

Sunday 18 February 2018

COLT RETURNS STRONG **DERBY TRIAL**



On The Rocks, back in NZ Derby favour after taking out the Gr.2 Avondale Guineas

On **The Rocks (NZ)** (Alamosa) is back in Group One contention after downing his fellow classic hopefuls at Ellerslie.

The Alamosa colt dropped down the pecking order after he was unplaced in the Karaka Million 3YO Classic (1600m), but he's back in business after knocking off a strong three-year-old line-up in Saturday's Gr.2 Electrolux Avondale

Guineas (2100m).

On The Rocks' performance under stable jockey Jake Bayliss has seen his Gr.1 Vodafone New Zealand Derby (2400m) odds come in from \$16 to \$6.50.

"To be honest, I was a bit dubious today about the wet track, but he's just so brave," said Pam Gerard, who trains with Michael Moroney.

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COLT RETURNS STRONG **DERBY TRIAL**

(Continued from page 1)

“His work during the week was absolutely outstanding and it was a beautiful ride from Jake. Very patient and it was all about getting the horse to settle and finish off and he’s done that.

“I would like a better track for the Derby and a good draw.”

Out of a half-sister to the Gr.1 Melbourne Cup (3200m) and Gr.1 VRC Derby (2500m) winner Efficient (NZ) (Zabeel), On The Rocks raced behind the pace and he finished determinedly in the straight for the third win of his seven-start career.

“At his last start he raced on a hot speed and they really turned it up at the 800m and he got bottomed out,” Bayliss said.

“I was full of confidence today, his work had been huge and he was on his toes. I got him to settle better and he towed me into it at the top of the straight and kicked.

“He’s got plenty up his sleeve and I think he’s a big Derby hope. He’ll be a length or two better on a good surface as well.”

The filly Danzdzandance (Mastercraftsman) ran on well for second to also do her Derby claims no harm while Vin De Dance (NZ) (Roc De Cambes), Scott Base (NZ) (Dalghar) and Mission Hill (Teofilo) were next home and also returned solid trials for the upcoming feature on March 3.

– NZ Racing Desk.

Race	ARC Avondale Guineas Gr.2 2100m
Winner	On The Rocks (NZ) 2014
Owners	Ballymore Stables NZ Ltd, A Clark, N Gurney, A Mathieson, On The Rocks Syndicate, D P Sinn, Richard Sims, Jim Bebedellis, George Alas & John McNicholas
Trainer	Michael Moroney & Pam Gerard (Matamata)
Breeding	by Alamosa out of Cold Shoulder by Volksraad (GB)
Breeder	WJ Gleeson
Sales	2016 National Yearling Sale – Select Session; V: Wellfield Lodge, P: Paul Moroney Bloodstock; \$40,000



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GRUNT STAMPS HIS AUST GUINEAS CREDENTIALS

Trainer Mick Price has bolstered his chances of winning a third Australian Guineas after promising colt **Grunt (NZ)** (O'Reilly) confirmed his credentials in a traditional lead-up race at Flemington.

Lightly raced Grunt, ridden by Damien Oliver, took his record to three wins from four starts when he edged past well-performed colt and Australian Guineas favourite Cliff's Edge (Canford Cliffs) to take out Saturday's Group Three C S Hayes Stakes (1400m).

"He beat the right horse and he won the right way," Price said.

"The 1400 metres is not his ideal distance, it's a bit short for him, but that's his run to get him into the Australian Guineas.

"The Guineas is a Group One and he's a beautiful O'Reilly colt. He's a good-winded horse, perfectly sound, and I think that will take a bit of freshness out of him."

Grunt was wound in from \$15 to \$6 for the Australian

Guineas (1600m) in two weeks after the win, with Price also aiming Caulfield Guineas-winning colt Mighty Boss (Not A Single Doubt) and last week's winner Holy Snow (Fastnet Rock) at the race.

"It's a value race for them as colts," Price said.

"But he does have to beat Holy Snow and Mighty Boss."

Price has won the Australian Guineas with Light Fantastic (Danehill Dancer) (2008) and Heart Of Dreams (Show A Heart) (2009).

-AAP

Race	VRC CS Hayes S. Gr.3 1400m
Winner	Grunt (NZ) 2014
Owners	R & C Legh Racing Pty Ltd, Wright Racing, Gurners Bloodstock Co, Mr R Smith, Mr G Pulitano, Mr S Tsalikidis, Mr C Cortese
Trainer	Mick Price (Caulfield)
Breeding	by O'Reilly out of Ruqqaya by Van Nistelrooy (USA)
Breeder	Trelawney Thoroughbred Ltd
Sales	2016 National Yearling Sale – Premier Session; V: Trelawney Stud, P: M G Price Racing/Cameron Cooke B/stock; \$220,000



Grunt winner of the Gr.3 CS Hayes Stakes





RIMRAAM LANDS PLUNGE FIRST-UP IN VANITY

Rimraam (NZ) (Commands) has landed a betting plunge for Lindsay Park with her first-up victory in a stakes race at Flemington.

The filly was backed from \$16 to \$7.50 before taking out the Group Three The Vanity on Saturday.

Damien Oliver gained a run on the fence over the final 200m to defeat Bring Me Roses (High Chaparral) (\$9) by a half neck with Shokora (Nicconi) (\$7.50) a half-head away third.

Rimraam was having her first start since running seventh in the VRC Oaks (2500m) at Flemington last spring.

“She didn’t stay in the spring,”

Lindsay Park senior co-trainer David Hayes said.

“She can still run in an Oaks, this time, but it might be the Australasian Oaks over in Adelaide.

“We might look at a race like the Vinery Stud Stakes at Rosehill along the way.”

Hayes explained Rimraam had taken time to break her maiden status last campaign, but run some good races in stakes race on her way to the Oaks.

“She’s a filly that was knocking on the door in the Group races in the spring and it’s great now that she’s

now a Group winner,” Hayes said.

“She got a big plus today, she didn’t go around a horse.

“An Ollie special.”

Hayes said Rimraam was likely to head to the next month’s Group Two Kewney Stakes (1400m) at Flemington on March 10.

“I think we’ll take on the girls. It might be a good Guineas this year,” he said.

Hayes said third-placed stablemate Shokora was likely to follow a similar path to Rimraam and aim towards the Australasian Oaks in May.

Aloisia (NZ) (Azamour), the \$4.40 favourite, pleased connections with her first-up fifth after coming from last on the turn.

-AAP



Race	VRC Vanity S. Gr.3 1400m
Winner	Rimraam (NZ) 2014
Owners	Shadwell Stud Australasia Ltd
Trainer	David & B Hayes & T Dabernig (Flemington)
Breeding	by Commands (AUS) out of Swansea (IRE) by Singspiel (IRE)
Breeder	O’Shea Family Trust & Rosemont Stud Pty Ltd

Rimraam in full flight on her way to victory in the Gr.3 Vanity Stakes





RITCHIE SUCCESSFULLY EXECUTES ANOTHER SOUTHERN MISSION

Shaune Ritchie rolled back the years on Saturday when **Global Thinking** (So You Think) won the Listed ILT Ascot Park Hotel Southland Guineas (1600m).

The Cambridge trainer won the event in 1995 with The Hyatt (NZ) (Spectacular Love), but success this time around will have a much more lasting effect.

“The Hyatt was a gelding and the key factor here was identifying a filly that is a length or two below the three-year-olds up north and turning her into a black type winner,” the Cambridge trainer said.

“She’s cemented her broodmare career now. Placing this type of filly to do that was always the way to go.”

Runner-up last time out in the Listed Dunedin Guineas (1500m), Global Thinking settled last before she looped the field in the hands of Kylie Williams and then charged clear in the straight to beat The Sparkle (NZ) (Darci Brahma) and Courte Zarindi (NZ) (Any Suggestion).

“Life was a lot easier without Excelleration (NZ) (Exceed and Excel) in the race,” Ritchie said.

“Sean Bellew has been taking care of her down there for me and he’s done a wonderful job so thanks to him.”

Global Thinking will now get one more chance of picking up further black type on her southern excursion.

“She’ll run in the NZB Insurance Stakes at Wingatui in a fortnight’s time and she’ll almost certainly come home after that,” Ritchie said.

Meanwhile, the stable wasn’t prepared to risk the promising stayer Excalibur (NZ) (Tavistock) on a rain-affected track at Ellerslie.

“He’s won three of his last four starts and couldn’t go in



Global Thinking gets an all important black-type victory to boost her broodmare credentials

that sort of ground when he was beaten on New Year’s Day,” Ritchie said.

“He’ll go to Hastings for a Rating 85 over 2100m and if he runs well he could still go to the Auckland Cup.”

– NZ Racing Desk.

Race	Southland Guineas L 1600m
Winner	Global Thinking (AUS) 2014
Owners	J Botoulas, J Cuthbertson, P J Keep, C Konstantopoulos, KR Racing Pty Ltd, S K McGregor, L Mete, P Palmer, N Twyford & R Williams
Trainer	Shaune Ritchie (Cambridge)
Breeding	by So You Think (NZ) out of Capital Raising (AUS) by General Nediym (AUS)
Breeder	Mr G Calder
Sales	2015 National Weanling, Broodmare & Mixed Bloodstock Sale; V: Curraghmore Stud, P: NZB as agent; \$42,500 2016 National Yearling Sale – Premier Session, V: Phoenix Park, P: KR Racing; \$40,000



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ALMOST COURT, EMPEROR'S WAY SHARE SPOILS

Trainer Paul Snowden queried Glyn Schofield's tactics after developing stayer Emperor's Way had to settle for a dead heat with pacesetter **Almost Court (NZ)** (Alamosa) at Randwick.

The duo could not be split in the Fairfax & Roberts Jewellers Handicap (2000m) after Emperor's Way (Roman

Emperor), the \$3.50 favourite, made a last-ditch dive at the line.

Snowden had virtually conceded the race when Schofield opted to go around The Bandit at the 300m rather than slip to the inside to make ground on Almost Court (\$7.50) and Christian Reith.

"Head on there's enough room to go in and he's decided to come out. Schoey had his reasons, that was the difference," Snowden said.

Schofield conceded he may have erred in the run home.

"I'm glad to see the number go up to share it, it may have cost him the outright win," he said.

"I elected for a little bit of clear room, I wasn't sure where Blake (Spriggs) was going to go (on The Bandit)."

Snowden, who trains the four-year-old gelding with his father Peter, marvelled at top weight's determination to reel in Almost Court.

"It was a massive effort from the little horse. It's a testament to how hard he tries. I thought the bird had flown,"

Snowden said.

"He's got 58 kilos today, he's got a very big will to win."

Almost Court's co-trainer Paul Jones was satisfied with the outcome as the five-year-old gelding aims for the Canberra Cup. –AAP

Race	ATC Fairfax & Roberts Jewellers H. 2000m
Winner	Almost Court (NZ) 2012
Owners	Mr PA Jones, Mr P H Joseph, Mrs B M Joseph, Mr B D Court, Mrs L S Court, Mr MG Jones, Mrs M T Guthrie-Curran, Mr J Black, Mrs E M Black, Mr M K Walcott, Mr A M Mills, Mr D L Gaul, Mr M D Gaul, Mr M Gray, Mr A Smith, Mr G Kearney, Mr J Kearney, Mr B Arcidiacono, Mr L M Bason, J J R Partnership
Trainer	Barbara Joseph & Paul Jones (Canberra)
Breeding	by Alamosa out of Cinder Bella by Victory Dance (IRE)
Breeder	Cambridge Hunt Ltd; B M Hancock & C J G McFarlane
Sales	2014 National Yearling Sale – Select Session; V: Curraghmore Stud, P: Courtco Racing; \$36,000



Almost Court had to settle for a dead-heat victory at Royal Randwick





SAINTLY RETURN FROM CLASSY GREY

Model racehorse **Saint Emilion (NZ)** (Mastercraftsman) will add further quality to his stable's assault on an upcoming Group One feature.

The Murray Baker and Andrew Forsman-trained grey warmed up for the Gr.1 Bonecrusher New Zealand Stakes (2000m), a weight-for-age contest also on the programme of his stablemate Lizzie L'Amour (NZ) (Zabeel) and possibly Nicoletta (NZ) (Savabeel), on March 10 with a stylish return at Ellerslie on Saturday.

Saint Emilion took up his favoured front-running role in the Appliance Shed Handicap (1500m) and he left his rivals struggling in his wake in the run home to continue his outstanding winning strike rate.

"We purposefully freshened him up for the Bonecrusher so he's on target," Forsman said.

"Once he's rolling along he can dictate the race and it was a good, strong win. He's a class horse and very genuine."

Saint Emilion, who has now won 12 of his 35 starts, hadn't raced since November, but he had signalled his readiness to return with a recent trial success at Cambridge.

"He had been working really well and I guess the track was the only



Saint Emilion made a stylish return at Ellerslie

query, but he needed a good hit-out and he got it," Forsman said.

Saint Emilion travelled comfortably in the lead and he held a strong gallop to comfortably account for Arraignment (NZ) (Nom Du Jeu) and Camino Rocosco (NZ) (Shocking), who were both in receipt of six kilos from the Mastercraftsman gelding.

"When he gets to the front he just loves it, he was spot on," rider Matt Cameron said.

"He's got a high cruising speed and

once I got to the 600m I just clicked him up. He was too good."

– NZ Racing Desk.

Race	ARC Appliance Shed H. 1500m
Winner	Saint Emilion (NZ) 2011
Owners	Est late RA Horton
Trainer	Murray Baker & Andrew Forsman (Cambridge)
Breeding	by Mastercraftsman (IRE) out of Roseario by Pentire (GB)
Breeder	Mrs RA Horton



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ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL FOR RAE FOLLOWERS

Kenny Rae's punting mates may have felt short-changed after **Kaharau** (Ad Valorem) won at Ellerslie, but they were all smiles after stablemate Major Tom (NZ) (Red Giant) followed suit in the closing event on Saturday.

The Ruakaka horseman gave the former little chance in the Westinghouse Nathan's Memorial (2400m) and was much keener on

the latter's prospects in the Vodafone Events Centre Handicap (2100m).

"My tip was Major Tom, I thought he could win again, but I didn't think Kaharau could win with the weight – I was wrong but who cares," said Rae, who trains with his wife Lisa and their daughter Krystal Williams.

Kaharau's victory under 60kg has put him right in the Gr.1 Auckland Cup (3200m) picture.

Spratt before trailing and he was back in front 300m from home.

The six-year-old showed the tenacious side of his nature in the straight to hold the challenge of Ladies First (NZ) (Dylan Thomas) at bay to win by a short head. Araldo Junior (Medcian) gave a strong account of himself in his New Zealand debut to be a long head back in third.

Kaharau's stablemate Major Tom had little trouble justifying Rae's faith in the son of Redwood when he posted a clear-cut victory off the back of a Pukekohe success six days previously.

"He doesn't need a heavy track, he's a very talented horse on dead to slow tracks," Rae said. "He's really switched on in the last two or three months."

Major Tom completed a double for apprentice Jasmine Fowcett, who had earlier been successful aboard the Bill Pomare-trained Rich Billie Marsh (NZ) (Viking Ruler).

– NZ Racing Desk.



His odds for the Barfoot & Thompson-sponsored feature tumbled from \$61 to \$14 after a determined dress rehearsal display to win Saturday's open handicap.

Placed in the Gr.3 New Zealand Cup (3200m) in the spring, Kaharau led early for jockey Sam

Race	ARC Westinghouse Nathan's Memorial H. 2400m
Winner	Kaharau (AUS) 2011
Owners	M M Harris, G A Matches & K I Rae
Trainer	Ken, Lisa Rae & Krystal Williams (Ruakaka)
Breeding	by Ad Valorem (USA) out of Mon Jolie by Montjeu (IRE)
Breeder	Mr R Sanderson

Kaharau leaves punters feeling short-changed at Ellerslie





FILLY CHASING EARLY STAKES REWARD FOR TRAINER

Smart filly **Astor (NZ)** (Iffraaj) will bid to give her tyro trainer Cody Cole the first black type training success of his career at her next appearance.

The three-year-old finished runner-up to Melody Belle (NZ) (Commands) in the Gr.3 Mongolian Khan Trophy (1200m) in her first start for the Matamata horseman and she had no trouble going one better in Saturday's Beko Appliances 1200m at Ellerslie.

Race	ARC Beko Appliances Stakes 1200m
Winner	Astor (NZ) 2014
Owners	GE Harding
Trainer	Cody Cole (Matamata)
Breeding	by Iffraaj (GB) out of Hukba (AUS) by Shamardal (USA)
Breeder	RM Tunncliffe
Sales	2016 National Yearling Sale – Select Session; V: Haunui Farm, P: GE Harding; \$95,000

“As long as she gets through this okay, she’ll be back here for the Listed Mufhasa Stakes on Derby Day,” Cole said.

Astor handled the Slow 8 conditions comfortably enough, but she is expected to be far more effective on a better surface.

“When you ride her, her action suggests she wants to be on top of the ground,” Cole said.

The daughter of Iffraaj settled third under Cole’s partner Samantha Collett before moving off the fence to sit on the leader’s quarters.

“Sam did the right thing by popping out – you don’t want to get unlucky in a small field,” he said.

Astor quickly mastered the frontrunner Not Usual Heart into the straight and they coasted clear to score by three and three-quarter lengths from Morrie Ock and Eeny Meeny Miny Mo.

“There was no Melody Belle in the field this time and I

didn’t want to get stuck in a pocket so I opted to push the button,” Collett said.

“They didn’t go that fast early and she did relax and found a very good kick.”

– NZ Racing Desk.



Astor, impressive at Ellerslie

