse to the farm of Michelle and Al Crawford in Lexington, Ky.

"I talked to Scotty D when he had him, and he said he'd look after him," said Dunn. "Scotty helped me out and took him back to his place. I think he is going to come down (to Kentucky) and do some riding trails, with Michelle Crawford looking after him for me."

Dunn added that while Christen Me is likely to be retired, he hasn't totally ruled out continuing to race the horse. He said one option is to send Christen Me to Ohio to trainer Stacey Van Huizen-Miller and her husband, driver Brett Miller.

"We also have the option to race him in Ohio a little bit on his way out," said Dunn. "They have conditions for him. He's looking great and he's looking healthy so he may race out there."



# Stress-free education for young horses

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Made and manufactured in the Waikato the harness has been designed by a local equine enthusiast to ensure the safety of both horse and handler.

Consisting of two parts, the harness and lead tie rope, the Load 'N' Tie system requires only one person and is incredibly simple and easy to use. Also suitable for breaking in horses, this quality product significantly reduces the time and stress associated with loading horses.

The Load 'N' Tie is set to revolutionise the equine industry.

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Proof of its value and practicality for educating weanlings and yearlings is demonstrated through its use at a number of leading farms, both thoroughbred and standardbred.

*Our customers can tell you themselves of the benefits of Load 'N' Tie.*

## ROSS PAYNTER

– Cambridge Raceway

“I've found the Load 'N' Tie harness beneficial for horses that are not great leaders while jogging off a carthorse. It's great to use when putting horses on the frame the first few times and takes the pressure off the neck and puts it on the bum. It's also good to tie up young horses that have not been tied up before.”

## STEVE TELFER

– Trainer, Stonewall Stud & Stables

“When weaning and educating our young horses we have found the Load 'N' Tie harness to be of great benefit to us. It is easy to apply and when fitted properly both safe and kind on the horses. I can recommend this product to any one educating young horses.”

## ROBERT DUNN

– Harness Racer

“Load 'N' Tie's harness system has made teaching young ones to run behind the sulky almost hassle free for us now. We actually have two Load 'N' Ties so we can train more than one horse at the same time. With a Load 'N' Tie training is so much easier and quicker now.”

## MARK CHITTY, BVSc

– Haunui Farm

“During the education of young thoroughbreds at Haunui, we have found the Load 'N' Tie gear to be an ideal tool for our staff. Whether it be in the early weaning process of halter breaking and leading, or educating horses who have shown a reluctance to enter stables, washbays or floats – the Load 'N' Tie gear has greatly assisted our staff in the education of these horses.”

## RODNEY SCHICK

– Windsor Park Stud

“We have been using the Load 'N' Tie adjustable horse harness system during foal handling for two seasons now. The ease of use is outstanding and training new team members to use the system is simple and straight forward. The adjustable straps allow for easy fitting for any size foal/weanling and resizing between the large number of horses we need to get through in a session is quick and uncomplicated.”

## MARK CHITTICK

– Waikato Stud

“The Load 'N' Tie system is an essential part of our foal handling process and is a great tool to help teach young horses to lead whilst keeping our team safe.”

## CARIN DE GROOT

– Veterinarian, Totally Vets

“In my professional opinion I believe that a Load 'N' Tie harness is a very useful tool for training and controlling horses. When suitably fitted it applies safe contact on the pressure points and greatly reduces the normal risk of injury.”

## REBECCA WYLIE

– Kaimanawa Stallion Challenge Trainer and Quarter Horse Trainer and Clinician

“I can't believe this hasn't been invented before! It's incredibly simple and easy to use, and best of all it takes all the stress away from loading, leading or breaking in any horse. This is a life changing product for horse and handler and I'll be telling everyone I know about it!”





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Consisting of two parts, the harness and lead tie rope, the Load 'N' Tie system requires only one person and is incredibly simple and easy to use. Also suitable for breaking in horses, the Load 'N' Tie is set to revolutionise the equine industry.



When weaning and educating our young horses we have found the Load 'N' Tie harness to be of great benefit to us. It is easy to apply and when fitted properly, both safe and kind on the horses. I can recommend this product to any one educating young horses.

**STEVE TELFER** – *Trainer, Stonewall Stud & Stables*



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# LEADING STALLION AWARDS 2020/2021

PETER CRAIG

*The latest season saw a continuation of excellence in the stallion ranks which will be acknowledged at the annual HRNZ Awards evening. The nominees for both the leading pacing and trotting stallion awards are outlined below:*



## American Ideal

*(Western Hanover line stallion standing at Woodlands Stud)*

Although in essence the "second stringer" to Bettor's Delight, this Woodlands shuttle stallion has very impressive credentials world-wide and in Australasia. Currently (mid-September) third on the USTA Pacing Sires list for 2021 (\$10.4m earnings) behind Bettor's Delight and Somebeachsomewhere and sixth on the Australian pacing sires list at mid-September.

During the 2020/21 season in NZ, **American Ideal** recorded his best ever season with 80 winners and just under \$2m in stake earnings placing him third behind Bettor's Delight and marginally behind Art Major (fourth on combined list behind Sundon). His progeny collected eight group or listed race wins during 2020/21, second to Bettor's Delight. Now the sire of close to four hundred winners of over 1,000 races in NZ.

**His standout performers in New Zealand last season were multiple group winners:**

**4yo COPY THAT, 1:52.0 (1700mM)**, winner of ten of seventeen starts in NZ including Taylor Mile, Messenger, Ashburton Flying Stakes, Waikato Flying Mile, City of Auckland FFA, Founders Cup, second Auckland Summer Cup, third Auckland Cup; winner of Sunshine Sprint and Wondais Mate in Queensland during their Winter carnival as well as second in the inaugural Rising Sun and fourth in Blacks A Fake.

**3yo AMERICAN DEALER, 1:53.3**, winner of five of nineteen NZ starts including NZSS – 2c (run as 3yo), Alabar Classic, GN Stakes, thirds in GN Derby, Harness Millions and since his sale to Australia winner of Queensland/South East Queensland Derbies, Rising Sun consolation.



## Art Major

*(Artsplace line stallion standing at Alabar Australia)*

Another worldwide siring great of the modern era. Having previously stood at Alabar NZ, he currently (mid-September) sits fifth on the USTA Pacing Sires list for 2021 (\$6.6m in earnings).

In the 2020/21 season in NZ **Art Major** was second behind Bettor's Delight both for wins 85 and earnings just over \$2m (slightly ahead of American Ideal on both counts) while he was third on the combined earnings list behind Bettor's Delight and Majestic Son. Progeny of **Art Major** collected four group or listed race wins during 2020/21, third behind Bettor's Delight and American Ideal. He is now the sire of close to five hundred winners of nearly 1,300 races in NZ. As a broodmare sire he placed inside the top ten in NZ both for pacers and overall combined gaits.

With regard to his 2021 Australian season stats **Art Major** sits second behind Bettor's Delight on both stakes earned and wins achieved year to date – mid September (pacers and overall). On the broodmare sires stage he is second to Christian Cullen on earnings but ahead slightly on wins both on the Pacers list and overall sires list.

**Art Major** was a very consistent achiever in 2020/21 without any real standout performers although both **Beyond Words**, Queen Of Hearts, Southern Mares Classic, second GN Breeders Stakes, five wins from nine starts, 1:55.0NZ, now 1:51.0US and **Cosmic Major**, Welcome Stakes, seconds Harness Millions, NZSS – 2c&g, third Jewels Emerald, performed more than creditably for him.

*Note: All NZ stats as at 31 July 2021 (2020/2021 season).*





**Bettor's Delight**  
(Cam Fella line stallion  
standing at Woodlands Stud)

The all-time leading sire in harness racing history and the greatest sire of his generation. It is interesting to note at the time of writing that he trailed Somebeachsomewhere as leading pacing stallion in North America for 2021 by a slender margin of less than \$90k, both over \$13.3m in earnings (mid-September). His dominance of the local scene over the past decade continued in the latest season with stakes earned of \$7.354m, second only to his record of \$7.374m in 2018/19 season. His one hundred and ninety two pacing winners (195 overall) were slightly less than his three best seasons, highest of which was 2015/16 with 201 pacing winners (203 overall).

**Bettor's Delight** led all individual pacing age group categories whether on a winners or stakes basis. Among major contributors to his achievements in NZ last season were leading age group performers, both male and female, the calibre of Amazing Dream, Self Assured, Krug, Bettor Twist, leading NZ pacing stake earner \$478,725, Spankem, Akuta, True Fantasy together with Classie Brigade, Stylish Memphis, Need You Now, La Rosa, Pembroke Playboy ..... etc. The progeny of **Bettor's Delight** were the winners of forty one group or listed races during 2020/2021 season.

**Bettor's Delight** is proving he will be the dominant broodmare siring force in the decade ahead placing second to Christian Cullen on the latest seasonal pacing list overall (leading two year old broodmare sire) and third on the combined broodmare sire list behind Christian Cullen and Sundon.

His Australasian pre-eminence is again seen with his dominance as leading pacing and overall sire in Australia as at mid-September 2021 for both stakes and winners produced. As a broodmare sire in Australia he is third on both pacers and overall siring lists, stakes and winners year to date.

## LEADING TROTTING STALLIONS:

*Due to the dominance of Sundon for close on two decades, who could have speculated just a few years ago that NZ trotting breeders would have had access to top North American (Canadian and USA) and European (French) sires in the case of the three trotting stallion nominees.*



**Majestic Son**  
(Angus Hall line stallion  
standing at Alabar NZ)

Canadian bred multiple Group One winner, leading trotting stallion in Australasia in recent years. Recording his best season in NZ in 2020/21 with seventy seven winners and \$2.157m in stakes making him leading trotting stallion and second only to Bettor's Delight on stakes; fourth behind Bettor's Delight, Art Major and American Ideal.

Now the sire of over two hundred and thirty winners of over 730 races in NZ, he was leading sire on races won by his four year olds with thirteen winners and leading five year old and older age group sire with stakes of \$1.599m and forty eight winners. The progeny of **Majestic Son** were the winners of eleven group or listed races during 2020/2021 season.

*A standout performer for Majestic Son in NZ last season was multiple group one winner and leading trotting stake earner...*

**SUNDEES SON, \$415,792, T1:56.4 (2200mM).**

Winner of seven races from eleven starts including four group ones – premier double of Dominion Hcp/Rowe Cup plus National Trot and ANZAC Cup. Other major victories were Lyell Creek Stakes, Ordeal/Canterbury Park Trotting Cups with seconds in NZ Trotting Championship, Waikato Mile.

*Other significant performers for Majestic Son were...*

**MAJESTIC MAN, T1:54.1**, Ashburton Trotters Mile, Cambridge Flying Stakes, Waikato Trotters Mile and in Australia, T1:53.5AUS, Dullard Cup, Aust Trotting Grand Prix, Menangle Miracle Mile Night Trotters Mile; **MAJESTIC LAVROS**, Kaikoura South Bay Cup.





## **Muscle Hill**

*(Valley Victory line stallion)*

The champion North American trotter who won twenty consecutive races after losing his first start and nine time Group One winner. Leading trotting sire on stakes basis past five seasons in North America and currently second on USTA Trotting sires earnings list to Chapter Seven in 2021 (\$5.690m as at mid-September). Leading sire of trotters in Sweden for three consecutive seasons 2017 – 2019 and well placed in Australia, third overall in current season to mid-September.

Second only to Majestic Son in 2020/21 season with earnings of \$1.375m and twenty seven winners, largest seasonal number of winners from limited numbers, he currently has produced over fifty winners of close to two hundred races in NZ as at mid-September. **Muscle Hill** was leading three and four year old trotting age group stake earning sire with figures of \$440k and \$704k respectively. His progeny collected twelve group or listed race wins during 2020/21, one more than Majestic Son.

*Among his standout performers during the 2020/21 season were a superb crop of young four year old trotters:*

**BOLT FOR BRILLIANCE, T1:56.4**, winner of nine of seventeen starts including NZSS/NZYSS – 3T (both run at four), Jewels Ruby, Trotters Classic.

*Greg and Nina Hope trained pair of...*

**MUSCLE MOUNTAIN, T1:57.0 (1980mM)**, winner of six of ten starts, NZ Trotting Championship. NZMTC Summer Trotting FFA and Midnight Dash, T1:57.9 (1980mM), NZSS Aged Trotters Classic; leading three year old.

**FIVE WISE MEN, T1:57.6**, winner of nine of eleven career starts including GN/NZ Trotters Derbies, Jewels Ruby, NZSS, Hambletonian.



## **Love You**

*(Coktail Jet line stallion)*

Champion European trotter and leading sire on stakes won basis in eleven different European nations, several on multiple occasions i.e. Germany (nine), Netherlands (seven), Switzerland (five), Sweden (three), France/Czech Republic (two) and premiership winning trotting sire in NZ in 2016/17 season.

Third to Majestic Son and Muscle Hill in 2020/21 season with earnings of \$670k and twenty six winners, his fourth equal highest total since being available to NZ breeders. **Love You** topped the two year old trotting list in the 2020/21 season with three winners and \$129,346 in stakes and led the three year old section with fourteen winners. Progeny of **Love You** collected six group or listed race wins during 2020/21, third behind Muscle Hill and Majestic Son. With limited numbers he has already produced over one hundred winners of over four hundred races in NZ. Currently in fourteenth place on stakes won basis in Australia for 2021 season.

*Among his leading performers during the 2020/21 season were classy two year old trotters:*

**HIGHGROVE, T1:57.1 (1700mM)**, winner of five of eight starts, Trotting Stakes, Harness Millions;

**OUTAMYWAY, T1:59.9 (1980mM)**, Harness Millions – 2T (run AT THREE)/3T;

**WANNA PLAY WITH ME, T1:57.5 (1980mM)**, NZSS Classique – 3fT.

*With trotting stallions of the calibre of these three nominees, the NZ trotting breed can only be improved further and faster than previously.*

*Note: All NZ stats as at 31 July 2021 (2020/2021 season).*



# NOMINEES FOR NZ PACING/TROTTING BROODMARES OF YEAR 2020/2021

PETER CRAIG

*The nominees for both the leading Pacing and Trotting Broodmare of the Year awards to be announced at the annual HRNZ Awards evening are outlined below.*

In looking at the nominees for the Broodmare of the Year Awards, it is important to consider the criteria under which such assessments are to be made - setting aside previous years achievements and considering only 2020/2021 seasonal NZ and Australian performances as a starting point - thinking about number of winning foals per mare, number of wins by those foals, Group race performances, stakes earned by starters and so on during the most recent season.

## LEADING PACING BROODMARES

**Christian Dreamer** (2007 Christian Cullen/Dreamy Atom; Kate by Highland Chief, U301) unraced seventh foal, qualified in 2:09.9, the reigning 2020 NZ Pacing Broodmare of Year and daughter of 2yo Pacing Filly of Year Dreamy Atom. Christian Dreamer and all her foals were bred by Vin and Daphne Devery. She is the dam of six live foals, all have raced with four being sub two minute winners, one achieving sub 1:50. Three of her foals raced in the latest season:

Two lightly raced non-winning colts, three year old **Special Dream** (\$600) and two year old **Power Up** (\$1,040), exported to Victoria.

Outstanding millionaire four year old mare **Amazing Dream**, winner of eight from sixteen NZ starts, five placings, 1:54.0 (1980mM, NZR Mares record), \$315,961 (leading four year old stake earning pacer), five group victories, Nevele R Fillies (run as 4yo), Auckland Cup, GN Breeders Stakes, Premier Mares Championship, Leefield Station Wines FFA; seconds Queen Of Hearts, NZ Breeders Stakes, Superstars; thirds Easter Cup, Messenger; fourth Taylor Mile, Jewels Diamond; fifth NZFFA. Placed outside first three on three occasions, the only surprising feature of her stellar season was not winning the three NZ Group One mares races. Her Australian campaign during the Queensland Winter carnival yielded wins in Rising Sun and Blacks A Fake, third in Golden Girl, all at Group One level, 1:54.9AUS (2138mM), A\$301,500.

Amazing Dream, last season's 3yo filly Pacer of Year is now a nominee for four year pacing mare and also a contender for Pacer/Horse of Year Awards due to her seasonal exploits. Christian Dreamer's other claim to fame is her first foal, (Lets) Chase The Dream, 1:53.2NZ, 1:49.9AUS, 1:50.2US, \$604,589, two year old colt or gelding of year, NZSS - 2c, Cardigan Bay Stakes and other minor winners in Catch the Dream and Dream Major.

**Star of Venus** (2004 Christian Cullen/Starlitnight; Mona R U307) - winner of two races and 1:53.0TT at Ashburton in March 2010. Star Of Venus and all her foals were bred by Reg Caldwell. She is the dam of eight foals, all have raced with six being sub two minute winners, five in sub 1:55 and two placed non-winners. Five of her foals raced in the most recent season:

**Star Of Memphis** (7yo), in Australia had seven starts for one placing, \$6,400. One race winner in NZ, fourteen AUS wins, 1:52.9AUS, \$140,240, now retired.

**Stars N Bars** (4yo), non-winner placed on three occasions from ten NZ four year starts and two placed runs from two Western Australian starts, \$7,135.

**The Morning Star** (3yo), two race, Addington winning three year old filly from eight starts, 1:58.8, \$15,190. She is the only filly produced to date by Star Of Venus.

**Star Casino** (2yo), third placed two year colt from five starts, \$2,160.

**Self Assured**, glamour millionaire five year old pacing gelding from Star Of Venus, in season 2020/2021 winner of six group races and placed on five occasions from twelve five year old starts including NZ/Easter Cups, Superstars (1:55.7, 1980mM, his seasons best), Canterbury/Rangiora Classics, Maurice Holmes Vase; seconds Ashburton Flying Stakes, Methven Cup, Waikato Flying Mile, NZMTC Summer Cup; third Leefield Station Wines FFA, \$464,562 seasonal earnings/leading 5yo and older stake earning pacer.



Self Assured is a nominee for five year old and older Pacing Entire or Gelding and also a contender for Pacer/Horse of Year Awards due to his seasonal exploits. Other winners from Star Of Venus include Star of Dionysis (twelve wins, 1:53.6AUS, \$118,149), Vega Star (twenty two wins, 1:50.3US, \$163,212) and Caviar Star (fourteen wins, 1:54.2AUS, \$357,112).

**Twist And Twirl** (2008 Artsplace/Giveitawhirlgirl; Jessie Pepper U4) – seven win mare (five NZ, two Australia) 1:59.3NZ, \$234,095, 1:55.9AUS, \$49,163, GN Oaks, NZSS – 3f. She was bred by Breckon Bloodstock with all her foals bred by Breckon Farms Ltd. Twist And Twirl is the dam of five live foals, four have raced for three winners, all in sub 1:57, one achieving 1:48.0. In the 2020/2021 season, just two of her foals raced with both being standout performers on either side of the Tasman:

**King Of Swing**, the six year old and reigning Grand Circuit champion, AUS Pacer/Harness Horse of the Year and double millionaire pacer currently leads the 2021 Australasian Pacing Gold Grand Circuit race series with 180 points (Amazing Dream second equal with Lochinvar Art, 100 points). The winner of thirteen races (ten Menangle, three Albion Park) with five placings from eighteen starts in the August 2020

– July 2021 period, 1:48.8, \$984,880 including multiple group races, Miracle Mile and Prelude (Schweppes Sprint), Blacks A Fake (2020), Kevin Robinson Memorial, Hyland Sportswear FFA, Sterling Graphic Design FFA, Lucky Creed, Mr Feelgood; seconds Victoria Cup, Sunshine Sprint; thirds Blacks A Fake (2021), Hunter Cup; six sub 1:50 wins at Menangle in latest season.

**Bettor Twist** was the highest earning three year old filly and overall highest stake earner in NZ in 2020/2021 with earnings of \$478,725, the result of eleven wins (seven group races) and three placings from sixteen starts including NZSS (1:52.1, Alexandra Park)/Caduceus Club – 2f (both run as 3yo), GN/NZ Oaks, Nevele R Fillies (also winner/second in heats), Jewels Diamond, Ladyship Stakes; seconds NZSS – 3f (also winner of two heats).

Bettor Twist is a nominee for three year old Pacing Filly and also a contender for Pacer/Horse of the Year Awards due to her dominant three year old filly season. Twist And Twirl's other winner was Extreme Stride, three two year old starts for a win and placing, 1:56.7, \$12,280 while filly Ballroom Beauty's four starts yielded no placed results, \$1,060.



## LEADING TROTTING BROODMARES

**Harriet Hughes** (2001 Sundon/Elish Mac; Pride of Lincoln N1) – winner of five races, T2:03.9, \$38,782, second NZSS – 3T, third NZ Trotters Derby. She was bred by Ivan McNicholl of Wellington. Harriet Hughes was the dam of six foals, all four to race are winners, three of them trotting in sub two minutes. Her only starter during the 2020/21 season was leading three year trotter **Five Wise Men**, T1:57.6, winner of nine of eleven career starts, five group races including GN/NZ Trotters Derbies, Jewels Ruby, NZSS, Hambletonian.

Other winning progeny of Harriet Hughes include three race winner **Bert Powell**, T2:05.9, \$28,664; open class trotter **Harriet Of Mot**, fifteen wins, T1:57.9, \$187,065, Southern Lights Trot (also second), Canterbury Park Trotting Cup, seconds Ashburton Trotters Mile, Methven Green Mile, thirds 4/5yo Trotting Championship, ANZAC Cup, overall NZR holder for 2600mM, T3:12.0, NZR 4yo+ mares 1950mM, T2:23.0; **Muscles Galore**, winner of six NZ races, T1:59.5, \$74,353, non-winner in Australia.

**Stardon** (1997 Sundon/Chiquita Dee; Brown Beard U310) – three race winner, T2:09.3, \$11,776. She and all her foals were bred by HRNZ Board member and Finance Chair/ NZSBA Chairman Colin Hair. Stardon is the dam of seven foals, three to have raced for two winners, one in T1:57.0. Apart from two win gelding **Latent**, T2:06.8, \$21,853, Stardon's other winner is 2019 Trotter of Year and Trotting Masters champion **Sundees Son**.

During the latest season six year old Sundees Son proved to be NZ trotting's standout performer with multiple group one victories and leading trotting stake earner, \$415,792, T1:56.4 (2200mM). The winner of seven races from eleven starts including four group ones – premier double of Dominion Hcp/Rowe Cup plus National Trot and ANZAC Cup. His other major group race victories were Lyell Creek Stakes, Ordeal/Canterbury Park Trotting Cups with seconds in NZ Trotting Championship and Waikato Mile.

Sundees Son set three NZ records during the 2020/21 season : overall trotter's records for 2200m mobile T2:39.1 Alexandra Park, 3200m stand T4:00.5 Addington and 4yo and older horses and geldings record for 2700m

mobile T3:20.3 Alexandra Park. He currently leads the 2021 Australasian Pacing Gold Trotting Masters race series with 200 points (Majestic Man 180 points, Bolt For Brilliance 120 points).

Sundees Son is a nominee for five year old and older Trotting Entire or Gelding and also a contender for Trotter/Horse of Year Awards due to his dominant seasonal exploits.

**Toomuch To Do** (1997 Britewell/Game Key; Lady Cabot U42) – winner of eleven races, T1:59.2, \$153,021, Canterbury Park Trotting Cup, ID Trotters heat winner and place getter, fourths in Dominion Hcp/Rowe Cup and NZ Trotting Championship. She was bred by Robin and Francis Schulz with a number of different breeders being responsible for her foals. Toomuch To Do is the dam of ten foals, five have raced for two winners and one placed non-winner. Three of her foals raced during the 2020/21 season:

**Toobusybeingfamous** (6yo), non-winner, placed once in five starts, \$2,138

**Miss Yo** (2yo filly), non-winner, unplaced in three starts, \$1,783

**Bolt For Brilliance**, classy four year old trotter bred by NZSBA Executive Manager Brad Reid, T1:56.4, leading stake earner for his age group, \$269,505, winner of nine of seventeen starts, four at group level including NZSS/NZYSS – 3T (both run at four), Jewels Ruby, Trotters Classic. During the latest season he set three NZ records : overall Trotters record for 2200m stand T2:44.0 Alexandra Park which reduced his own T2:44.6 from earlier in the season, 2200m mobile T2:39.6 Alexandra Park subsequently reduced to T2:39.1 by Sundees Son.

Bolt For Brilliance, previously two year old colt or gelding trotter of year is a nominee for four year old Trotting Entire or Gelding and also a contender for Trotter/Horse of Year Awards as a result of his latest seasonal performances.

Toomuch To Do's other winning trotter was **Hey Yo**, victorious on eight occasions in NZ, T2:02.0, \$101,268, two VIC wins, T2:01.5AUS, A\$51,220, second Maori Mile; thirds Waikato Trotters Mile, Great Southern Star, George Gath; fourths Lyell Creek Stakes, Dullard Cup; fifths Ashburton Trotters Mile and Banks Peninsula Trotting Cup (twice).

**Everyone will have their favourites and cases can be made for all nominees under either Pacing or Trotting Broodmare categories. Who would you choose?**

**The 2020/2021 season Pacing/Trotting Broodmares of the Year will be revealed in mid-October.**





# Royal Aspirations

t2,1:56.5; p3,1:59.2. 18 wins from 2 to 6 years

\$313,775 1:56.5f (Monarchy - Aspiring Gal - Sundon) BH (2009) 16hh

## **A stunning individual with a wonderful pedigree and now a 'Rising Star' sire!**

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• 2YO Jewels wnr • 3YO Sires Stakes wnr • 2 & 3YO Sales Series wnr!

### Royal Aspirations

Many glowing reports are coming in from around the stables. Royal Aspirations looks to have a huge future as a sire!

As at 1/7/21 he is the leading fresh semen sire of 3-year-olds... with just 4 foals in this crop.



**Royal Del** 3 wins at 3yrs | \$26,650



**Royal Pride** 3 wins at 3yrs | \$33,790

**Royal Aspirations had a "motor" that could break opponents hearts!**

### Contact: Phoebe Standardbreds

49 Larcombs Road, Broadfield

Grant Beckett: Phone: 021 160 1080

Email: grantanddi@amuri.net www.phoebestud.co.nz

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# Phoebe Stud's phone is ringing hot

Brad Reid



For the last few seasons Grant Beckett has been putting to use four generations of stockman experience and working the land in North Canterbury and trying his hand at standing stallions.

While he admits to some frustrations and associated with trying to 'change the narrative' around colonial and non-commercial stallions, Beckett says he has enjoyed it so far and is expecting his best year yet.

"The pre pay bookings have been really strong this year and while you would always love more, its fair to say I am well ahead of where I have been this time in previous years," he said.

It's been nine years since **Royal Aspirations** lit up Cambridge with a 1:56.5 mile rate in the two-year-old Ruby and only the great Monbet has ever threatened that New Zealand record in the years since.

He was a serious race horse winning over \$300,000 and given he has a stallion's pedigree with his maternal roots tracing back to Roydon Gal, it shouldn't come as any surprise he is punching well above his weight in the competitive trotting market.

**"He's lovely to handle and a cracking individual who broke four New Zealand records as a racehorse."**

"His semen is very good and we've had some success getting tricky mares in foal to him and by all reports his semen travels well too," said Phoebe Stud principal Grant Beckett.

**Royal Aspirations** is starting to make his presence felt in trotting races around Canterbury with three of the four from his first crop having greeted the starter.

"It's frustrating because I don't think he could have done anything more from his first crop but some breeders are still wanting to see more. But he's sixth on the three-year-old

## **Royal Aspirations**

sires list and only a fraction behind Majestic Son which is pretty bloody good from only four foals," said Beckett.

Two of that first crop are **Royal Pride** (Diedrez Pearl) and **Royal Del** (Commander Del) who have lined up in the three-year-old trotting classics and raced with some distinction.

The pair were 5th and 9th respectively in the Hambletonian won by Five Wise Men earlier in the year and have gone on to fashion some solid results for their sire.

**Royal Del** has won four races and placed a further 10 times and has picked up over \$30,000 in stakes.

**Royal Pride** went amiss in Auckland after contesting the Northern Trotting Derby and Sires Stakes final but has managed to win three races and place on five occasions for over \$30,000 in stakes also. He is due back at the races shortly, this time for North Island trainer, Arna Donnelly.

Three of his 12 two-year-olds qualified this season and while none have greeted the starter just yet, it is only a matter of time before we see a few of them according to trainer Fletcher.

"Both **Sunny Louis** and **Game Aspiration** are really nice two-year-olds and with any luck will be better than both the three year old's. Nicky Chilcott has a nice one up in the North Island who should be at the races in the near future," said Fletcher.

"I especially like **Sunny Louis** who is out of a full sister to Sunny Ruby. We didn't pull the ear plugs on him and he was about eight seconds under the qualifying time.

"I've had a few people contact me asking me whether they would send a Sundon mare to him and my answer is always yes if it were my horse."



**Sunny Louis** is bred on a 3 x 2 reverse sex cross to Sundon which would put a lot of people off perhaps, but Fletcher sees it differently.

"It comes down to temperament and we know he had a big heart, and all his stock have a beautiful nature. We have a breed here of an outside client that I have been involved with for a number of years and to be fair the mares aren't the nicest to deal with. But the foals by him out of this breed are all wonderful to do anything with," said Fletcher.

**Imperial Count** is another trotting stallion standing at Phoebe Stud and like his stable mate, is probably another with bigger things to come as some of his better crops come through.

**Imperial Count** produced 10 live foals when first made available to New Zealand breeders back in 2014 and of those now six year olds, the likes of Group One placed **Monaro Mia** (16 wins, 32 placings, \$236,507), Group One performed **Phoebe Imperial** (8 wins, 12 placings, \$86,000) and **Imperial Whiz** (19 wins, 29 placings, \$191,666) have done remarkably well given the quality and quantity of the mares he had received that first year.

In Australia he has done a fine job and has the Group One winner **Keayang Livana** (12 wins, 6 placings, \$166,000) flying the flag for the son of Angus Hall.

**Count** only has the one three year old in race winner **Monaro Mako**, a full sister to **Monaro Mia**.

He has crops of 10 two year olds (one qualified), 16 yearlings and 11 foals coming through and served a book of 20 mares last term.

"There's no doubt that he has clicked with a large range of New Zealand bred mares. He was a serious serious race horse and I think breeders underestimate that as well.

**"His nature is honestly unbelievable, he's just like a pet pony," said Beckett.**

As a racehorse the "Laid back" son of Angus Hall was a serious proposition, winning \$680k with 17 wins from two to five, many of these in the highly competitive Ontario Sires Stakes program at 2 and 3.

One of his best performances was actually a second in an OSS Final to Mr Herbie. "**Count**" left the outside of the gate to lead in an opening 26.4 first quarter, created all the fractions and although well beaten set up the 1.52 World Record for Mr Herbie.

This crop was strong and included Broad Bahn, Chapter Seven, Manofmanymissions and Dejarmbro, all of these competitors have gone on to be successful at stud.

Beckett says "at 15.2h and with his wonderful temperament and ability to "stamp" his progeny it is no surprise that he is leaving 2yr olds and tough horses that try hard and thrive on racing".

The trainers are loving their no nonsense, willing to learn attitudes and another good sign, he says, the guys who have them already are coming back for more.

**Locharburn** enters his third season at stud with the derby winning son of Christian Cullen doing his best to get some traction and desperately needs some numbers to help his cause.

It's not easy for any domestic stallion to get going in New Zealand without the state sponsored breeding initiatives we see in Australia, however Beckett hopes that this season will be his best yet in the breeding shed.

"I'm pretty lucky with my three stallions in that they are all great natured and I'm not just saying that," he said.

"About the only thing I can fault with Locharburn is that he is sometimes in a mad rush to get on the dummy mare," he laughed.

The maternal family of Locharburn has only solidified since his retirement with his Washington VC dam Suzy's Delight throwing some really nice horses.

Full brother Cullenburn has just resumed racing after a 10 month layoff and is very much a quality pacer having won a Group 2 in Australia and been three times placed at Group & listed level here before crossing the ditch.

Three year old half-brother Franco Stefan (Bettor's Delight) won a race earlier in the year for Ken Barron and is yet to resume this season having had the six race days for a further placing.

Suzy's Delight had the distinction of producing a \$215,000 yearling sales purchase for her vendors Helen Conaghan and Spreydon Lodge with the Vincent colt securing a mammoth result for the debut sire at the sales.

**Locharburn** has nine live foals with most of his support thus far coming from the Chapman family who have obvious sentimental ties to the horse with Kevin having trained him for all but his first five starts.

He has produced a colt out of Presidential Ball mare, Twilight Rascal who from only three foals of racing age has produced three qualifiers and some handy types.

**Locharburn already has a prepaid booking to a Group One winning Soky's Atom mare so the tide may be turning for the son of Christian Cullen.**

Heroes Square (Art Major | 4 starts | 3 wins) was showing huge potential for the Dunns before going amiss and Chapman has just won consecutive races with the promising two-year old half-brother Beach Ball (Somebeachsomewhere, 5 starts, 3 wins, 2 placings).

Her only other foal of racing age is from the Rocknroll Hanover mare Rock Me Gently who has also produced a Locharburn colt for the Chapman family.

"I'm very happy with the colts I have by him," said Kevin Chapman, former trainer of Locharburn.

"They're nice foals that have a bit of size about them. Three of the ones I have got have a bit of a white strip down the face like he had. They're very good natured like he was and he still is to be fair, he's such a gentleman and that is coming through in his stock," he said.





# Imperial Count

t2,1:57.2; t3,1:55.3; t4,1:53.4; t5,1:54.4h. 17 wins at 2, 3, 4 & 5yo

\$680,392 1:53.2f (Angus Hall - Miss Imperial - Imperial Victory) B.H.(2008) 15.2hh

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# HERO programme proving a winner off the track | David DiSomma

Animal welfare is a core pillar of harness racing, and the public rightly demands that horses are cared for properly once their racing days end.

Leading the way are schemes like the flagship **HERO** programme. It's already making great progress in the South Island, with plans to expand nationwide.

**HERO** stands for Harness Education and Rehoming Opportunities. It started in Australia, and such was its success that Harness Racing New Zealand followed suit two years ago.

"We are all about matching horses with their forever homes," says Georgie Bolton, HRNZ's Education and Training Co-Ordinator, who heads the **HERO** programme.

"We have already had a lot of success stories, and plan to have a lot more in the years to come."

The **HERO** programme is all about helping standardbreds transition from their old lives. During their racing careers most have never been ridden before. In the **HERO** programme they are broken to saddle, then united with new owners for their Life After Racing (LAR).

"We are all about showcasing the breed to the wider equestrian scene," says Bolton, "and that includes all types of sport horses, happy hackers, trekkers – they are such versatile horses and their natures generally are very relaxed and family friendly."

"We are all about quality not quantity but we think it's going to be sustainable to have 15 horses go through the programme a year."

There are certain stipulations as to who's eligible for the programme.

There are no colts or stallions, horses must be 4 to 12 years

old, of good conformation and temperament, and be recently retired from racing.

Horses are usually in the programme for around two months, before they are re-homed. Not only are they broken into saddle, but some learn to jump, and embrace new tricks, like cowboy challenge. **HERO** horses are exposed to a range of situations prior to being sold to ensure they are ready for their new role.

Thanks to a support act, including Seahorse Supplements, Fiona Gillies (NRM and McMillan Equine Feeds), Lillian Bonner (bodyworker) and Josh Whittaker (equine dentist), all horses are thoroughly examined and treated in preparation for their LAR journey.

*“We are all about showcasing the breed to the wider equestrian scene... they are such versatile horses and their natures generally are very relaxed and family friendly.”*

Georgie Bolton

"They must be saleable at the end of their education," says Bolton, "and we have to be confident they are ready for their new environments, wherever they are."

After graduating horses are then sold to their carefully-vetted new owners. Prices do vary but a starting point is usually around \$1000.

"It's two-fold why we charge for the horses," says Bolton, "the money is channelled back into the **HERO** programme to help cover our costs. And experience tells us people are much more likely to look after something if they have had to pay for it."

HRNZ is the major **HERO** funder, and they are committed to it long term – animal welfare is a top priority for the sport.

So far there have been more than a dozen **HERO** "graduates" – some were unraced, some were proven performers like 11-win trotter Bordeaux, or Dusky Eyre, who won eight races, and Swamp Major (5).

Another graduate Dr Cliff has caught the attention of some of the best in the business. He, for instance, has been ridden and schooled by New Zealand's leading dressage rider Melissa Galloway.

"That just goes to show the calibre of horses that are coming out of the programme," says Bolton

Another is Love Watching, an unraced four-year-old, who was reserve champion at the Winter Dressage Series in Marlborough.

"And that was against all the non-standardbreds," says Bolton.

The current **HERO** educators are Hannah Keetly and Monique Koch in Southland, and Ginny McKenzie, Anna Bryant, Tarryn Jones, and Chanelle Dickie (all in Canterbury).

"All our educators are based in the South Island right now but we are branching out, there are plans to get into the North Island very soon, later this year in fact."

The programme is regularly updated on social media and on the HRNZ website.

Among the number of hashtags that have proved popular are:

**#notallheroswearcapes,**  
**#brandshavenoboundaries** and  
**#retirednotrescued.**

For more information about **HERO** contact:

Georgie Bolton

Education & Training Co-ordinator

Tel +64-3-964-1200 ext 844

Email [georgie@hrnz.co.nz](mailto:georgie@hrnz.co.nz)



# HERO

Harness Education & Re-homing Opportunities



## What is HERO

- HERO is a rehoming and re-educating programme designed to showcase the standardbred breed to the wider equine industry.
- Initially launched by HRV in 2015 and adopted by HRNZ in 2020.
- HERO is established in Canterbury and Southland and will launch in the Northern region in the 21/22 season.
- Horses are selected for HERO based on age, temperament, conformation, and soundness.
- Horses are placed with a professional educator for approximately 8 weeks.
- Horses will be schooled to a high level showcasing their versatility as a pleasure and competition horse.
- Upon completion of their education the HERO horse will then be offered for sale with all proceeds returning to the HERO programme.



## Eligibility for the HERO Programme

To enter the HERO programme horses must meet the following criteria:

- 4-12 years of age
- Sound
- Good conformation
- Good temperament
- No stallions / colts

## Industry benefits of HERO

- HRNZ's own pro-active life after racing scheme.
- Promoting animal welfare and an industry approach of the importance of life after racing initiatives.
- Showcasing the versatility of the Standardbred breed to both the industry and the wider equestrian scene.
- Strong social media following already promoting the NZ Harness Racing Industry in a positive light.
- Providing an alternative pathway for retired standardbreds.



## HERO Educators

The HERO programme prides itself on employing professional riders to educate our horses and give them the best start to their life after racing journey.

**For more info or if you have a suitable horse for the HERO programme please contact either:**

### Georgie Bolton

HERO Manager | Harness Racing NZ  
Ph 03-740-0958 | Mob 027-309-1756  
Email Georgie@hrnz.co.nz  
Mail PO Box 459 | Christchurch 8140

### Natalie Gameson

HERO Co-Ordinator | Harness Racing NZ  
Ph 03-964-1193 | Mob 021-936-155  
Email Natalie@hrnz.co.nz  
Mail PO Box 459 | Christchurch 8140

**Follow our HERO horses progress on our Facebook and Instagram pages**

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# Macca Lodge gears up for another busy breeding season | JONNY TURNER

**Four generations combine to form the driving force behind Macca Lodge's success and its vital position as one of New Zealand's most important standardbred breeding studs.**

Husband and wife Brent and Sheree McIntyre and son Caine are gearing up for their 14th season this spring, operating their 600-acre property near Riversdale in Northern Southland

Macca Lodge will serve up to 350 broodmares this season with up to 250 to foal at the stud, positioning it as a vital supplier of New Zealand's future racehorses.

Though Brent admits working out exactly how many mares will come through the gate this spring is a tricky task.

**"It is a bit of a rollercoaster leading into the stud season,"** Brent said.

**"The Southland way is to not book your mare in until you have to, so we never know exactly what might be coming through the gate."**

**"All of the breeders going to the sales have their mares booked in to stallions months in advance."**

**"But a lot of the other Southland breeders often don't decide what they're going to until their mares foal."**

**"It doesn't worry us at all, we are happy to accommodate anyone that wants to breed a horse, that's for sure."**

**"It just means making the odd phone call, which I have been put in charge of."**

Brent is now positioned as chief phone call taker as part of a changing of the guard at Macca.

Son Caine has been part of the business since the McIntyres took over what was Charlie and Ailsa Smaill's Jaccka Lodge in 2008.

Caine has upskilled along the way and now oversees the running of the farm's breeding shed.

That includes the important role of A.I'ing mares.

**"Caine runs the breeding barn, he is the future and I am the past,"** Brent said.

**"We work in together, I'm the overseer and the phone call taker."**

**"There is plenty to do, we have the whole farm to run."**

**"We train a few and we have young stock that we look after all year round."**

**"I'm not an office person, I like to be hands-on so I am still working with the horses but Caine is in charge of the breeding operation."**

**"He's good at it, he's built up his skills and now he knows the breeding game inside out."**

Caine and brother-in-law Paul Hailes bred Australian Group One winner Boots Electric.

The Somebeachsomewhere pacer was developed at Macca before being sold in a big-money deal stitched together by agent Garrick Knight.

Group One success is not the only result of family combining for success at Macca Lodge.

The entire running of the operation is built on it.

In terms of seniority the team is headed by Graeme and Heather McIntyre, Brent's parents.

Aged 89 and 84 respectively, the couple do the airport run to pick up chilled semen in Invercargill – a round trip of around two and a half hours.

**"Graeme and Heather still do the semen run, they love it,"** Sheree said

**"They take baking down to the staff at the airport, they've got to know them and they have the boxes there ready for them."**

**"All of the family pitch in over the stud season – it is a real family operation."**

**"Our daughter Lauren and son-in-law Paul help out when we are busy."**

**"Even our 11-year-old grandson Zac helps out too, he is like Caine's shadow at times."**

**"We all pull together to make everything work."**



Staff assist the McIntyre family in keeping the wheels at Macca Lodge turning, which includes a 24-hour foal watch.

A long stud season and the complications of working around the added pressures of COVID adding more time to Australian semen deliveries will put the team to the test again this spring.

But with everyone pitching in the team enjoy the ride.

**"There are some long days and it can be a long season when you get to the end of it,"** Caine said.

**"But everyone helps out and we get the job done."**

**One of the highlights on that ride is the friendships made with clients.**

**"One of the best parts is the great friends we have made along the way,"** Sheree said.

**"A lot of our clients either were our friends or have become great friends of ours since we started running the stud."**

**"We have met a lot of great people and they are right across the country and overseas."**

**"Seeing their horses do well is a big thrill for us and it's great to be able to catch up with everyone at the races."**

The Macca Lodge team head into the new season buoyed by the early success of their freshman sire Fear The Dragon.

The outcross stallion is currently ranked ninth on the North American sires table behind some of the established heavyweights of the stallion ranks.

**"He has made a great start in North America and hopefully New Zealand breeders catch on to that,"** Brent said.

**"It's early enough in the season up there and Dragon Lady has 100k in the bank and she's a really nice filly."**

**"They sold really well as yearlings up there, Dragon Lady was the highest priced filly at the Ohio sale and the top-priced colt was by Fear The Dragon, as well."**

**"The breeders here have been rapt with him, he leaves very athletic types that are well put together."**

**"We supported him a lot in his first year and we have broken a few of his foals in now."**

**"They want to work with you and they were born to pace so we are pretty excited about him."**

**"There is plenty of talk about what stallions are coming through, I hope the breeders are picking up on what he's doing because he deserves a good crack this year."**

The McIntyres plan to back Fear The Dragon with some of their best mares.

Asajah, the Christian Cullen dam of the Macca Lodge bred Queen Shenandoah, a two-time Group One placegetter in New Zealand, who has won 14 races, mostly in Perth, is among them.

Also going to the rookie sire is Delightful Image.

A new recruit to the Macca broodmare band, she is a Bettor's Delight daughter of Imagine Me from the Scuse Me family.

Macca Lodge will breed 22 pacing and six trotting mares this season with their broodmare band to leave a mixture of yearling sales types and breed to race types that the team will get going themselves.

The stud has enjoyed excellent results by selling going horses with Perth Group One winner Balcatherine heading the list of exports.

Among their broodmares is the dam of another West Australian star in Wildwest.

Wildwest is by Macca Lodge's resident sire Raging Bull, who will again stand at stud this season.

The stallion offer breeders a value option this season having proven he can leave a smart horse and stands at just \$2000.

En Solitaire, who served champion mare One Over Kenny and left a well put together filly, also returns.

Panscpacificflight, who just keeps leaving winners will be available by frozen semen and Net Ten EOM is also available.





# GETTING TO KNOW LLOWALONG FARMS



LLOWALONG  
FARMS

The naming of it goes to the core of who I am. Being a vet is not just what I do, it is who I am. And this would never have been possible without the support of my Grandfather and World War II veteran Jack Adams.

Without him I would never have had the opportunity to study Veterinary Science at the University of Sydney.

## Have you heard of Llowalong Farms?

If you have not, this could be the reason why.

Llowalong Farms is an expansion of the Northern Rivers Equine Veterinary Clinic that many more may be familiar with.

The head of the newly branded operation Dr. Kath McIntosh gave Breeding Matters readers some insight into this side of her business:

Started in 2009, Northern Rivers Equine Veterinary Clinic has grown from just myself in a car to the clinic and facilities that you now know in Kyabram Victoria, boasting three full-time vets servicing all aspects of equine work as well as breeding.

Since 2017, the stud component of Northern Rivers Equine has grown and flourished into the world class facilities that are now present with a world class stallion line up available to NZ breeders.

This line-up includes:

- **Poster Boy** – The Australian champion from Australian Broodmare of the Year and all-American bred son of siring sensation Somebeachsomewhere;
- **Pastor Stephen** – an impeccably bred, million dollar-earning stallion and trotting sensation in Europe and the US – providing fresh chilled semen this year.

With the addition of the quality Woodlands Stud Australia stallion line up which is spear-headed by the master sire American Ideal, speed sensation and world record holder Lather Up and the globetrotting young sire Speeding Spur we will stand, in total, 8 supreme quality stallions for the 2021 season.

The veterinary clinic and stud complement each other perfectly, however, to enable each business to prosper and grow to their full potential it makes good sense to separate the two entities and hence Llowalong Farms is born with Northern Rivers Equine Vet Clinic continuing to function as normal.

What is the origin of Llowalong Farms?

Poster Boy



With his early influence as a successful farmer and involvement with cattle and racehorses, his unwavering support and the support of my parents, his fine example of work ethic and passion for life, I was able to have the opportunity to become the veterinarian I had always dreamed to be.

Llowalong is the name of one of my Grandfather's farms in Gippsland that I spent so much time at growing up.

His property had beautiful undulating land split by a meandering creek bed and majestic 100-year-old red gum trees.

Llowalong speaks of hard work and sacrifice, it speaks of history and family beginnings and now with my husband Luke and two girls Heidi and Georgia, I hope to continue this heritage through Llowalong Farms from our current base in Kyabram.

With a unique skillset and knowledge unrivalled in the standardbred stud space in Australia, as well as a drive and passion to assist in growing the Harness Racing Industry, we as Llowalong Farms, look forward to leading Victoria and indeed Australia and New Zealand, into the breeding arena long into the future.

I look forward to having you all join us for the journey!

Regards,

Dr. Kath McIntosh







LLOWALONG  
—FARMS—

BAY HORSE  
16 HANDS



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- The USTA Two Year Old Trotting Colt of his Year.
- Full Brother to Father Patrick - both Two and Three Year Old Trotting Colt of the Year.
- His Dam is a half sister to Chocolatier - Two Year Trotting Colt of the Year.
- Pastor Stephen sired over 160 winners in Europe including nine millionaires [European currency] before resuming a Stud career in USA in 2021 - serving a Full Book of 140 mares.

“ He was a really good gaited colt, easy horse to be around and to race. He was top three of his Class as a three year old. ” Jimmy Takter / Trainer

Pastor Stephen is ideally suited to mares of the Valley Victory and Garland Lobell sireline and in New Zealand this includes mares by the champion sire Majestic Son.

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# BETTING LINE

BETTOR'S DELIGHT- HEATHER'S WESTERN-WESTERN HANOVER  
p,2,1:51.8; 3,1:47.4 (\$2,238,518)

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24 IN 1:55 AND EARNINGS OF \$1.4 MILLION

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# EMPIRE STALLIONS offer royal line-up | Joshua Smith

**Empire Stallions is offering an exciting line-up this year which will capture the eye of many New Zealand breeders.**

The Victoria operation will once again stand exciting stallions **Betting Line**, **Captaintreacherous**, **Stay Hungry**, and exciting new addition **Tall Dark Stranger**.

"In our stallion line-up of four horses we have two Somebeachsomewhere sons and two Bettor's Delight sons," Empire Stallions General Manager David James said.

"We have chosen carefully and have limited ourselves to just the four horses."

**Excitement is surrounding Betting Line after he made an immediate impact on the track, becoming the leading juvenile sire in Australia with his first crop.**

"He is the leading two-year-old sire in Australia from his very first crop, with 18 winners," James said.

"**Betting Line** has had 42 two-year-old starters here in Australia, more than any other stallion.

"He is already a Group One sire here in Australia, with My Ultimate Levi (Gr.1 Albion Park Gold Final - Brisbane APG Sales Graduates, 1660m).

"He is off to a terrific start and there is more to come, with a very good crop to follow next season."

James said he is also making waves in North America.

"He has a very high percentage of starters to foals. In his very first crop in the US last year he had over 90 starters from 120 foals, with 46 winners," he said.

James has received positive reports from trainers and breakers alike about the great constitution of **Betting Line's** progeny.

"The trainers have been very impressed with the **Betting Lines**," he said.

"They are great gaited with lovely



**Betting Line**

manners, and that's where these starters are coming from.

"They are very easy to break-in and are very athletic, they are just nice individuals."

James has also been pleased with the way **Betting Line's** progeny have been received at the yearling sales.

"I would call his yearling sales (results) 'solid'," James said. "They have been well accepted in the sales ring. They are lovely looking individuals."

"Most of them are a dark colour and he stamps them, he is a dark colour himself. They all seem to have one white fetlock. They look like **Betting Line**, they are appealing."

**Betting Line** was a standout racehorse himself and James hasn't been surprised by the precocious types he is leaving.

"He was a double World Champion and was a three-year-old pacing colt of the year and Horse of the Year," he said.

"He won 20 of 27 lifetime starts and earned more than \$2.2 million in stakes."

"He was a major factor in every race he entered. He won the Little Brown Jug. He was an outstanding horse."

"He is extremely well-bred being by Bettor's Delight out of Heather's Western, a terrific mare who won \$173,000."

"As with any Bettor's Delights, they get better as they get older. I think they will race on for a long time."

**Betting Line is available via frozen semen for a fee of \$7,500 + GST.**

**Empire Stallions has also welcomed back exciting young stallion Captaintreacherous.**

"He is doing a sensational job in Australia, New Zealand, and in America," James said.

"He was Australia's leading first season sire last season with 41 individual two-year-old winners from 56 starters."

"Tough Tilly would be his best performer last season at two along with Treachery. Those colts and fillies are just getting started right now."

"He is North America's leading money-winning sire from his first three crops to race, with more than \$33 million."

"He has only got three crops racing in America to date, and only two crops currently racing here in Australia and New Zealand."

In New Zealand, **Captaintreacherous** has been well-represented by his first crop, including Group One winners It's All About Faith and Montana DJ, and Group One performer Hot And Treacherous.

Taking into account his limited book in Australasia, James said **Captaintreacherous'** results on the track are even more impressive.

"What people have to remember is there are not a lot of them. He doesn't have 150 to 200 foals," he said.

"The syndicate has limited **Captaintreacherous** to 120 mares served in Australia and New Zealand combined."

"Generally he is breeding around 50 to 60 a year in New Zealand and a similar number in Australia. He is getting tremendous results from a light number of foals."

**Captaintreacherous is available via frozen semen for a fee of \$22,000 + GST.**

**EMPIRE**  
STALLIONS (NZ)





**Sophomore stallion Stay Hungry will welcome his first southern hemisphere foals this year and James has been taken by his first crop in North America ahead of their yearling sales later this year.**

"His foals are magnificent. His first crop will sell in North America come October and November," James said.

"They are lovely individuals. I have seen quite a few videos so far and a lot of photographs. They are terrific. I would be looking for good results from a moderately priced stallion.

"He has been very well received in the US, and very well received here as well."

The O'Brien two-year-old pacing colt of the year in 2017, **Stay Hungry** has an impressive resume on the track, backed-up by a rich pedigree.

"He was a sensational horse," James said.

"He won the Breeders Crown, the Messenger Stakes, Cane Pace, the Bluegrass Stakes, all at two, and he came back to be exceptional at three.

"What a pedigree he has as well. Not too many dams (My Little Dragon) have \$2.5 million in earnings.

"I love the look of him. He is 15.3-1/2 hands and he is a magnificent individual himself.

"He is a lovely horse to handle."

**Stay Hungry is available via frozen semen for a fee of \$5,500 + GST.**

**Completing Empire Stallions line-up this season is exciting new acquisition Tall Dark Stranger.**

The son of Bettor's Delight was a sensation on the track and James holds high hopes for the new season sire.

"Arguably he is the best Bettor's Delight ever and in my opinion he is," James said.

"His dam was an Art Major two-year-old filly of the year who won more than \$800,000.

"**Tall Dark Stranger** himself was a two-year-old, three-year-old, all-aged, and Horse of the Year at three.

"One stat I really like about the horse is that he won 19 of his 22 starts, and a little over \$2 million.

"He is a magnificent looking horse and was a \$350,000 yearling. I have high hopes for **Tall Dark Stranger**. I think he is one of the best horses (to stand in Australasia) in the last 10 years."

**Tall Dark Stranger** has already made a flying start in North America, attracting a high-end book of mares.

"In the US, his first season book would be the best book of mares I have ever seen a stallion get. His first crop will be spectacular," James said.

"His fertility is exceptional. He follows in the footsteps of Bettor's Delight in that regard. He is in the 90-percent range of mares in foal in his first season in America."

**Tall Dark Stranger** also has a limited book in the southern hemisphere and James said he has already received solid support from Australasian breeders.

"We have had sensational enquiries and contracts with **Tall Dark Stranger**," James said.

"We are under restrictions here. There are 125 breedings available in the two countries.

"We only have a small number of bookings left. There are a lot of fillies and mares that retire during the breeding season so we will do our best to keep a breeding available for that. We will always have a breeding for a very good mare."

**Tall Dark Stranger is available via frozen semen for a fee of \$18,000 + GST.**

While all four of Empire's stallions are offered via frozen semen, James said the farm has a great fertility rate with the added benefit of no semen transport fees.

"We have between 78 and 88 percent in-foal with frozen semen," James said.

"We don't have any semen delivery costs. The semen is always on-hand wherever the semen is going in advance of the mare getting there at the semen bases.

"With all the (transport) problems that they are having this year with COVID, our semen is already at every semen base.

**We are also the only stud in the southern hemisphere that provides breeders with a full cash refund of the service fee if their mare fails to have a live foal after they pay the stud fee.**

**EMPIRE**  
STALLIONS (NZ)





# TALL DARK STRANGER

BETTOR'S DELIGHT-PRECOCIOUS BEAUTY-ART MAJOR

p,2,1:49.2; 3,1:47.2 (\$2,020,195)

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3YO PACING COLT OF THE YEAR

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# Vale Peter Binnie | January 1st 1939 – April 10th 2021

On the 10th of April, Peter Terence Binnie passed away and with it Harness Racing lost one of its great pioneering administrators and passionate supporters.

**Peter Binnie was a man who for the best part of four decades was very much entrenched in all aspects of Harness Racing.**

Binnie was a well-known breeder and owner in the harness racing fraternity and on more than one occasion topped the yearling sale in Christchurch with his offerings, same said for the best presented award.

Binnie is remembered as someone who was incredibly passionate with his ideas for our sport and incredibly generous with his time. Naturally, this led to volunteering for administrative roles in racing where he spent a significant amount of time with a kindred spirit in that sense, Tony Abell.

"Peter was an enthusiastic former Chairman and member of the New Zealand Standardbred Breeders Association and he was there with me at the original meeting," said Abell.

"I was a steward on the New Zealand Metropolitan Trotting Club when Peter got the job of being President of the Canterbury Standardbred Breeders which in turn became the role of the New Zealand Standardbred Breeders Association in 1974. I became his Vice President and together we formed an effective team," he said.

Abell describes the working relationship as a good cop bad cop scenario, whereby Peter was unapologetically direct in his message, often leaving Tony as the man to smooth things over with officialdom.

"Peter was the right sort of man for the job. He was blunt and to the point and didn't mind ruffling feathers to get what needed to be done, done. I had the job of sort of interpreting him to The Met and other officialdom.

"After the meetings were over we would be sitting in the car arguing with each other about what we were going to do next, but it was a great working relationship and together



we achieved a lot," said Abell.

The annals of the Inter Dominion Hall Of Fame website might best sum up the working relationship of the duo in referencing the commitment and dedication to the cause:

It is common knowledge within the harness racing fraternity of New Zealand that the flourishing NZ Standardbred Breeders' Association might never have got off the ground but for the foresight, initiative and energy shown in the late 1960s and early 1970s by Abell and his close associate Peter Binnie, also of Canterbury. In the face of some stern opposition from die-hards who resisted their efforts to establish an appropriate body to govern the blossoming breeding industry around those years, Abell and Binnie eventually won the day.

"When he set the Breeders Association up, there was quite a clear disconnect between the establishment and the breeders themselves. The initiative to set it up was probably more from the yearling sales vendors than anybody else but at the same time, breeders generally speaking had an axe to grind and didn't have the relevant platform to have their voices heard," said Abell.

Binnie's ability to play the frontman role was key in seeing a number of other initiatives and ideas come to fruition under his leadership.

*“Peter was the right sort of man for the job. He was blunt and to the point and didn't mind ruffling feathers to get what needed to be done, done.”*  
Tony Abell

"Peter wasn't necessarily the ideas man," said Abell.

"He was brilliant at taking ideas and concepts and getting them over the line."

Abell points to the DB Fillies Series as his case in point.

"They didn't think the public would bet on three-year-old-fillies races for a start, let alone a series. That was a huge obstacle in itself. We then had the other major stumbling block in the sponsor itself," he said.

Such were the times with 'The Met' being a Lion club, the very idea of accepting sponsorship from another brewery was almost sacrilege.



# “Death comes to all, but great achievements build a monument which shall endure until the sun grows cold.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Max Bowden was instrumental in securing the sponsorship because he was very close with Sir Henry Kelleher, the owner of DB Breweries.

“When they saw we had a close relationship with Sir Henry it made them take us pretty seriously and once we were close, Peter and I were able to get across the line in the face of apparent limitation,” said Abell.

As history would suggest, the DB Fillies Series was a roaring success and having just run its 43rd edition this year under the banner of the Nevele R Fillies Series, it's safe to say there are many more instalments to come in what is now a time honoured race.

Abell also credits Binnie's work with having achieved the inception of the New Zealand Standardbred Breeders Stakes which next year will see the 50th running of the race.

The 1973 edition consisted of seven mares and three fillies competing for the prize, all of whom were invited to the race. The three filly invitees were issued to the winners of the Great Northern, Southland and New Zealand Oaks. Something that previous programming allowed for!

With the race organised by the Canterbury Park Trotting Club and the New Zealand Standardbred Breeders Association together with input from various stud masters, the spirit of cooperation between the three parties was a pleasing feature of the fixture.

Ten stallion services were donated with a draw held the week before the race to allocate a sire to each starter, with it being said that the stallion draw was almost as exciting as the race itself.

Binnie oversaw the introduction of the two-minute mile rate pins which were awarded to members of the association and were a proud addition to the attire at any racing function, something that is still tradition to this day.

## INTRODUCTION

It is with much pride that I welcome you to the N.Z. Trotting Dinner of the Year — another 'first' for the N.Z. Standardbred Breeders Association (and for trotting) adding to the many other accomplishments in our short history.

Our major aim has always been to foster and promote the wonderful heritage of the N.Z. Standardbred and to make sure this identity is protected and developed.

To this end, the Association was the instigator of the National Sales 'Select Yearling' concept and the new selling centre in Christchurch and this has seen a vast improvement both in the quality of stock presented and the prices obtained for our yearlings.

As well, the Association was the original motivator in the eventual formation of the Equine Research Foundation. A grant will be made out of proceeds of this Dinner tonight to the Foundation in the very near future.

The new American Speed Sulky has been imported by the Association — we have published three issues of the Stallion Register — we have worked

with NZMTC in developing the first N.Z. Standardbred Breeders Sires Produce Stakes for two year olds — we are continually promoting the need for filly races — we are always working towards the betterment of trotting.

The acceptance of the N.Z. Standardbred Breeders Association is shown in the rapid growth in membership, particularly in the last year. All branches are flourishing and the enthusiasm of members is most encouraging.

As an Association we have not 'back peddled' when strong issues have been at stake and have probably been the most outspoken division within the trotting fraternity when we have believed in an issue. We believe we have 'become of age' and as an association should have democratic representation at all levels involving trotting administration.

Tonight's 'Trotting Dinner of the Year' is only a forerunner to the many activities we have planned for the future.

We'd like you to join us.

*Peter L. Binnie*

*Inaugural 'Dinner of the Year' in 1976.*

He was also responsible for the first awards dinner ever put together and held in this country. Before Binnie and the NZ Standardbred Breeders Awards dinner, there was no ceremony of its kind for our sport.

By all accounts the dinners were a roaring success and were often attended by notable international harness racing personalities and participants, such as Mr Delvin Miller at the inaugural 'Dinner of the Year' in 1976.

Miller, best known for his deeds as the trainer of Delmonica Hanover, came all the way from the United States to attend and was one of the sports revered figures in North America for his work as an administrator and also his legacy as a trainer and driver.

Finally, Abell credits Binnie with building the platform for which the Sires Stakes Board was ultimately launched and all things considered is a wonderful legacy.

Binnie was also known as an extremely capable horseman in his own right having held a public trainers license from 1976 to 2002 with 18 training victories to his name.

Arguably the best horse he bred was the Son Of Afella entire Bold Reason (Son Of Afella — Mary Tudor).

As a colt when trained by Doug Breed, Bold Reason was good enough to run in the three year old classics of the 93/94 season where he featured in the 1994 New Zealand Derby finishing eighth behind Ginger Man.

Bold Reason would win seven races, Binnie trained him to win six of those, including the Te Awamutu Cup in 1996.

Peter Binnie is survived by his two children, Phillipa and Doug and leaves behind a wonderful legacy of getting results and inspiring change in an industry that is notoriously conservative.



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# Perkins comes up Trumps with 2021/22 roster | Brad Reid

## ***How on earth do you wind up becoming a semen agent for some the best pacers and trotters to walk the planet?***

For the prominent Queensland breeder and owner, Anthony Perkins, it was as simple as owning his first racehorse.

"When I was a young fella I always wanted to be a race caller. That didn't eventuate and I don't know whether it was fortunate or unfortunate but the first horse I ever owned won its first race which got me addicted to the sport," he said.

"After that I got the bug and ended up buying a nice trotting mare from New Zealand called Kumbya (Sundon – Shelley's Way) and she ended up doing quite a nice job and won 11 races in total.

"When she retired, I didn't want to sell her so I ended up breeding from her. It's all gone from there, the horses accumulate quickly and got to the point where I had around 30 mares," he said.

The racing industry has seen plenty of fly by nighters in its time.

Those that enter the industry with grandiose hopes and dreams who prefer to make a splash instead of merely dipping the toe in the deep end.

Most of them have the best of intentions but it only takes a few setbacks along the way to bump this type off course.

When the passion and love for this sport is at the core of your commitment, some rough waters only made the man from Queensland more determined to navigate a path to success and it's been quite the journey since 2007.

"Because I had the mares I actually looked into buying a stallion out of North America and did a lot of research around that. It didn't eventuate and I was breeding to the stallions available through Alabar and the like but I never lost sight of it.

"The costs were starting to add up and it got to the point where I either had to scale it right back or try and make it into a decent business and here we are today," he said.

In the last five years Perkins has tasted success in bringing champion bloodlines down under both in the flesh and via frozen semen, but the 21/22 season is shaping up to be the most exciting yet.

"We've got 11 stallions, six of them are available to New Zealand but that's simply because of the time it takes to freeze the semen," he said.

## ***Headlining the roster this season is the American bred Swedish sensation, Propulsion.***

The son of Muscle Hill is out of a Hambletonian Oaks winning Andover Hall mare in Danae and was famously sold at the Meadowlands Summer Mixed Sale to Swedish interests for \$210,000.

To say he grew a leg was an understatement under the tutelage of champion Swedish trainer, Daniel Reden.

Few champions leave North America and make the impact **Propulsion** have and the horse was first past the post in 14 Group Ones including the Elitloppet at Solvalla in 2020.

Soon after doing so, **Propulsion** became embroiled in controversy equitable to a spy novel. It was determined that under Swedish racing laws, **Propulsion** was not eligible to have ever raced in the country due to having his feet 'nerved'.

A clerical error meant that the Swedish authorities never picked up on the fact and with Reden none the wiser, the duo

claimed close to \$3,000,000 in Swedish prizemoney which subsequently had to be given back.

To make matters worse, **Propulsion** was then banned from being a stallion in Sweden despite having served two seasons at stud prior. Those subsequent foals will be allowed to race in Sweden, and now **Propulsion** has found himself back on the soil of his birthplace in North America.

"It's going through the courts and it's a bit mickey mouse the whole thing. Who knows, he could be given those 14 Group Ones back in which case his service fee is arguably not enough.

"The fact of the matter is he was a superstar that raced under the extreme pressures of European racing over every distance imaginable and acquitted himself against the likes of Bold Eagle and Facetime Bourbon.

"He is bred to be a stallion being out of Danae who has left two champion fillies on top of **Propulsion** and the full brother to him sold for \$1,000,000 in 2019. He would be the only trotting stallion to be by a Hambletonian winner (Muscle Hill) and out of a Hambletonian winner.

"The owners are just such fantastic people and have done everything imaginable to help us make this season a success for him at stud. His semen is really fertile and he already has a good book of over 50 mares in both countries," said Perkins.

"I'm supporting him with some of my best mares including Aldebaran Ursula who was the fastest ever two-year-old in Australia," he said.

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***In the last five years Perkins has tasted success in bringing champion bloodlines down under both in the flesh and via frozen semen, but the 21/22 season is shaping up to be the most exciting yet.***

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**Few champions leave North America and make the impact Propulsion have and the horse was first past the post in 14 Group Ones including the Elitloppet at Solvalla in 2020.**

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**Propulsion is not the only square gaiting globe trotter on the books of *Trump Bloodstock* with the world champion Sebastian K also available by frozen semen.**

The son of Korean broke the world record over a mile in 2014 trotting 1:49.0 at Pocono Downs making him the fastest trotter ever at the time over the distance.

He was due to be available to breeders down under in 2020 for his first season at stud shuttling to our shores when tragedy struck.

"I had been asking the owner for a couple of years to shuttle **Sebastian K** without any luck and they had finally agreed too on the back of him siring the Breeders Crown winner in North America, Next Level Stuff.

"To have a horse of his calibre come down and die in quarantine was just terrible and is easily the hardest phone call I've had to make in my life," he said.

The silver lining for Perkins and the owners is that **Sebastian K** is making a big impact at stud with the stallion dominating the juvenile trotting ranks in Queensland.

He has also produced the fastest ever three-year old over a mile in Australasian history with On Advice trotting an incredible 1:54.5 at Menangle in June this year.

"We probably have around 25 doses left available for New Zealand so breeders will need to be quick if they want to breed a mare to him," he said.

**Another *Trump Bloodstock* trotter available by frozen semen is *Helpisontheway*.**

He is a son of this seasons North American leading all age sire, Chapter Seven who is also the sire of the phenom and leading juvenile sire from his first crop in Walner.

That should make him an interesting prospect for trotting breeders looking to access bloodlines that have avoided these shores.

"He hasn't had a lot of support as of yet and part of that was my fault as I didn't send any of my own mares while I was trying to get **Sebastian K** up and going, but I'm sending 10 to him this year and is bred on a real outcross when you look at his maternal family.

"He's actually had some great support early so we might see quite a nice book for him across the two countries," he said.

**Standing in the flesh in *Shepparton* for his debut season at stud is the son of *Muscle Hill* in *Muscle M Up*.**

His 1:51.4 mark when winning in free-for-all company as a four-year-old in a \$50,000 leg of the Graduate Series at The Meadowlands makes him the equal fastest trotter to ever shuttle down under alongside What The Hill.

"He was racing the best of the best in the likes of Atlanta, Manchego, Six Pack and co in the world record-breaking \$250,000 Graduate Final where he was raced timed in 1:50. He was due to resume work this season but broke down. Being a son of Muscle Hill I am not surprised at the support he is getting already. He has already covered his first mares in Australia," he said.

**Rounding out the trotters available to New Zealand is the five time Group One winning son of Buvetier D'Aunou, Up And Quick.**

This is a trotter who won a Prix D'Amerique and Criterium and Vincennes in Paris and the casual breeder would be none the wiser which really showcases just how good the genetics we have available to use are.

"I think the horse is super and I really got behind him with ten of my own mares last season and have ten more coming. He has half a dozen going to the APG Sales this year.

"He stands for eight and a half thousand euro so his service fee of \$5,500 makes him very affordable for someone looking for some fantastic European bloodlines," he said.

**Mixing his gait, Perkins has a couple of pacers on the books with the only one available to New Zealand breeders being *Luck be With You*.**

The son of Western Ideal was a Breeders Crown winner at two and is from the Three Diamonds family with a deep maternal line to his pedigree.

"He is actually a three quarter to American Jewel who is the world record holder for three-year-old fillies and won \$1,800,000 in career earnings. Being by American Ideal herself shows the family crosses well over itself and I think he would be a fantastic option for someone to consider with an American ideal mare," he said.

Interestingly there is one foal in New Zealand on the ground having been selected as something of a project by Sires Stakes manager, Martin Pierson.

Pierson himself thought the sire was a chance on pedigree alone and has informed me that the resulting colt is the nicest of a strong draft of a dozen yearlings progressing through the spring.



# PROPULSION

Muscle Hill - Danae T3 1.54.2 (Andover Hall)

3,1:52.3; 1:49.3f-Europe (\$3,900,000-int.)

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# Hope fulfilling childhood dream | Joshua Smith



**Top junior driver Ben Hope has been kicking plenty of goals this year on the track but it's not the only area of harness racing the young horseman is enjoying.**

For the last few seasons Hope has been trying his hand as a breeder and he is already garnering plenty of success from his foundation broodmare Unyielding Spirit.

The daughter of Love You was initially purchased to give Hope a leg up in his driving career, and while she proved to be a success on the track, netting three wins and nearly \$30,000 in stakes, it's as a broodmare Hope is gaining the most enjoyment.

"I got Unyielding Spirit five or six years ago," Hope said. "Dad (trainer Greg Hope) was just looking for a horse for me to learn to drive at the workouts and trials.

***"She ended up doing a really good job for us. The money I won off her went towards a deposit on my first house and also some of the foals that I have been breeding from her.***

"She turned out to be a really good buy."

While Unyielding Spirit was a handy enough racemare, and helped out Hope on his journey to becoming a driver, her pedigree encouraged Hope to fulfill a long held ambition of becoming a breeder upon her retirement.

Her dam, Merlene O, is an SJ's Photo half-sister to Group One winner Inspire and Group Two winners Enthusiast and Call You Later, and Hope is aiming to replicate the family's talent.

"She is well bred," Hope said.

"Lately the breed hasn't been firing but if you go back a couple of generations there are some really top horses there. It will be no mistake if she leaves a nice one."

Hope had been a student of standardbred pedigrees throughout his childhood and it was a dream come true to put that theory work into practice a few years ago.

***"When I was young, around primary school age, I could read the stud book really well," Hope said.***

"From memory I could go back three or four generations on each horse. The stud book used to be my book that I would always read. I have always been into the breeding.

"There are a lot of people who love the racing but don't always look at the breeding. I have always loved both. I am a huge racing man, but breeding is right up there as well."

Hope said he put a lot of thought into deciding the first mating for Unyielding Spirit, finally electing to head to the top of the market and send her to champion trotter Muscle Hill.

"When Muscle Hill was first available here I looked at his pedigree and races, and if any horse was going to be a superstar (sire) it was him," Hope said.

"He had 22 starts for 21 wins and he had a great way of going. I have always been the person where if I am going to breed my mare I am going to try and go to the best, and if I can't afford the best then I won't bother breeding.

"I haven't quite got the bank balance now to go to him (Muscle Hill). At \$13,000 he was quite dear at the time, but it was cheap now that you look back."

The resulting foal was a colt Hope subsequently named Tedesco. Now a three-year-old gelding, he has won once in seven starts.

"I don't think he is going to be a superstar," Hope said. "He is still a really nice trotter that has a good way of going and he will still do a nice job for me I think."



For Unyielding Spirit's second mating, Hope sent his mare to Dream Vacation, using distant relative, millionaire trotter Stent, as his inspiration.

"If you go back about four generations, Unyielding Spirit's great grandmother (In The Pink) is a half-sister of the great grandmother (Primula) of Stent.

"Being that he was by Dream Vacation I thought I would try him with my mare."

Hope has a lot of time for the resulting foal, now two-year-old gelding Latrell, who qualified in June.

"I think he is going to turn out well, I quite like him," Hope said.

"He has just come back into work now. He had a break after he qualified and the target for him is to race at the Nelson circuit in January."

Hope also has a Father Patrick filly, born last year, that he is excited about, not only for racing but as a future broodmare prospect as well.

"Kyle Cameron just broke her in recently," Hope said. "I have just had the one drive on her and she is a lovely wee trotter.

"She is only young, and it is hard to tell, but from what she has shown she looks like she could be a mare I can breed on with in a few years time."

***A diehard rugby league fan, both Tedesco and Latrell were named after rugby league players, and Hope is looking to continue that sporting theme with his filly.***

"I am thinking about calling her Redfern (home suburb of South Sydney Rabbitohs). I am a huge South Sydney Rabbitohs fan," Hope said.

Outside of harness racing, rugby league has been Hope's biggest passion, and naming his horses was a good chance to combine his two loves.

"I was into rugby union when I was younger. I used to play a bit of rugby but when I was eight we moved to Woodend Beach and my best mate at Woodend School was a really big league fan and he got me hooked on it," hope said.

Last year Hope decided to expand his broodmare band and leased a mare off Ben Smith, however, she missed to Always B Miki so Hope said he will try once again with another mare this season.

"I borrowed a mare off Ben Smith last year called Hakuwai Creek, she is a half-sister to Wainui Creek. I had her in-foal to Always B Miki but unfortunately she lost the foal.

"He wanted to breed from the mare this season, which is fair enough, so I have borrowed a mare off Dad called Indie, so I can use that free return to Always B Miki.

"Indie is a very small mare and Always B Miki is a big-sized horse, so I thought they would match up well."

Hope will also breed from Unyielding Spirit and has decided to send her to leading New Zealand trotting sire Majestic Son.

"With my trotting mare I am going to Majestic Son," Hope said. "He is a reasonably cheap option (\$5,000+GST) but at the same time he has done a super job, leaving the likes of Sundees Son and Majestic Man.

"While he is cheap, he has proven that he is the top stallion. I thought he would really suit my mare. She is really placid and sometimes the Majestic Sons can be a bit hot."

Breeding from two mares can be a costly exercise, particularly for a young man, but Hope said it has been well worth it.

"It is a bit costly breeding from two but at the same time I really enjoy it, so sometimes it is worth the cost," he said.

Hope caught both the racing and breeding bug off his parents, Greg and Nina Hope, and one day dreams of replicating their success of breeding a top trotter the ilk of multiple Group One winner Monbet.

"To breed a Group One winner is the pinnacle, so that is definitely a goal," Hope said.

While enjoying his time as a breeder, Hope has experienced his best year in the cart, recording his first Group One driving victory behind exciting trotter Muscle Mountain and bringing up his 100th career driving success.

***"To get that first Group One win was awesome and to get my 100th career win was really cool too. We have kicked some goals this year so hopefully it's onwards and upwards," Hope said.***

Heading into spring racing, Hope is particularly excited about the prospects of Muscle Mountain and is looking forward to partnering him in feature trots over the coming months.

"Spring racing is always a great time of the year. The road to the New Zealand Cup and Dominion is not too far away," Hope said.

"Muscle Mountain has come back really good. He is the sort of horse that could be in for a big year because he is such a big horse and I have always thought that as a five to six-year-old would be his time to shine.

"I am quietly confident that he will have a super year."





1:46:2

# MCWICKED

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# McWicked comes to New Zealand

**McWicked** (p,2,1:52f; 3,1:47.3f,1:46.2 \$5,103,271). 2018 Horse of the Year and the richest pacing stallion in harness racing history, will stand his second Southern Hemisphere season at the renowned NSW horse haven Cobbitty Equine Farm.

In Australia he served a full book of 150 mares last season and then 154 mares at Winbak Farm, Ontario this year.

**McWicked** is now available to NZ breeders through Rangiora Equine Service at the exceptional value of \$5,000 plus GST with an attractive vet package available.

Grit, determination and raw talent propelled **McWicked** through a seven-year racing career that saw him earn over \$5 million dollars, with 40 appearances in the winner's circle and a record of 1:46.2 over The Red Mile. With those Statistics, the son of McArdle joins an elite group of horses elected into the Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame just months after his last appearance on a racetrack.

He retires as the richest pacing stallion ever and is second behind Foiled Again on the all-time earnings list for pacers.

In 2018, he was the oldest horse in 43 years to top the leading money earners list in North America.

At two, **McWicked** won two Pennsylvania Sire Stakes divisions and prizemoney of \$179,617. He dominated his rivals as a 3YO winning the Breeders Crown, Delvin Miller Adios Stakes Final, Max Hempt Memorial elimination & Final, North America Cup elimination, Progress Pace Preview & 2 Pennsylvania Sire Stakes & Final.

In 2014, **McWicked** was both the USHWA and O'Brien Award Winner for Three-Year-Old Colt Pacer of the Year.

At four, **McWicked** was second in the Allerage Farm Stakes. From five to eight, **McWicked** won the Allerage Farms twice, Ben Franklin elimination and final, Breeders Crown final, Canadian Pacing Derby final, Dan

“The best thing about **McWicked** is that with him being a son of McArdle, he will cross well with most of the best and most popular broodmare bloodlines ...”

Pat Woods

Rooney Invitational division twice, George Morton Levy Series leg, Jim Ewart Memorial twice, Joe Gerrity Jr. Memorial division, Mohawk Gold Cup, TVG Open final, and William R. Haughton Memorial division.

He took a mark of 1:46.2 winning the 2018 Allerage at Lexington's Red Mile, which is the third-fastest winning race mile in history. **McWicked** achieved this record in one of his many Northern Hemisphere tussles with the "Wonder from Down Under" Lazarus.

The two time Breeders Crown winner is known not only for his amazing speed, but his toughness, soundness and conformation.

"**McWicked** gave it 110% every time he got behind the gate. He was first over more than any horse I have ever seen and raced strong up until the end of his career at 8 years old. He was impressive on any size track and had perfect manners. **McWicked** had a great gait and was smart and classy. He is a big, strong horse that has a huge back end and shoulder. He has a long gait and wore no boots" Casie Coleman, trainer.

Champion reinsman Brian Sears said **McWicked** was one of the most intelligent horses he had ever sat behind. "He was very smart and all business. **McWicked** was the perfect size and had everything one could ask for. I will always be appreciative of how smart **McWicked** is. I hope his potential offspring get his intelligence."

The son of McArdle and Western Sahara (Western Ideal) was voted the 2018 United States Harness Writers Association (USHWA) Dan Patch and 2018 O'Brien Horse of the Year and 2018 Aged Pacer of the Year. At seven, he was the oldest horse to ever win Horse of the Year honours from (USHWA).

**McWicked** descends from the famed U1 Family, a family which is littered with standardbred royalty and includes, Wiggle It Jiggle It, Betting Line, Stay Hungry, Artsplace, Armbro Operative, Artiscap, Western Terror, Sabilize, Bret Hanover, Tall Drink Hanover and Sushi Sushi.

After **McWicked** completed his first commercial year at Stud at Winbak Farm, Ontario. Farm Manager Pat Woods stated that he has exceeded their expectations receiving a full book and recording a 92% fertility rate thus far.

Pat quoted "The best thing about **McWicked** is that with him being a son of McArdle, he will cross well with most of the best and most popular broodmare bloodlines. He has all the make-up of being a top stallion; speed at every age he raced, \$5 million in earnings, toughness, soundness, and conformation".

**McWicked** is the richest and fastest son of McArdle who boasts a 41.57% live foal to winner ratio in the Southern Hemisphere. The most successful winners include Nike Franco NZ, Tintin In America (father of world champion race mare Shartin NZ), Five Star Anvil NZ, Tact Tate NZ and Elusive Chick NZ. The Falcon Seelster Grand Sire provides an excellent outcross to many mares here in Australia.

**McWicked's** owner Mr. James, SSG Stables, had bred three foals whilst he was racing. From these foals, the eldest a 3YO Colt named **McWicked One** was successful on only his second appearance recording a slick 1:51.3 mile rate at Pocono Downs on the 6th of July. **McWicked** has also sired a 2YO Colt and a Yearling filly.



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# Holding On

| Dave Briggs

Part-owners Kathy Cecchin, trainer, and Nikki Davies lead Desperate Man after the \$1 million North America Cup win.

Photo: Dave Landy



**Desperate Man's popular all-Canadian victory in the \$1 million Pepsi North America Cup resonates with the eternal harness racing themes of hope, small-town families and the ability of a single great horse to be the ultimate equalizer. But to John and Kathy Cecchin, it's about holding on to those things to which they hold dear.**

At the Cecchin family's farm in tiny Arthur, ON they hold on to things — like that old tractor named Abner, that old trotter named Emmitt and John's beloved "company truck" his daughter Nikki Davies says isn't worth \$500.

"I heard him say he might have to put some wood on instead of bumpers," Davies said, "because the bumpers had fallen off. I said, 'Are you kidding me?'"

Last Friday, John was delighted to use the company truck to deliver the family's star pacer Desperate Man to Woodbine Mohawk Park's retention barn for the Pepsi North America

Cup. He left the farm in plenty of time to account for the possibility of the truck breaking down along the way, which Davies said has happened before.

"We are just on standby to pick him up when that thing breaks down," Davies said, laughing.

As fate would have it — and, make no mistake, fate plays a major role in this story — the trip turned out to be as perfect and uneventful as the one Trevor Henry carved out a little more than 24 hours later in the \$1 million final that delivered a mild 7-1 upset victory in Canada's biggest harness race ([replay here](#)).

Though, having the company truck at the track did pose another problem in the aftermath of a surreal evening for the Cecchin, Davies and Henry families.

When John went to take the Pepsi North America Cup trophy to his truck, Megan Walker, Woodbine's senior manager of standardbred racing operations, suggested he make sure to lock the doors, to which John replied, "I don't think it locks. One window doesn't work."

The \$500,000 cheque that comes with that trophy has little bearing on whether John Cecchin will get a new truck anytime soon.



"He could've bought a new truck at any time," said his wife, Kathy Cecchin, Desperate Man's trainer and co-owner. "He's very stubborn."

Truth is, John Cecchin is also sentimental. The truck used to belong to his dear friend and employer, trainer Mark Austin. John was Austin's second trainer when Austin died at the age of 54 in September of 2014, a little more than a year after Austin's pupil Fool Me Once won an elimination of the 2013 North America Cup and finished fourth in the final won by Captaintreacherous.

"Fool Me Once was the last horse that any of us were associated with that raced in the North America Cup," Kathy said. "John just thought the world of Mark and when (Desperate Man) crossed the finish line and Nikki and I were just screaming and hugging each other, (Austin's daughter) Paige was the first person there. As soon as we saw Paige, we just started to cry."

\* \* \* \* \*

*There are hundreds of interconnected little pieces from there to here in Desperate Man's story – most speak of the sport's dominant themes of families and hope and the ability of a single great horse to be the ultimate equalizer, no matter what an auction says he's worth and regardless of how many horses you have in the barn.*

Long before Paul and Nikki Davies were a couple, Paul got his very first pari-mutuel driving win piloting Thinga Me Bob N to victory at Hanover Raceway for Kathy Cecchin in 2009.

"They put him down just to give him a shot in his first year driving," said Nikki, whose first job as a caretaker, apart from working for her parents, came at age 14 working for Trevor and Shannon Henry, who now train at the Cecchins' farm.

That John and Kathy even looked at Desperate Man is because Paul and Nikki own Outlawgrabbingears, an Alberta horse with career earnings of some \$250,000 that they share with Deborah Pinel.

It was Paul that bought Outlawgrabbingears for \$22,500 from the pacer's breeder, Connie Kolthammer.

"I was at the track the day that Connie Kolthammer that bred him and raised him brought him in to train. I saw (Outlawgrabbingears) training and I went up and offered her some money and we made a deal and bought him that day. That led down the line to (Desperate Man)," Paul said. "The mother of Outlawgrabbingears (Grand Slam Woman) and the mother of Desperate Man (Dreamlands Latte) are full sisters. Kathy found (Desperate Man) and she pursued it and got him and we were just lucky enough to be involved."

By now you may know that Desperate Man, bred by Winbak Farms, was a \$20,000 yearling purchase at the 2019 Lexington Selected Yearling Sale. You likely also know he was a wedding gift from Kathy and John to Nikki and Paul.

John and Kathy gave Nikki and Paul a choice between half-ownership in the Ontario-sired son of Shadow Play or a down payment for a house.

"There was never a thought the other way," Nikki said of their choice. "Paul and I got married in Vegas, so it was an affordable wedding. Mom and dad actually bought the dinner and we booked the whole buffet. I said, 'That's lots, mom. That's a great wedding present.' I know those aren't cheap. I said, 'You don't have to do anything. We'll buy our share (in Desperate Man).' They insisted and it was a super generous gift and I can't believe it all worked out the way it did."

**"Mom always says, 'You could've got half of nothing. You just got lucky.'"**

Truth is, they all know they got lucky and plan to appreciate every second of their good fortune — welcoming photographers and reporters and TV crews to their farm with open arms.

"There will never be another horse like him for us and we know that," Kathy said.

The Cecchins have been around the game long enough to have some highs and some devastating lows. Austin's death is a low point, of course, but so was the early hours of April 2, 1992 when 69 horses died when a fire gutted Barn 3 in the Mohawk backstretch. John Cecchin lost his stable that night.

"They've had a lot of heartache," Henry said. "Those are all things that happen in life, right? This time something good happened."

Leave it to Slick to turn this, the wildest of dreams, into a reality.

\* \* \* \* \*

*It wasn't long after Desperate Man stepped off the truck from the Lexington sale that the pacer earned his nickname.*

"As a yearling, it was a joke because he was anything but slick," Kathy said. "He was a great big horse and he fumbled around. You'd jog him and he would barely get off the walk."

One thing Desperate Man has in his favour — beyond being a son of Shadow Play — is perfect conformation. He wears very little equipment.

"He has a beautiful conformation. You cannot fault him," Kathy said. "He's just the easiest horse ever. You can't imagine that he's as good as he is because he's completely without drama. I laugh that we did geld him. I think that he would be a handful if he was still a stud because he's a good feeling horse – he always feels saucy — so I just think that he might have been a problem."

Instead, Desperate Man is so chill he's barely awake — which is often the sign of a great horse.

"He's a cool horse and he has a great personality," Nikki said. "He's basically asleep before he goes out onto the track. I've never been in the paddock with him before. I usually just play owner and mom does all that,





Jason Cecchin holding daughter, sister and part owner Nikki Davies, with mum, owner and trainer Kathy Cecchin.

Photo: Dave Landy

but he was actually sleeping (before the NA Cup). I said, 'Should we be worried?' and she said, 'No, this is him.'

### **It's pretty amazing for a horse that spent the entire winter confined to his stall.**

Despite posting a solid 3-1-1 record and earnings of \$162,747 in six rookie starts in 2020 that included three Ontario Sires Stakes (OSS) Gold Series victories, the Cecchins discovered at the end of his season that Desperate Man had a P1 stress fracture he likely raced with in his last two starts.

The options were surgery or stall rest.

"I did feel terrible for him because he never got to get turned out. He stood in the stall for the entire winter," Kathy said. "I did not want to do surgery on him. We could've done the surgery and they would've put screws in it and I just didn't want to. I just wanted to stand him and let it heal. It did heal beautifully, so it was lucky."

A lockdown of racing due to the COVID-19 pandemic proved to be another stroke of luck for Desperate Man's camp. The lockdown forced the Woodbine Entertainment Group (WEG) to move the North America Cup from its usual slot in June to Sept. 11.

"We would not even have been in it if it went in June," Kathy said. "He wasn't good in June. We thought he was racing okay, but he wasn't going to take on Perfect Sting. Perfect Sting was on fire."

As it turns out, Perfect Sting was the horse Desperate Man's connections were most concerned about as the NA Cup field turned for home.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *The consensus from the experts is that Trevor Henry gave Desperate Man a perfect trip.*

"That was the only trip that he could've beat them with," Kathy said. "Trevor just said, 'It was all or nothing.' He had to get away closer to the front. If he had got away eighth or ninth it would have been too much to overcome."

### **Desperate Man doesn't have the greatest gate speed and Henry said the horse is "kind of goofy and shy" behind the wings.**

"The other night, he got away a lot better and, of course, that's what helped him. Those races you've got to be in position," Henry said.

Ultimately, that was the winning move.

He got away fifth while Kathy was still hiding in his paddock stall, refusing to watch. Race favorite Bulldog Hanover took a commanding lead to the quarter and half-mile half stations. By the time Kathy finally peeked at a monitor, her concern was the slow fractions of :27.3 and :55.1.

"But I still felt that (Desperate Man) was going to get money and then I could see that he had power. When they were coming off the last turn, he was wanting out and you could see that he had his head turned," Kathy said.

By the top of the stretch, Desperate Man was third behind Bulldog Hanover (driven by Jody Jamieson) and Perfect Sting (David Miller).

"When we came off the turn, I noticed Dave asked his horse to pace on and then Jody asked his," Henry said. "Jody had no pop. I knew I was probably going to beat Bulldog, but I



wasn't sure that I was going to beat Perfect Sting. He's a tough horse to get around and he's an awful good horse. He did all the work and I just happened to pick him off."

"When (Henry) flipped (Desperate Man) off cover, I think everybody just cheered as loud as we could and hoped he got there and he did. We couldn't have asked for a better drive. Trevor did a great job," Nikki said.

Despite it being his first NA Cup win, Henry deflected all praise.

"It just worked out," he said.

"Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. That time was the perfect time to have it work."

**As he crossed the finish line three-quarters of a length ahead of Perfect Sting, Henry felt the pressure lift from his body.**

"It was a long week leading up to it, because it's all you think about," Henry said. "You don't want to screw up because you feel bad if you do. It's not as bad if it's people you don't know – you feel bad, of course, but it's not the same. I've got to see them the next day.

"We've just been great friends for years. When I decided to go on my own, I came (to the Cecchins' farm) and they gave me stalls. We've owned horses together and we've had luck and they are just great people. They are very humble people."

\* \* \* \* \*

*Small towns have a way of molding people differently. Kathy comes from one of the smallest.*

The granddaughter of a prairie horseman, Kathy was born and raised in Welwyn, SK, a town of 78 people near the border with Manitoba.

Saturday, it seemed as if everyone in town was watching as the race unfolded on national television.

"My brother said his phone rang off the hook... My mom is 87 and people her age were screaming at their TVs. I just never thought of that. I was just so focused on the horse and trying to survive up to the race that I just wasn't thinking about the bigger picture."

Arthur, ON, located about an hour north of Mohawk, has a population of about 2,500. On Saturday night it seemed as if half of the town jammed itself into the winner's circle.

"I just could not believe how many people there were," Kathy said. "When they said, 'Take him to the back, I was, like, 'How am I going to take him through there?'

"The best part, the funny part, is that every single person



Part owner John Cecchin.

Photo: Dave Landy

bet him. It must've only been our people. My brother said, 'I made \$1,300.' My nephew made \$1,000. My other nephew made \$1,000. I think (our son) Jay made \$1,500. Nikki, who never bets, she bet \$50 to win on him."

Beyond those that cashed tickets, there's no doubt it was a popular victory thanks to the beloved underdog or "little guy" narrative. But most of all, this one resonated not because of their size in the industry, but more because the winners are lovely, hardworking souls big on humility and long on perspective.

Anyone that knows them knows it is a team effort. Those that have never heard of the Cecchins likely "never will again," Kathy joked.

Still, despite getting a kick out of the fact Desperate Man is the third straight NA Cup winner and fifth in the last seven to be trained by a woman, Kathy just laughs.

"That's too cool, but I certainly wouldn't put myself on the same level as Casie (Coleman-Herlihy) or Nancy (Takter)," Kathy said.

**In truth, she said she feels uneasy getting most of the credit simply for being listed as the horse's trainer.**

"(Desperate Man is) my only horse. John has three and then I just have him. He's about all I can handle," she said. "John entered him to baby race and he put me down as trainer. I said, 'You didn't have to do that. I don't need to be the trainer.' I am a glorified groom and John is a wonderful horseman. He said, 'No, he's your horse and you're the trainer.' We do everything together. John goes all the miles with him because he's so lazy. I could never get him to go. He'd be going miles in three minutes if it was me.

"I think John is so much more deserving of it, really. I do wish



it was John's name instead of mine," Kathy said.

For his part, John diverts the credit to Desperate Man, Nikki said.

"Dad says the same thing all the time, 'He's so smart. He's smarter than we are.' That's the main thing he says about him," Nikki said. "Dad would never talk about himself. Even the night of, I was with dad loading up the equipment on the trailer and everyone was congratulating us and dad was just saying, 'Sometimes you get lucky.' He never takes any credit for the hard work that he puts in or anything like that," Nikki said. "He's a really patient horse, so it's nice to see it all happen for him, too. He deserves that."

Still, Kathy was instrumental in the triumph. For one, she wasn't about to leave her only trainee alone overnight — especially a horse that sometimes gets cast in his stall.

Friday was her birthday. She spent it sleeping in her van outside the retention barn after receiving permission to do so from Woodbine officials.

"I thought if he were to get cast it would take us over an hour to get there, so I slept in the parking lot," she said.

That it was a less-than-stellar birthday didn't bother her. Her father died on her birthday in 1994 and, ever since, it's not been much cause for celebration. That her birthday falls four days before the anniversary of Austin's death doesn't make it any better.

"It's never a happy day," Kathy said.

Thankfully, Friday night was uneventful and positively peaceful.

The next night was pandemonium, leaving Kathy and Nikki positively gobsmacked as first-timers winning a million-dollar race.

**"There was so much that we didn't know was going to happen. Everybody was so emotional," Kathy said.**

"How this all happened, I still can't process it all," Nikki said.

"I just kept thinking, 'Oh my God, he did it. He did it.' I just kept saying to him in the winner's circle, 'This is all you, big guy. This is all for you,'" Kathy said.

Desperate Man simply took it all in as the maelstrom swirled around him.

"I kept saying to Nikki, 'He's the only one that is acting like he's been here before,'" Kathy said, laughing. "The rest of us were complete lunatics and he was just standing there. He never moved or whipped his head around."

So what will they do with the money?

Likely not a lot, as you might expect. Kathy and John are made of earth and salt, after all. Perhaps the best thing that will come from it is it will likely keep them in the horse business a little longer.

"Everybody knows that he's the only horse that my mom looks after," Nikki said. "For a while it didn't look like they were even going to have any more horses. She also breeds dogs, so that was her main thing."

Kathy breeds world class German Shepherds. Naturally, the night after winning the North America Cup — as if the weekend wasn't eventful enough — a litter of seven puppies arrived.

"I was, like, 'Sure, why not, let's do that,'" Kathy said.

Life, as yet, seems shockingly normal for the Cecchins in the aftermath of a million-dollar victory.

"John keeps saying, 'When the cheque comes, it'll sink in.' Maybe, because I can't imagine a cheque with that kind of number on it. I can't even really get in my head what that would look like," Kathy said.

Nikki and Paul hope to take a trip — maybe back to Vegas. They might invest in some fencing for the farm.

Kathy said she finally might be convinced to buy a new tractor. Though, she wouldn't think of getting rid of Abner.

"I heard the murmuring around here yesterday that if anything is going to get bought, it's going to be a tractor," Kathy said. "We have a really old tractor... Its name is Abner. We can't get rid of Abner. John said, 'You don't have to get rid of Abner, but we can get a new tractor.' We've had Abner since we've moved here and we've been out here since 2002. Abner is part of the family."

Just like Kathy's 23-year-old trotter Emmitt, who is living out his days at the farm in glorious retirement.

"Emmitt was not the fastest son of Armbro Agile. He was a \$5,000 yearling and made \$288,000. Again, in the theme of 'We keep things,' Emmitt is retired and lives the life of luxury... We have a big pond in the centre of our racetrack and we call it Lake Emmitt. Emmitt paid for everything."

You can bet Desperate Man will pay for some more, but it likely won't be a new truck.

"I was laughing when I was loading (Desperate Man). I said to my dad, 'Your million-dollar horse and your \$500 truck,'" Nikki said.

But that shouldn't be the takeaway.

In an industry where millionaires buy the best horses and top trainers condition barns full of talented youngsters, this story — as positively, delightfully, improbable as it is — provides hope to all the rest.

"John said when we were driving home, 'People like us can never win a race like this because you always have to sell the horse,'" Kathy said. "When somebody comes with the money, you've got to take the money. Last year, we did get some very generous offers and I said, 'I don't want to sell him.' He was never bought to be sold, but I said to Nikki and Paul, 'If it will change your guys' life, then we will sell him.' They said, 'Nope.' They didn't want to sell him and we were just going to race him," Kathy said.

**Proving holding on to the things you love can sometimes transcend sentiment to provide the thrill of a lifetime.**

*Courtesy [www.harnessracingupdate.com](http://www.harnessracingupdate.com)*





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