
BREEDERS' UPDATE

December 11, 2019



THE BREEDERS' AND WOODLANDS STUD
PRESENT **EDITION 70** OF THE
BREEDERS' UPDATE.



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TROTting MARES GET A LEG UP IN WAIKATO

Cambridge Raceway

Cambridge Raceway will welcome a new race to their racing calendar in 2020 with the inaugural running of the \$30,000 Waikato Trotting Breeders' Stakes (2700m) on February 21.

The race was the brainchild of owner and breeder Ken McGrath and his partner Melanie Barker, who have been supported in their vision by a group of local trotting enthusiasts.

"My partner Melanie and I breed and race predominantly trotters and we have a real passion for the trotting gait," McGrath said.

"What has become very apparent to us over a period of time is the trotters are not catered for anywhere near as well as the pacers are and there is a real shortage of opportunities for them to step-up and race in quality races.

"With that in-mind we decided we would like to support a new race. One that was of considerable value and one that could progress and become a Group race in due course.

"We consulted with a number of other breeders and trotting enthusiasts who were keen to come onboard."

The group has pulled together to fund the inaugural race, worth \$30,000, and McGrath is hoping it will be promoted to a stakes race in years to come.

"The group have contributed the funds required to put this race on and give it a reasonable stake so it can go ahead next year, with the hope that in the very near future it will be accepted by Harness Racing New Zealand as a Group race," he said.

"The race is an encouragement for people to breed and race trotting mares and fillies and something for them to aim for.

"Credit goes to breeders and owners of trotting horses in the Waikato area who have contributed for this to happen."

McGrath, who is also Vice President of Waikato-Bay of Plenty Harness Racing Club, is hoping the race will attract some South Island talent, with the race programmed just

a week before the Gr.3 Northern Trotting Breeders' Stakes (2700m) at Alexandra Park on February 28.

McGrath is looking forward to the race and is hoping to line-up three contenders, including Mums Star who won the Farmlands Trot (2200m) at Cambridge Raceway on Thursday night.

"I thought it was really good win," he said. "She went out really strong and just took the lead and at one stage was nine lengths ahead of them.

"She did what she had to do to stay in front, so there is a lot more in here yet."

It was the first victory for the daughter of Monkey Bones and while happy with the victory, McGrath said trainer Ross Paynter is still trying to work through a few issues with her.

"She has had her issues and we are probably still not quite on top of them yet. She just doesn't seem 100 percent comfortable.

"She trots around beautifully, but at the end of her races driver David Butcher tends to have to hold her together a little bit rather than drive her out as fully as he would like to.

"She is going in for some tests and checks on Monday and hopefully the results will tell us we have got nothing to worry about."

McGrath would also like to target the Waikato Trotting Breeder's Stakes with Mums Star's year younger full-sister Molly Bones, and five-year-old mare Canskyfly.

All three mares are showing promising signs, with Canskyfly winning four of her eight starts to date, while Molly Bones has recorded two wins and three placings from her nine starts, and Mums Star now has one victory and placing to her name from just three starts.

"We would have three mares that we would certainly like to aim for it," McGrath said. "But Mums Star will depend on whether we can get to the bottom of her issues."

As well as the newly formed race, McGrath is also looking forward to the Harness Jewels returning to Cambridge Raceway in 2020.

"It's terrific and that's what it is all about," he said. "I have got to give huge plaudits to the Cambridge Raceway management team, led by Dave Branch. They are helping take Cambridge well into the future."

YOUNG REINSWOMAN BREEDING A TROTTER

Brad Reid

"You have them from day one and then you break them in and take them to the races, I don't think there is anything better than breeding your own horse and seeing them prove themselves on the race track".

That quote from soon to be first time breeder, Olivia Thornley should be blasted across every barn in New Zealand.

Heck why not the Auckland Motorway while we are at it.

Last week I got an application from Olivia Thornley and her Mother, Jackie, to join the NZSBA as members.

I found this pretty neat as earlier in the year we had awarded Olivia a voucher for submitting the best Breeding Assessment of any cadet in the country.

The assessment tasked students with selecting a yearling from the sales with a hypothetical budget of \$30,000. Parts of the criteria included detailing why the yearling was chosen, what they liked/ didn't like about its pedigree and a confirmation and temperament assessment before reviewing the yearling at auction on how it sold, with general comments about the sales and complex it was held in.

The assessment submitted by Thornley was of an incredible standard both in its presentation and its content. It wouldn't have looked out of place on any University lecturer's desk!

"It was quite interesting because I choose a yearling that's family we had quite a bit to do with at work being closely related to Stress Factor and I found it quite cool researching more into that," she said.

The pedigrees of the well related youngsters is something she has taken a keen interest in also.

"It's quite interesting to get a sister or a brother of one we have worked with before and you get the next brother or sister at the following yearling sales and I enjoy looking over how different or sometimes similar they are in things like there shape, size and attitude," she said.

For the most part, the cadets enrolled with Harness Racing New Zealand have designs on being race day drivers and trainers of the champions we breed.

Thornley is no exception and is fast becoming a distinguished horsewoman in our industry as an employee of the powerful All Stars Racing Barn.

She currently has 11 race day winning drives (not withstanding three placings behind Elle Mac) with only four more needed to be able to drive at Premier meetings.

Thornley has shown initiative in realizing that by breeding a foal from the family mare, she will likely see it in her own colours.

“The reason behind breeding with Mum is that by the time it gets to the track, I’ll be training them in my name and I’ll drive them as well,” she said.

Starlight Express is the name of the mare that Thornley and her mother will see served by first season sire, Volstead. He’s discounted by \$500 for NZSBA members, and an additional first season special of \$1500 if you were looking at breeding to him!

The dam of Starlight Express was previously trained by her father Robin.

“Armour Lea was owned and trained by Mum and Dad and they raced her until she had an injury which meant she only had a couple of starts,” said Thornley.

In her two race day starts, the daughter of Gee Whiz was good enough to win on debut as a two-year-old so obviously had a bit of ability.

Her dam was Amourette who was a daughter of French born and imported stallion, Beau Nonantais. Amourette was out of the lightly tried race winning daughter of Game Pride in Vans Pride making her a half-sister to New Zealand Trotting Free For All (1992) and Hambeltonian (1990) winner Staka Pride.

The Keith Coutts trained trotter won 15 races and was placed 27 times with \$120,000 in race stakes to her name. She was also crowned Aged Trotting Mare of the Year in 1993 to go along with her Interdominion Trotting Consolation win the same season.

Staka Pride has bred on with her SJ’s Photo daughter, Starcus, being just below the best of her age group at three. She would run 4th in the inaugural Three Year Old Ruby behind Springbank Richard and placed in the Group 3 Northern Breeders Stakes and Listed Greenlane Cup later in her career spanning five wins and \$55,000.

Starcus now resides in Australia but she has left the former Phil Williamson trained Zhenya who won five her and 8 more across the ditch and also the Group One placed and Group Two winner War Dan Destroyer.

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It's a family with ability and a lot of sentiment so a great place to start for a young first time breeder.

"All the foals Mum and Dad have bred from Armour Lee have won races for them and with Dad doing the training was quite cool.

"I can remember the mare and most of the foals that came along," said Thornley.

None stand out clearer than first foal from the mare, Power Phyll, the eight win son of Grant Our Wishes.

"Power Phyll when we were little kids we used to ride him bare back around the track quite a lot and just cruise around, he was a lovely horse.

"The second foal Master in Command I don't remember quite as well, but I do remember him winning at Motukarara when we were kids and getting our photo taken," she said.

He would win three races and place on nine occasions.

"We had Solar Sam from day one. In the end when he retired and that was incredibly rewarding to see when you've been around a horse like him since day one.

"It's definitely exciting having a trotter because they do take more time and are more stressful but the rewards you get out of it and sitting behind them are quite good. I've been lucky enough to sit behind the Father Patrick two-year-old out of Escapee and she gave a good feel."

Broodmare to be, Starlight Express is the only other live foal from Amour Lee and had good reason for not making it to the races.

"Yeah just had an injury like a paddock accident and just couldn't trot properly after that, we think it may have been a torn hamstring. She is going to be served this month so I'm looking forward to that," said Thornley.

Before she gets a (fingers crossed) positive 14 day scan from Starlight Express, Thornley has business to take care of in the form of the Interdominion Series at Alexandra Park.

She has been up there with her employer for the last fortnight and has enjoyed the part she has played in getting the leading pacers and trotter for the series right for race day.

"I have driven Winterfell in fast work and it's amazing the feeling a powerful trotter gives you when you sit behind them. It's been great with the quality of horses we have obviously and also getting to work at another property and the different ways of doing things when your away from home," she said.

FOSTERING IN THE SOUTH: COOPERATION AND SUCCESS

Brad Reid

While it is important that we recognize and congratulate breeding achievements both big and small, it is also important we take the time to acknowledge the heartache that is associated with breeding livestock.

This season in particular has been quite tough with breeders losing mares and foals, and some instances both.

The reasons are varied, but Mother Nature can be a cruel mistress.

There wouldn't be a breeder in the country that isn't emotionally invested in the outcome of a foaling, and go along with their mare or mares go on an 11 month rollercoaster carrying ambitions and hopes of future champion.

When it goes pear-shaped, the time and costs can be crippling, but that pales in comparison to losing our beloved mares and/or their foals.

For the last three years, Anna Miles of Tall Tree Stud has assisted breeders and studs around the South Island by successfully coordinating and matching foster mares with foster foals. Over the last three years this service has played a part in seeing over 30 successful fostering outcomes.

"My husband Michael and I own and operate Pear Tree Farm which is a small agistment and sales prep farm in Waimate," said Miles.

"I won a scholarship through the NZ Thoroughbred Breeders Association to go to the Irish National Stud in 2001 and I graduated as the top student there as the Gold Medal Winner.

"My role now outside of our own farm is as a committee member on the Canterbury, Marlborough, Westland & Otago NZTBA. I run the South Island Foster Mare Facebook Page and have recently undertaken the role as coordinator for the Foster Foal service.

"It's kind of my way of paying back the scholarship I won way back then for the Association.

The NZ Standardbred Breeders Association have had great success in the past with its own Foster Foal Service which relied on a text messaging service and database of breeders subscribing to the platform.

When Miles came on board in her role as Foster Foal Service Coordinator in 2017, we liaised in setting up a Facebook page with better collaboration between the two breeding associations in the South Island to further extend our community of help. The shift to Facebook as a platform reaped almost instant reward.

"I guess when I came onboard I had a vision of the role that Social media and technology could play in making the operation more accessible and wide reaching. Before that there was a lot of time ringing studs," said Miles.

The benefit of using Facebook is not just the extensive reach given its huge audience, but its ability to couple a plea with imagery. Nobody with a human bone in their body likes to see an animal suffer, and an image of an orphan foal is incredibly powerful in triggering a response.

The South Island Foster Foal Facebook page now has over 800 users following the page. The average number of friends per Facebook user globally is 338, and to give you an idea of just how wide reaching the platform can be, try this for size.

Where the NZSBA would typically reach 50-200 people in a regional text service, a post on Monday via the Foster Service page reached 10,644 people and is still climbing.

"I am actually blown away by the support we have received. I was hoping that it would be something the public would get on board with. Every time I make a post and in particular when there is a photo of the orphan foal it is incredible the reaction and support we now get, and not just from the horse community, it's been fantastic," said Miles.

"Last year we were offered 31 mares. We had 13 foals that required mares and we had eight that



Mum

were successful with the fostering's. This year we have had the same number of successful fostering's and one to check on from yesterday so at this stage we are tracking really well.

The parameters to getting a successful outcome vary but are heavily skewed towards the mare and the environment.

"I think a lot of it comes down to the mare. There are some mares that will just take a foal and there are some that you have to work at it. There are also some mares that will just not be interested but in my opinion the environment in which the fostering occurs is a large factor," she said.

Mile's says there are some techniques to improve the chances of a successful fostering but they aren't always for the faint heart, one of which she referred to as skinning, a process used by shepherds for centuries for fostering lambs.

Skinning is the process in which you take a 'jacket' of most of the skin from the deceased foal to drape over the foster

foal in an attempt to coerce the fostering process with the mare.

"It's certainly not a nice thing to have to do, but I think it helps in getting a positive outcome," she said.

"The sooner you can get a mare who has lost her foal into the presence of a foster foal also has a huge bearing. It is a time critical process especially as milk starts to dry up, the mares hormones can change so the quicker we can get on to it the better.

"As far as foals go, we've had success with foals as old as a few weeks old being fostered providing the foster mare has only recently lost her baby. While the first couple of days are important, if you have a foal that is a strong drinker and still wanting to drink off a mare, it is less critical of the age of the foal.

"When it comes to deciding who goes where, we very much leave that up to the parties involved. I always ask the preference of both sets of owners, obviously you get in a situation where there will be foals at properties that don't have facilities for mares to be going back in foal, so in that situation foals will travel back to Nevele R where that process can take place. It's very much case by case.

Having a combined approach with both thoroughbred and standardbred breeders around the South Island has significantly widened the database, but what correlation is there between the two industries in terms of fostering and do the different breeds accept one another through the fostering process?

"It's fantastic, I was talking too one of the guys at Nevele R and to have a big place like that on board has been fantastic, if we can all work together, that is what is going to make it work.

"The last 10 days I have constantly been looking for four mares. You can go a whole week and have nothing at all and then everything can fall into place. As far as different breeds accepting one another, it doesn't typically matter but the foal still has to be accepted.

A greater percentage of fostering scenarios tend to occur from home foaling's, something that while is ideal in theory, many breeders aren't properly equipped to deal with themselves should it go wrong.

"If you go to the expense of breeding a mare, I believe you should send her to foal somewhere that has the resource and facility to give the best possible outcome during foaling. 24 hour foal watch, experienced vets being on hand or on call and dedicated breeding teams in my view will skew the outcome greatly in your favour."

The alternative to fostering is obviously to hand rear, however If foals are hand-reared they often become too close to humans, said Miles.

"They do not have boundaries and by the time they get to 550kg they can become bossy and not respectful."

On more than one occasion this year, breeders have ran into the issue of losing both mare and foal after the pregnancy has gone well over the normal gestation period. The lay person might ask about the possibility of inducing the pregnancy in these instances to avoid complications in birthing. There is a good reason this is not common practice!

"The issue with inducing is that the lungs are the very last thing in a foal to develop properly, so you run the risk of having foals born without full development there and even if they are overdue. 30 days overdue a long time to be waiting and we would like them to foal in the general gestation period, but the reality is that it's not always the case.

"We only foaled two here this year that were 3 weeks over there due date and one of them was a big foal that needed to be pulled out. Being experienced in foaling it wasn't a big drama, but that's a situation where if somebody is foaling at home and wasn't monitoring it with an alarm or something, that mare wouldn't have got the foal out on her own and then you've lost them. It's all good foaling at home when it goes well, but if it doesn't you are on very limited time frames to get a successful outcome. It can be fairly traumatic," said Miles.

Given that Miles can spend as 'little' as one hour and as many as 10 hours in determining a successful match, you might wonder why on earth she would give so much time to such a fantastic cause?

"I have raised an orphan foal and I know the time and dedication that goes into it, I know the expense that goes into it and how difficult it is to not spoil a foal even when you are trying to have them as well adjusted as big horses at the end of it. So that is part of my passion for it, for these foals that lose their mothers or are simply rejected by them, it's a very personal thing," she said.

You can follow the Facebook Page by clicking to the following link:

[facebook.com/southislandfosterfoalservice](https://www.facebook.com/southislandfosterfoalservice)

INTERDOMINION HISTORY / The One That Got Away

Dave McCarthy | C/O All Stars Website

Cecil Devine retired as one of the greatest trainers in our history. Only this year All Stars surpassed his record six training wins in the New Zealand Cup, a record he had held (jointly with James Bryce) for 40 years.

Like all the greats Cecil did not have just one string to his bow and if he were around today he would point out his training numbers compared to the big modern stables. His first real star was a champion two year old filly Vivanti (sold to Australia at that age) and when the record books are opened he won them all-classics, major trotting races, provincial staying features then so popular in the harness world, and just about anything else you care to mention.

The numbers of winners he trained is almost irrelevant. When it came to the quality of the wins in an era which featured fierce competition among the leading stables because there were so many top trainers, C C Devine had it all.



Cecil Devine

Except an Inter Dominion Pacing Championship Final. And 1961 at Addington was the one that got away.

False Step was the horse and he looked to have won it to the naked eye. Even Massacre's driver Doug Watts told him so. Cecil returned at the head of the field the American bound False Step having ended an exceptional New Zealand career (he had won three of those six NZ Cups) on the highest note. Then disaster.

The judge disagreed with both drivers handing the verdict to the longshot Massacre. In what must have been a stunning moment Cecil still smiled and stood aside to let Massacre past.

Now while most famous as a trainer, Cecil Devine was also a great 'money' driver. In those hotly competitive days you had to be to survive when 'argy bargy' was not always obvious or even detectable in the days before race filming. The leading trainers of that era, especially names like Devine, Maurice McTigue, Vic Alborn, Jack Litten Wes Butt etc were not always "pretty" drivers taking all the short cuts like the greatest, Maurice Holmes.

Sometimes the short way was not the best way home especially if you were not Holmes, so the top trainers of the day like Devine put all the extra stamina into their charges they could to negate the luck factor as much as possible. It was quite different to today's 'less contact' style

So in most ways Cecil's Inter Dominion drive had been a brilliant one for the horse he was driving. Just one minor hitch spoiled the show.

False Step added to his 40m handicap with a slow beginning and settled at the rear of the field. With a round to go he was following Massacre but Watts was not interested in making a run at that stage.

"I was worried that some of the best chances, like Arania who were sharp sprinters were getting soft runs up near the leaders and could outspurt me in a run home. False Step needed to move mid- race because he was such a great stayer"

So Cecil launched from the 1000m and ranged up at the turn, a tactic that had beaten brilliant young sprinter Sun Chief in the NZ Cup just a few months before.

Just as happened then, the great horse kept surging and hit the front. If it had been just about anyone else than Doug Watts on Massacre it would have been game over.

But when False Step had moved at the bell Massacre had swapped positions and got on his back and there were few better judges of pace than Watts. He followed the hot favourite into the race then unleashed a very late sprint. But even he did not think he had won.



1961 Pacing Interdominion

Can you be the judge? The dramatic finish to the 1961 Inter Dominion at Addington between False Step (inner) and Massacre Arania, on the rail and the horse Cecil Devine feared most with a round to go was third. Lady Belmer (outside) was fourth

"I have been driving at Addington for many years and never made that mistake before" Cecil said of his misreading the finish.

In later years he never hid from his error which came down to the difference in carts. Devine always used a short-shafted cart in big races that were generally rated as having a better centre of balance. Massacre had one of the longer shafted carts then in use and was geared in it in such a way as to have Devine's wheel ahead of Watt's. This led both drivers to think False Step had won.

Many years later Devine went on television and explained how he drove the race and how the error was made. It's never easy to admit you made a mistake but Cecil never regretted that.

So False Step was denied his last great triumph before leaving for the US to where Cecil took him soon after. There bad luck struck again in that the horse had to be scratched from the first heat of the three leg International series after being adjudged sore, Had he competed and done well in that heat he might have won the series. Sold by Devine on behalf of owner Jim Smythe, False Step got down to 1.57 before dropping dead from a heart attack.

Certainly he and Cecil had caused a few heart flutters not long before at Addington, but it was a sad and premature ending to a great career

False Step the great stayer of the 1950's who won three NZ Cups and was cruelly robbed of an Inter Dominion Final in 1961

SHORT SNIPPETS

WA classic winner from strong NZ family

Sangue Reale, the upset winner of the \$125,000 WA 4YO Classic – the first Group 1 of the season – is an Art Major gelding from Christisimo, a Christian Cullen mare from the noted Krina family.

It was his seventh success and pushed his stake earnings over the \$140,000 mark. Christisimo, the dam of Sangue Reale, was a capable racemare winning 10 races including four at Gloucester Park, earning \$48,618 and taking a mile record of 1:57.2.

Watch the Sangue Reale race [click here](#).

At stud she has left three winners from three foals of racing age – all inside 1:58 – including the multiple Group winner Miss Sangrial 1:55.7 (\$199,714).

The next dam, Bellissimo, left eight individual winners, four of whom earned \$100,000 headed up by the Queensland Derby winner Torbello 1:56.1

(\$147,360) and The Gammalite winner The Cavalier 1:56.8 (\$248,434).

She is also the grand-dam of the top Western Australian pacers Ohokas Bondy 1:53.6 (\$388,148) and Code Red 1:55.1 (\$132,639), the Leonard Memorial winner Dancing Diamonds (\$343,276), and the exported Mr Ricky 1:52.6 (\$173,250).

Bellissimo, who was unraced, was by Smooth Fella from Krina Bella, by Lordship from the Van Dieman mare Bellajily, winner of the 1963 NZ Derby.

Others from this branch of the Krina tribe have been Be Happy Mach, the reigning Australian 2YO Colt of the Year, the dual NZ Sires Stakes champion Imagine That, Happy Hazel (NZ 3YO Filly of the Year), Heza Thrill (1:49.1), Keep It Up (SA Derby) and the NZ 2YO Filly of the Year Krina Bella, the fourth dam of Sangue Reale.

Lazarus Attracts Book of 250 Mares

Champion pacer Lazarus has already more than 250 confirmed bookings from Australia and New Zealand breeders for his first 'down under' season at Yirribee Pacing Stud, Wagga.

The dual NZ harness racing Horse of the Year served 136 mares in his initial season in New Jersey earlier this year.

QUALITY IN FOAL BROODMARES & WEANLINGS FOR SALE

The NZSBA currently has multiple listings of well-bred mares for sale/lease/free.

To find out more information and to see what is available, please [click here](#).

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High Class Rangiora Workout

Workouts at Rangiora generally come and go with little fanfare, but race last week was eye opening in terms of two-year old horse flesh and what they might equate too.

The five fillies in the field were all from the powerful All Stars Stable and as you might expect had a bit of breeding too them.

Four of the five runners dams had combined race earnings of \$2.6 million while the fifth mare only contributed \$10,000 in race stakes to her own name, her progeny have earned in excess of \$4,000,000.

The broodmares represented in the trial were;

- Adore Me
- O'Baby
- Twist and Twirl
- Splendid Dreams
- Tandias Bromac

Adore Me's second foal by Sweet Lou, Darling Me, lived up to the hype and won the workout by a head.

Two for Tommy

Highview Tommy had a great day at Methven on Sunday when picking up another two wins to his resume.

Both pacers had previously won races, but continue to show ability for their trainers.

The John McDermott trained, Refine, won its second race from 24 starts when taking out Race 4 at the Mt Harding venue.

In the last on the programme Glen Elgin Thompson won his second race from 6 starts for breeder/owner Hazel Van Opzeeland who also owns the sire, Highview Tommy having raced him successfully prior as an owner!

Success for Successor

On the same day that Heavyweight Hero made his successful race return, his mother safely foaled a colt by Muscle Mass for breeder Gael Murray,

making him a full-brother to the New Zealand record-holder.

The omen for those in the know occurred in the Green Mile at Methven, a fairly tough task for your first race since April.

Battling injuries, the son of Muscle Mass has been sent down south for a sojourn that is likely to include plenty of beach work and grass track racing to keep the niggles at bay.

McArdle plays part in leading InterDom Hopes

Amazingly, the late Bob McArdle has played a part in the breeding of favoured Inter Dominion Final contenders, Cruz Bromac (pacing) and Winterfell, the new NZ trotting record-holder.

Winterfell, 5g Majestic Son-Una Bromac, (by Live Or Die-Universal Kim), is from a mare bred by the late Bromac founder, Bob McArdle.

She won eight races when raced and managed by Trevor Casey, who bred and races Winterfell on his own account.

Winterfell is a half-brother to Trevor's former top filly/mare Escapee (1:57.4, 11 wins from 39 starts & \$272,783), while he's also a half-brother to good Australian winner Needle (1:57.4, 16 wins & \$122,4810), and another smart Australian winner, Caligula (1:56, seven wins & \$54,833).

Una Bromac was a good trotter herself when co-raced by with Bruce Negus, and associated trainers of the time in Craig Parsons and Todd Woodward.

Latterly, when raced by Trevor on his own account in the north, she scored a Group Two win in the 2005 Meadowset Graphics Challenge Stakes at Auckland when prepared by Leanne Edwards, defeating subsequent Dominion Handicap dead-heater, Martina H.

Una Bromac is pacing-bred, being a younger half-sister to fast Union Guy mare Ulrica Bromac (1:49.6, US), formerly NZ's fastest-bred female pacer, bred by the late Mr McArdle.

Winterfell, winner of both the NZ and Northern Trot Derby's, and the Harness Jewels 3YO Ruby at three, is growing in confidence racing right-handed through the series for master trainers, Mark Purdon and Natalie Rasmussen, after mixing his form at last month's NZ Cup meeting at Addington.

Gavel House Entries Due Today

The December **gavelhouse.com** Standardbred auction is set to be held a week earlier this month to allow for the busy Christmas period. Harness racing Entries are therefore due online by 7pm this Wednesday, 11 December.

There are two steps for new users to enter horses including **registering their user account** and then following the simple, self-service process to enter each horse.

The catalogue will be launched at 5pm on Thursday 12 December with the auction running through until 7pm Wednesday 18 December and **future auction dates** available here.

A standard entry fee is \$125 + GST however you can increase your listing's exposure by choosing a featured listing for \$200 + GST. This will ensure your horse's inclusion in an email newsletter to our comprehensive industry database plus sponsored social media posts. Each listing may have up to five photos plus video footage and in a major coup for the Standardbred industry, Arion pedigrees and race results automatically pull through to **gavelhouse.com** listings.

New Zealand Bloodstock Standardbred agent **Cam Bray** is the main point of contact for those looking to list horses and can be contacted on +64 21 737 199.

HARNESSEXPRESS TO DEPART AGAIN FROM NEXT WEEK

Brad Reid

The HarnessXpress publication is set to be relaunched next week and will be welcomed by many industry participants.

Long time harness racing journalist Frank Marrion began producing the Xpress, a twice-weekly

publication which went to subscribers as a PDF file via email, in 2015 in the wake of the NZ Harness Racing Weekly changing to the monthly publication, Harnessed.

However, after about two years, Marrion accepted a full-time position with Racing Media Ltd, the Auckland-based company which produced The Informant and an accompanying formguide.

Racing Media absorbed the Xpress and with support from HRNZ following the demise of Harnessed, The Informant began expanded coverage of harness racing while also providing content for the daily newspapers.

Racing Media then crashed in April and The Informant's editor, Dennis Ryan, has been behind the publication to replace it in RaceForm, which is being launched this week to also replace the Best Bets.

"We've been patiently waiting for this new publication to arise and when it did eventuate, it wasn't what we were anticipating and hoped for," said Marrion.

"It is just going to be a formguide for the TABs with a few preview stories wrapped around the fields and just piecemeal coverage of harness racing.

"That is not surprising given RaceForm is being underwritten by a group of thoroughbred interests, but it does again leave a rather big hole when it comes to providing regular industry news to harness racing participants."

The only significant change with the Xpress is that it will come out once a week on Wednesdays and focus entirely on the latter rather than having two issues a week.

"I think the punters are being pretty well looked after these days between what HRNZ, the RB and RaceForm are doing between them," said Marrion.

"So I'm not going to worry about producing the fields in a Friday morning issue as everything comes with a cost.

"I know now that we initially made some mistakes with the Xpress as we were venturing into the great unknown and got a bit over excited with costs in attempting to produce the best product possible, while probably undervaluing it as well.

"But with the benefit of hindsight, I know what sort of realistic targets need to be met in making the venture sustainable in the long term.

"We'll do a bit of preview stuff, but basically marry the two issues together into one big one and focus on reviews and recording achievements, news and editorial type content.

"I think the Xpress was very popular with a hardcore group of enthusiasts before mainly because it was an

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independent publication and we weren't always writing through rose tinted glasses.

"If there were issues that needed to be given some light, or a problem that needed to be addressed, I'd like to think we did that in a fair and balanced manner and I think that's the sort of stuff that people want to read.

"One thing for example that we will be keeping a close eye on next year are the developments in Operation Inca.

"It is unfortunate we have seen the demise of the Harness Racing Weekly, Harnessed and The Informant in recent years, but like a lot of things, they have been casualties of the internet.

"Harness racing has been a contracting industry in recent decades and can no longer sustain a printed publication due to the costs involved in printing and delivery in particular.

"We could produce the Xpress on a website and require people to remember yet another login and password, but I think most would prefer to see a bundled up package arriving in their inbox each week just like before with the Weekly in their mailbox."

Most people should receive the Xpress for free next week, but from then on they will be required to subscribe.

UNPRECEDENTED USA HORSE OF THE YEAR RACE IN 2019

Bob Heyden

Assuming nothing changes, the top six vote-getters in this year's Horse of the Year (HOY) ballot, all will have lost their last race, which is completely unprecedented in harness racing history:

Shartin N
Bettors Wish
Greenshoe

Manchego **Warrawee Ubeaut** **Gimpanzee**

The likely top three finishers in the 2019 HOY ballot in some order had a combined 12 second-place finishes between them.

Shartin N — 3 times **Bettors Wish — 6 times** **Greenshoe — 3 times**

Outside of Shartin N's post 8 off-the-board finish at Yonkers in the Matchmaker in her second start of the year (she would later dominate the \$401,000 final), no other race saw this top trio worse than second all year.

A couple of precedents here:

No horse has ever been voted HOY while being the Hambletonian runner-up the same year. Greenshoe has that fact to deal with. Three times a Hambletonian runner-up has been HOY, just not that year. Savoir was the 1975 HOY four years after being the runner-up in the Hambletonian. Delmonica Hanover was the 1974 HOY two years after finishing second in the Hambletonian. Victory Song, the very first HOY in 1947, was the 1946 Hambletonian runner-up.

Bret Hanover lost three times to Adios Vic in 1965 as a 3-year-old — his only three losses of the year. He was easily voted HOY, and even more, he won his division over his only conqueror 174 votes to 2.

This year, Caviart Ally decisioned Shartin N three times, all on mile tracks. We'll see how it plays out.

Matts Scooter and Shartin N

The 1989 HOY Matts Scooter was the runner-up the year before and won more money in 1988 than 1989 (\$1,140,994 after a \$1,783,558 season in 1988). Shartin N hopes to be the 2019 HOY and she too had a larger bankroll a year back becoming the first mare pacer to post a seven-figure season. In the 30 years in between, no HOY runner-up has come back the next year to be named HOY.

Killer "B"s

Bettors Wish, Bettors Delight, Bye Bye Byrd. IF Bettors Wish is voted HOY for 2019, 21-year-old stallion Bettors Delight would be the first pacing stallion in 43 years of that age to have a HOY. Bye Bye Byrd was 21 in 1976 when his son Keystone Ore nailed down the award. Bye Bye Byrd himself was the 1959 HOY as a 4-year-old.

Bettors Delight surging

Bettors Delight was never a HOY, but possibly is a HOY sire in 2019 with Bettors Wish. In 2000, as a 2-year-old, Bettors Delight won the \$871,475 Breeders Crown and sported a slate of 10 6-1-1 \$804,661. He also sired Caviart Ally, whose late season surge put her into the national conversation as a dragon-slayer —and she approaches \$2 Million career.

Meanwhile, Bettors Delight continues to surge as a sire. He has been the number one pacing sire in four of the last five years and his progeny earnings keep growing with each passing year. In 2019, he is on the cusp of the first \$25 million siring season:

2015 #1 — \$21,022,068

2016 #1 — \$21,382,375

2017 #2 (to Somebeachsomewhere) — \$22,918,898

2018 #1 — \$24,563,132

2019 #1 — \$24,680,089

Resilient HOY winners

1. Nevele Pride posted his 1:56.4 mile at Saratoga and his 1:54.4 mile at Indianapolis right after his defeat to Une De Mai in the high profile Roosevelt International.
2. Staying Together's 1:48.2 world record mile of June 19, 1993 — an all-time record by a full second — came after three straight loses — in the Hudock, Battle OF Lake Erie and the Driscoll elim.
3. Cam Fella started the 1983 season winning just two of his first eight starts. Then he won 28 straight to go 30-for-36 on the year, a Horse of the Year (HOY) record for wins and starts during the award-winning year.
4. Even though Matts Scooter was fifth in the Levy, second in the Graduate, fourth in the Canadian Pacing Derby and disqualified in the Battle Of Lake Erie to second in 1989, he won 23 of 30 attempts en route to HOY honors. No horse has started that many times since and been named Horse of the Year.
5. Here's something you almost never see for a horse voted the best of the year. Precious Bunny's first three purses in 1991 were \$7,600, \$8,500 and \$9,400. Yet, he still set the earnings record for a single season (\$2,217,222), one season after Beach Towel became the first single-season double millionaire.

How can this be?

Muscle Hill, Chapter Seven, Donato Hanover, Glidemaster, Malabar Man, Mack Lobell, Green Speed, Nevele Pride, Speedy Scot, Scott Frost, Rodney and Victory Song all were trotters who were voted Horse of the Year at least once, but never sired a Horse of the Year.

Why not Frank first?

Bion Shively in 1967 at age 89, became the first ever trainer/driver inducted into the Hall Of Fame. Rodney and Sharp Note, the 1952 Hambletonian winner, would be his career highlights. Even though he was 26 years younger, Frank Ervin, entering the 1967 season, had five HOY trophies to his name. No one else had more than two. Ervin went into the Hall in 1968.

TEMPORALE HITS STRIDE

Duane Ranger

Last Friday's winner of the 5th Interdominion Trotting Heat, Temporale, is like a fine wine getting better with age.

"It's still great to see him winning, especially off long marks. He's done us proud over the years, and is still one of the best horses that we have bred.

"We sold him when he was three-months-old as a foal at foot. I sold the mare with him because I was downsizing at the time. We always watch and cheer on our progeny," said Hulston, who is also know as 'Pup.

Temporale's latest two victories took his stake earnings to a few dollars under \$514,000.

The bay gelding was named by Brian West when he purchased him. He is out of the seven-win Armbro Invasion mare, Whosinthenest, who was bred by Neil Munro, who like Hulston, is based at West Melton.

"Tim Butt and Prop (Phil) Anderson originally trained Whosinthenest and then Billy Heads, before Neil took over her training with Jim O'Reilly. When she retired in 2008 David and Catherine Butt were her trainers.



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"She was a lovely mare who won just over \$66,000. We bred the first four foals from her before Studholme and Kahukuri Bloodstock bought her," Hulston said.

Whosinthenest's first foal – a Sundon colt named Strathfield Sun won one race and then came another Sundon colt named The Big Nest, which had to be put down due to health issues.

Hulston said the mare's third foal, a 4-year-old Sundon mare named Lily Campbell never raced but was sold via Ged Moorar at Nevele R Stud.

"Even though we have downsized considerably we have bred two colts from her – a Pegasus Spur 2-year-old, and a Majestic Son yearling. So, the family still carries on through them," he said.

The foal after Temporale, the 2013 Muscle Mass gelding, Miracle Rising won five races in New Zealand, and has since gone on to win seven more in Australia and \$114,475. He now races out of Grant Dixon's top Queensland stable and was a last start free-for-all winner at Redcliffe last Saturday night (November 2).

"Whosinethest has left another three foals since him, and then two more in Australia. Michael Azzopardi from Victoria bought her. She was last served over there by Father Patrick in January," Hulston said.

The 64-year-old Canterbury horseman has been involved in harness racing for about 40 years. He said he got into the game through his Kirwee rugby mates.

"My first horse was a 1975 Typhoon Hanover gelding named Seanui. He won a race for us and I think that got me hooked. Jack Litten trained him," Hulston said.

That Under-19 Kirwee team included Hulston, and the famous Gilmour, Stewart and Hayes trio of the legendary Canterbury Shield era, along with Peter Jones, Brian Kerr, Ian Shinn and Robert Dunn.

"It was a very good side. Hayes formed a loose forward trio along with Gilmour and Number 8 Kerr who never grew much after that. We won the Under-19 and Senior B Ellesmere competitions before the likes of Hayes won selection for Canterbury Country and ultimately became the best player to not be an All Black.

"Kerr went on to work for Jack Litten and led Gilmour, Hulston and Stewart into Seanui, Kerr

drove to win a 3-year-old race at Addington in April, 1979, before he was sold for big money to Australia," Hulston said.

But the best horse Hulston has bred is undoubtedly the 15-win Monarchy – Hands And Heels gelding King Charlie.

"He was a lovely trotter. I still have the mare on the property and just weaned a Peak filly from her. King Charlie did a huge job winning almost a quarter of a million dollars for his owners, including the Northern Trotting Derby. He also placed in the Jewels 4yo Final behind Springbank Richard," said Hulston who has farmed sheep and beef for much of his life.

Hulston's latest winner – Temporale is now owned by Herlihy's wife Suzanne (Ardmore), Kevin Riseley (Victoria), Dene Biddlecombe (Auckland), and Douglas Donaldson (Kaiwaka).

SNIPER COULD BE THE ULTIMATE

Duane Ranger

West Coast breeder, Graeme Walsh, admits he was bouncing around with a bit of a spring in his step the morning after Ultimate Sniper won the first heat of the 2019 Interdominion Championship at Alexandra Park. Sniper has followed that win up with astounding performances in the next two heats.

Walsh and his wife Katrina, bred Ultimate Sniper at their family-run Ultimate Breeding establishment at Westport.

The Mark Purdon and Natalie Rasmussen trained black entire, not only beat his stablemate, Chase Auckland, by half a neck, but also broke the New Zealand record 2200m record by a 0.7 of a second.

"That was a very gutsy win, especially from gate six. Natalie drove him inch perfect. It's a great thrill to breed an Interdominion heat winner, and to take the record off his little brother. I must say life is good today," Walsh said.

Ultimate Sniper stopped the clock in 2:35.4 with a scintillating 1:53.6 mile rate. He came home in 55.6 and 27.5. His full brother Ultimate Machete and Dalton Bromac shared the previous national record.

"If we ever wanted 'Machete's' record broken we would want the new mark set by another one of our progeny – and this time it's not shared.

"The Bettor's Delight brothers are very tough race-horses, but this fella might be a bit quicker. I think he shows a bit more zip. I know he's now the Interdom favourite, but you can never get carried away in this sport. It's racing and you always need good luck and good draws," a chuffed Walsh said.

Ultimate Machete and Ultimate Sniper are the fifth and seven sons out of the 2003 four-win Armbro Operative – Maureen's Dream (by Lordship) mare, Reality Check.

They fetched \$84,000 and \$85,000 at their respective Yearling sales.

"We were originally going to give up on the mare because Katrina and I didn't think that her early foals were returning the price they should have. The dam's mother won five races.

"We came so close to giving her the sack. In hindsight it would have been the worst breeding decision we could have made. She's come good," Walsh said.

Has she what!

Reality Check, has now left three classy Group One winners and a couple of other nice yearlings who have fetched good prices at the Yearling Sales.

Foal three, Just Like Mum (by Art Major) sold for \$31,000 at the 2013 New Zealand Premier Sale. She was purchased by Kim Prentice of Perth and has since had her name changed to Major Reality.

"She's done real well over there. She won the (Group One) Western Australian Oaks in 2015 and the Norms Daughter Classic, as well as a couple of other Group races

"All up she's won 23 of her 55 starts, gone a 1:50.0 mile rate and banked more than \$430,000," the West Coast real estate agent said.

The foal between Ultimate Machete and Ultimate Sniper – Ideal Reality never raced. However, Walsh said that 2014 American Ideal mare, Ideal Reality, had left a lovely Bettor's Delight colt.

"He is Lot 369 in next year's Yearling Sale in Christchurch. She is also due to leave another Bettor's Delight foal any day.

"We have opted to keep going back to Bettor's Delight because it has worked, and the owners and good trainers also like him," Walsh said.

After Ultimate Sniper, Reality Check left the Walsh's a 2016 Art Major colt named Ultimate Assassin.

"Barry Purdon paid \$56,000 for him at the Yearling Sales, but sadly he died of laminitis as a 2-year-old. Then in 2018 the mare left us an Art Major filly called Rhapsody Franco.

"We sold her privately to Spreydon Lodge and Nevele R Stud. As a mark of respect to them I'd prefer not to say what they paid for her."

Walsh said Reality Check has this year foaled a daughter of Bettor's Delight, which is under offer, and she was just recently back in foal to that same sire again.

"My wife and I are both real estate agents and own branches in Westport and Hokitika. Harness racing has always been a hobby of ours but just lately it's been quite successful," Walsh said.

"Horses have always been a welcome relief away from our businesses. We do equestrian as well," he added.

They purchased Reality Check for about \$60,000 off Rod Coon at a Broodmares Sale in 2009.

"She was a good 2-year-old apparently and broke down the winner of four races. We bought her in foal to Christian Cullen and she produced a filly named Ultimate Reality. Rod had already bred one from her. His name was Roy The Boy.

"Roy The Boy (By Christian Cullen) sold for \$55,000 at the Sales and then died sadly. Our Christian Cullen filly named Ultimate Reality was lightly framed and never raced but has since left three foals," Walsh said.

So who is going to be the toughest for Ultimate Sniper to beat in the Interdominion \$500,000 Grand Final on December 14?

"I'd say his stablemates, Cruz Bromac and Chase Auckland. The Queenslander, Colt Thirty One, also reeled off some quick sectionals in a record race."

FANNY CREAMS THEM

Duane Ranger

She's got no brothers or sisters, her Mum is dead, and she could have died not long after giving birth, having to be bottle-fed to get through the early stages of her fragile infant life.

But fast forward three years and 18 days, Fanny Hill is thriving. So much so the 4-year-old Muscle Hill mare, has now won three of her nine starts and placed in three others. Her bank balance sits at \$21,550.

The Phil Williamson trained and Brad Williamson driven bay won her first start in the North Island on Interdomion night at Alexandra Park on Interdoms Night 1 when triumphant by a length in the third event for the R50 to R84 trotters. She ran third the following Tuesday.

She is owned and was bred by 67-year-old Southland sheep farmer, John Duff, who viewed his pride and joy win some 1,620km away from the comforts of his farm.

"I watched the race on TV and was very chuffed. Phil has done a very good job with her in a short time. She hasn't had it easy, especially early on in life. She was strong when she was a weanling and is even stronger now.

"Her mother got mastitis when she was born. Her milk ducts were blocked and her nipples were so cracked that she had to be bottle-fed.

"It was touch-and-go there for a while, but both girls pulled through. It was a real credit to Macca Lodge. They saved both of them. I'm extremely grateful for that," Longbush-based Duff said.

That dam was the two-win 2009 Monarchy – Madam Heidi (by Sundon) mare, Royal Squeeze. She was originally trained by Tony Stratford and then Jonny Cox and Amber Hoffman.

"I paid about \$20,000 for her at the 2011 Yearling sales off Dr Tony and Anne Parker of Auckland. Ian Wilson spotted her for me. Her mother (Madam Heidi) also won two races, and I thought her bloodlines were quite strong," Duff said.

He said Royal Squeeze raced 33 times and banked just over \$16,000 between September 2012 and November 2014.

"I thought she was going to be better than average, but after she won at Gore (October 2012) she went out on the training track one morning and then developed colic.

"She was never the same after that, and only won one more race (Riverton, November 2013). I pulled the plug on her in late 2014, and then put her to Muscle Hill," said Duff.

Fanny Hill was the result.

Royal Squeeze then missed to Quaker Jet and Majestic Son in 2016.

"Then in November (2016) Royal Squeeze died soon after we put her to another stallion. I'm not sure exactly what happened, but I think she may have suffered from a twisted bowel.

"it was pretty sad really, because I wanted to breed on from her. Now all I have is Fanny Hill to carry the breed on, and to be fair I'm not sure or not if I will be the one who puts her to a stallion when she retires.

"I'm closer to 70 now and it's not a cheap game. She's still a wee way off from retiring. I'm just happy to watch her and Phil do the business on the tack for now. I'll just play it one day at a time," Duff said.

He said he enjoyed being an owner-breeder, but preferred being part of syndicates.

"It's much cheaper and a lot of fun sharing victories with others. I've only really bred two horses. I also co-bred Flying Diamonds, who is a 13-year-old son of Falcon Seelster and Deckedindiamonds (by Soky's Atom).

"Deckedindiamonds won eight races and just under \$50,000. She left four foals. Flying Diamonds was her second foal. He went on to win seven races here (\$77,093) and three more in Australia (\$131,146) under the name of High Flying Diamonds."

Duff said it wasn't the first time that he had raced a horse in the North Island.

"Royal Squeeze raced at Cambridge in the Group One 3yo Jewels (Emerald) Final and finished down the field when Ken Barron trained her, and she also finished twice for him at Alexandra Park in December 2014.

"This is my first winner up there and I'm very proud of what Fanny Hill has achieved," the quietly spoken farmer said.

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