

Sunday 14 August 2016

SARACINO HAS AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER WHEN ASKED A SERIOUS QUESTION IN FOXBRIDGE



Saracino gallops his way into Caulfield Guineas contention with a commanding win in yesterday's weight-for-age feature at Te Rapa.

The connections of **Saracino (NZ)** (Per Incanto) yesterday asked a serious question of the three-year-old and the colt's answer – breaking his maiden at the expense of the older horses with a commanding front-running performance in Te Rapa's Group Two Lisa Chittick Foxbridge Plate – has booked his trip to the Melbourne spring carnival.

"We want to get him to Australia and a race like this has given us a good line on where he's at," said Andrew Forsman, who trains Saracino in partnership with Murray Baker.

"We've always known he had the ability and it was nice to see him get to the front and keep going and not prick his ears and pull up.

Raced by Wellingtonian Lib Petagna, Saracino's main aim will be the \$A1 million Group One Caulfield Guineas on October 8 and a decision on whether he has another run in New Zealand will be made after the weekend.

Saracino hadn't raced since he finished third in last season's Group One Manawatu Sires' Produce Stakes, but he

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SARACINO HAS AFFIRMATIVE ANSWER WHEN ASKED A SERIOUS QUESTION IN FOXBRIDGE

(Continued from page 1)

had won an open heat at the recent Te Teko trials.

“He came on a lot after the trial and he will improve again,” Forsman said. “He’s a nice, athletic horse and a natural who is a pleasure to train.”

Saracino bounced straight to the front and when rider Lisa Allpress asked him for a serious effort in the straight he quickly changed gear and comfortably held his rivals at bay.

“He’s quite professional and was so happy out there,” Allpress said. “He had his ears pricked and was on the bridle. I just had to hold him up as long as I could.”

No More Tears (NZ) (Darci Brahma) pleased trainer Stephen

Marsh with her second placing ahead of a crack at the Group One Makfi Challenge Stakes while another Hastings hopeful in Authentic Paddy (NZ) (Howbaddouwantit) got home well for third.

Race	Waikato RC Foxbridge P. Gr.2 1200m
Winner	Saracino (NZ) 2013
Owners	JML Bloodstock Ltd (Mgr L Petagna)
Trainer	Murray Baker & Andrew Forsman (Cambridge)
Breeding	by Per Incanto (USA) out of Bella Daniela by O'Reilly
Breeder	JML Bloodstock Ltd

NEWS IN BRIEF

Jeff picks a path for Panno Rossa

Premiership-winning jockey Jeff Lloyd yesterday put his years of experience in rating tracks to help score his first win of the new season at Eagle Farm. Lloyd was shuffled back to last on the fence aboard the heavily backed \$2.90 favourite **Panno Rossa (NZ)** (Testa Rossa) before surging home to win the 2230 metre Country Music Race Day Open Handicap.

The inside at Eagle Farm has generally been a no-go zone for jockeys since the rebuilt track was reopened in June, but Lloyd says he had no hesitation in staying along the fence when most of the other runners went wide.

“I have noticed the inside has been OK for the first few races at Eagle Farm but as the day goes on you have to get wider,” he said.

From the Zabeel mare Belleza, the Gerry Harvey-bred Panno Rossa has been a great money-spinner for trainer Kelly Doughty, who has had him for only his past five starts.

“He has won three and been runner-up twice for us but should have won both those seconds,” Doughty said.

“I only ran him today because he would have got 60kg in a restricted race next week and he got 54kg in an open handicap today.”

– AAP TURF



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WIDE DRAW QUIETENS SHANE'S NERVES BEFORE STAR FILLY'S POWERPACKED WIN

Trainers usually rue a wide draw but it kept the nerves away for Shane Nichols before the first-up win by **I Am A Star (NZ)** (I Am Invincible) in the Group Three Quezette Stakes at yesterday's Caulfield meeting.

I Am A Star drew the widest barrier – 13, after three scratchings – but it mattered little as she charged home to an impressive win.

Ridden by Steven King, I Am A Star – solid in the betting markets at \$6.50 – scored by a head over Leotie (Darci Brahma) with Athena Lass (Snitzel) a half-head away in third.

"If I'd drawn barrier five I would have been toey and nervous about what could possibly be," Nichols said. "But when we drew 16 it released all the pressure. I thought we could ride her conservatively and let her power home."

Nichols questioned whether the filly had done enough following a four-week break and eight weeks of work. She was having just her fourth career start, the two most recent outings, in May, bringing wins at Flemington and in a stakes race at Morphettville.

Halfway down the Caulfield straight Nichols thought she was going to run a nice race for fourth or fifth before I Am A Star lifted his expectations by putting on the afterburners.

"She was a pair further back than I would have liked and Steve probably thought the same thing," Nichols said.

"I didn't think she was going to win until there was just twenty metres to go."

Nichols has the 1200 metre

Atlantic Jewel Stakes at Moonee Valley on September 3 earmarked as her next outing followed by the Thousand Guineas Prelude at Caulfield on September 24.

"We'll get to the 1400 metre lead-up to the Thousand Guineas and then we'll assess where we go after that," Nichols said.

"Steve is fairly adamant she'll run a mile. She's not a big robust filly so we'll nurse her along."

– AAP TURF

Race	MRC Quezette S. Gr.3 1100m
Winner	I Am a Star (NZ) 2013
Owners	M B Sandblom
Trainer	Shane Nichols (Mornington)
Breeding	by I Am Invincible (Aus) out of Star Band (USA) by Dixieland Band (USA)
Breeder	Eales Racing Pty Ltd
Sales	2014 National Weanling, Broodmare & Mixed Sale; V: Rich Hill Stud, P: Llanhennock Trust; \$12,000



I Am A Star (#4) dashes through late to snatch a Group Three win against her fellow three-year-old fillies in Caulfield's Quezette Stakes.





UPPER CUT GIVES MARK **A FIFTH NATIONAL**

Mark Oulaghan landed the biggest Grand National Steeplechase uppercut of all when he claimed his fifth victory in Riccarton's prestigious jumping feature.

The Awapuni trainer's conditioning skills were perfectly showcased when he produced **Upper Cut (NZ)** (Yamanin Vital) for an impressive survival-of-the-fittest performance to claim top honours in yesterday's Racecourse Hotel & Motor Lodge-sponsored event.

Now the most successful trainer in the history of the race following doubles in 1997 and '98 by Deecee Seven (NZ) (Bandmaster II) and 2010 and '11 by Counter Punch (NZ) (Yamanin Vital), he has been patient with Upper Cut, who required a year off following a tendon injury in 2012.

"He won his first two 'chases and then had a sequence of problems so full credit to the horse for the way he has bounced back," Oulaghan said.

Upper Cut has been sparingly raced due to his injuries, but there was confidence in his camp ahead of the National following a brave effort to finish runner-up in the Koral Steeplechase seven days ago.

"We were very happy with his run on the first day and he had done well since," Oulaghan said.

Spirits were furthered buoyed after a solid final work-out from the ten-year-old on Thursday morning.

During the running, Upper Cut was in touch with the pace throughout



Aussie jockey Paul Hamblin has a fair smearing of Riccarton mud as Upper Cut carries him through the last fence on his way to Grand National success.

and stayed on strongly after jumping the final fence in front under leading Australian jockey Paul Hamblin.

"It's been a good year for me and this tops it off," Hamblin said. "He was a bit keen, like he was the other day, but he kept finding. It's not about me, though; it's the trainer and I've always had respect for him."

Upper Cut beat Mr Mor (NZ) (Corrupt), who also finished runner-up twelve months ago, by half a length and they were clear of Gargamel (NZ) (Sunray), who nosed last year's winner High Forty (NZ) (Danzighill) out of third money.

The favourite The Big Opal (NZ) (Storm Creek) made the running until

he slipped on landing after clearing the fence 1000 metres out and rider Matt Gillies lost an iron. He tried to stay balanced and horse and rider did well to stay competitive well into the straight but they came to grief at the final obstacle.

Race	CJC Grand National Steeplechase 5600m
Winner	Upper Cut (NZ) 2006
Owners	M D Ormsby, A P Duncan, M K Oulaghan, S J Speedy and W L Scott
Trainer	Mark Oulaghan (Awapuni)
Breeding	by Yamanin Vital out of Volucitate by Volksraad (GB)
Breeder	J E & Mrs S M Murray





RICCARTON WIN HAS HENI AIMING HIGH

Mike Breslin believes **Heni (NZ)** (Towkay) can take the next and most important step of her career in the wake of her latest South Island success.

The Awapuni trainer yesterday produced the mare to win for the fourth time at Riccarton when she claimed the Millennium Hotels & Resorts Premier Open and completed a double for the carnival following her success on the middle day.

“She always backs up well and it was a really classy effort,” said Breslin, who won the corresponding event twelve months ago with Salamanca (NZ) (Alamosa).

“I think she’s ready to step into black type company now. I’ll give serious thought to the Group Three race at Hawera and then back here for the Breeders’ Stakes in November.”

He was firstly referring to the Taranaki Breeders’ Stakes in early October and then the Group Three Canterbury Breeders’ Stakes on the second day of the New Zealand Cup festival.

Heni kept company with the leader Saperavius (NZ)

(Saperavi) to the turn then dug deep down the straight for the seventh win of her 23-start career.

“She wanted to be right up there and she held on really nicely,” said rider Danielle Hirini, who had claimed the previous event on the six-year-old’s stablemate Glengoyne (Statue of Liberty) and completed a hat-trick one race later on Onefortheditch (NZ) (Elusive City).

Heni won by a length from the favourite and Group Three Winter Cup runner-up Platinum Command (NZ) (Red Giant), who ran on well from last but without seriously threatening the winner.

Race	CJC Millennium Hotels & Resorts H. 1400m
Winner	Heni (NZ) 2010
Owners	W J Duncan
Trainer	Mike Breslin (Awapuni)
Breeding	by Towkay (Aus) out of Bahhzaar by Bahhare (USA)
Breeder	W J Duncan



Heni continues her strong gallop through the finish line for Danielle Hirini as hot favourite Platinum Command finds one better for the second time during National week.



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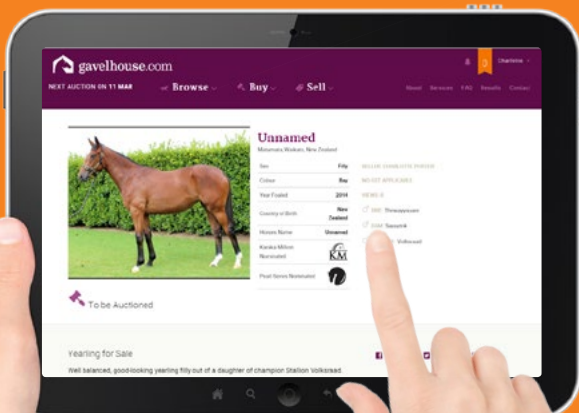
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FAMILY TRAIT **SAYS THIS IS MONTE'S YEAR**

The successful return to racing by **Nymph Monte (NZ)** (Tavistock) has confirmed he is on target for an upcoming Group One challenge, the five-year-old yesterday coming back from a break at Te Rapa and posting a smart first-up victory in the Greene Racing 1600.

Race	Waikato RC Greene Racing H. 1600m
Winner	Nymph Monte (NZ) 2011
Owners	T Brooks, W L Dunn, G N Nicholson and A G Nugent
Trainer	Grant Nicholson (Opaki)
Breeding	by Tavistock out of Grove Nymph by Grosvenor
Breeder	Sir Patrick & Lady Hogan

Opaki trainer and part-owner Grant Nicholson unveiled an ambitious plan for the gelding after his defeat of Hayley Grace (NZ) (Thorn Park) in the Rating 85 contest.

"His target will be the Livamol Classic and he's gone well at Hastings before," he said.

Nymph Monte has now won six races and wasn't disgraced when tested at the top level during his last preparation when he finished seventh behind Valley Girl (NZ) (Mastercraftsman) in the Group One Herbie Dyke Stakes.

"I think he's going to have a good

year," Nicholson said. "He was a bit fresh today.

"He didn't have a trial or a jump-out so it was a good effort and he's going to improve a lot."

Nymph Monte settled off the pace and was brought with a well-timed run to beat Hayley Grace by half a length with the pacemaker Flanders (NZ) (Lucky Unicorn) a further length and a quarter back in third.

"He's a lot stronger now. He's a five-year-old by Tavistock and his family have got to five and six before they really kick in to it," Nicholson said.

Nymph Monte is out of the

Grosvenor mare Grove Nymph (NZ), who is a half-sister to the dual Group One New Zealand Stakes and Easter Handicap winner Field Dancer (NZ) (Star Way) and to the dual Group One Sydney and Brisbane Cups winner Just A Dancer (NZ) (Star Way).



Danielle Johnson pushes Nymph Monte to a decisive win over Hayley Grace in the Rating 85 mile at Te Rapa.





BABE'S DELAYED DEBUT RESULTS IN A WIN WITH GRAHAM KEEN TO TAKE ON THE BEST

With a stylish debut victory at Te Rapa, **Babe (NZ)** (O'Reilly) has set herself on an early black type path.

The filly's first appearance had been delayed by illness but the three-year-old showed she was well worth waiting for when she beat a tidy field of maiden performers in yesterday's Skycity Hamilton Waikato Cup 10 December 1200.

Raced by her breeders Waikato Stud, Babe had given a glimpse of her talent with a trial success at Cambridge in May before her programme was interrupted.

"She copped a virus after that trial and it took her a while to get over it," trainer Graham Richardson said.

"I didn't give her a trial or a jump-out leading up to this so I wasn't really sure what to expect, but she is a really nice type of filly.

"She's going to keep on improving so we will be looking at the Gold Trail Stakes at Hastings."

Babe jumped smartly from the gates to trail and was left in front a long way from home when early pacemaker Bewitched (NZ) (Any Suggestion) ran off the track.

She responded to challenges impressively in the straight and lengthened stride under rider Craig Grylls to account for Clairethway (NZ) (Thewayyouare) with Fortaleza (NZ) (Darci Brahma) and Cha Siu Bao (Smart Missile), both touted as possible Group One contenders this season, next home.

Craig Grylls can sit up as Babe asserts herself at the business end of Te Rapa's three-year-old maiden.

"I told Craig to give her a dig out of the gates," Richardson said. "You can't give any of them too much of a start."

Babe is the first foal of the winning French Deputy mare La Belle Femme, who now looks a bargain buy after changing hands at Karaka last year for a paltry \$100.

Race	Waikato RC Skycity Waikato Cup 10 December Maiden S. 1200m
Winner	Babe (NZ) 2013
Owners	Waikato Stud Ltd
Trainer	Graham Richardson (Matamata)
Breeding	by O'Reilly out of La Belle Femme (Aus) by French Deputy (USA)
Breeder	Waikato Stud Ltd



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DUBAIINSTYLE'S LATE LUNGE BRINGS WIN

Waiting for the result of a photo finish can be agonising for a trainer, but with the trifecta in the bag Chris Waller could afford to be calm.

Race favourite **Dubaiinstyle (NZ)** (Roc de Cambes) gave Sydney's premier trainer the win in the 2000 metre Dooleys Handicap at Rosehill yesterday, with stablemates Firebird Flyer (NZ) (Stravinsky) and So Willie (More Than Ready) filling the placings.

Dubaiinstyle hit the lead at the 150 metre mark and managed to hold on from the fast-finishing Firebird Flyer, whom Waller thought had beaten her stablemate.

"To tell you the truth, I thought Dubaiinstyle did kick back a couple of strides short of the post," he said. "But he did lunge and obviously that's what the camera's seen as well."

Winning jockey Tye England also thought Tim Clark and

Firebird Flyer had won.

All three were on a one-week back-up from Randwick last weekend but Waller said he was confident they would perform well.

"I didn't have a gun to my head and I can make decisions based on what my gut feeling tells me," he said.

"Sometimes it can backfire but I think with a bigger stable you learn to take those decisions."

Dubaiinstyle's win took the gelding's record to three wins from seventeen starts, with two of those coming in the past seven days.

"It's just so good to see him put a couple of wins together because it's at the end of a preparation and we expected a lot more at the start of the preparation," the expat-Kiwi trainer said.

Waller added that Dubaiinstyle could head for a spell but expected him to graduate to provincial cups or stakes races in his next preparation.

– AAP TURF



Race	ATC Dooleys H. 2000m
Winner	Dubaiinstyle (NZ) 2012
Owners	Fesen Pty Ltd (Mgr: P Pollicina), Gemstash Pty Ltd (Mgr: A Alafaci), B Pang, Dr A Pang, R R Manning, R J R Manning, G R Taylor, A B Coombe, G P Calder and B W Honeybone
Trainer	Chris Waller (Rosehill)
Breeding	by Roc de Cambes out of Likeyourstyle by Zabeel
Breeder	The Oaks Stud
Sales	2014 National Yearling Sale, Select Session; V: The Oaks Stud, P: R R Manning; \$57,500

Two lightly raced Kiwi-bred four-year-olds with enormous staying potential fight out a 2000 metre finish at yesterday's Rosehill meeting, Dubaiinstyle (#9) snatching a last-stride victory from Firebird Flyer.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Liam looking for Beckham's black type

The revamped Eagle Farm circuit has worked wonders for consistent stallion **Beckham (NZ)** (Pins), who has won a second race on the new surface by outslogging Toowoomba mare Angel Dancer (Flying Spur) to score by half a length in yesterday's 1400 metre Chairman's Club Handicap.

The six-year-old has won seven races but trainer Liam Birchley believes his best is yet to come.

"For a stallion, Beckham is a gentleman and very consistent. He has three wins, two seconds and a fourth this time in," Birchley said. "He is very well bred, being by top Kiwi sire Pins out of Group One-winning mare Glamour Puss, so I would like to win black type with him."

"He wasn't far away in the Listed Eye Liner Stakes in the winter and he is up to that type of class. But where we find those races is up in the air at the moment."

– AAP TURF





Sunday 14 August 2016

CONQUEROR IMPRESSIVE IN KRANJI DEBUT

Seven-time Malaysian champion jockey Azhar Ismail made a welcome return to the winner's circle when he successfully combined with champion trainer Mark Walker aboard debutant **Mighty Conqueror (NZ)** (Patapan) at Kranji on Friday night.

The 53-year-old rider hurt his ankle in a barrier trial mishap in March and didn't return until June. Support was sparse for the veteran but a recent link-up with Walker at barrier trials has helped his cause.

On Friday, Azhar returned to scale with a bloodied nose, an occupational hazard for a jockey when dealing with flighty newcomers.

"He hit my face when he reared behind the gates but it's all good, he's forgiven, he's a nice horse," said Azhar. "He was

quite keen and all I wanted was to settle him for as long as I could when he sat outside the leader.

"He's still learning what racing is all about but when I went for him in the straight he did a good job to score. There is definitely more room for improvement."

Putting the whip away, Azhar cuddled the four-year-old to the line as they overhauled leader Typhon (NZ) (Gold Centre) then held their ground to score by half a length from the fast-finishing Ninepins (NZ) (Rip Van Winkle).

Walker handed out kudos to the Malaysian jockey for his perfect handling of the gelding, whose under four-to-one odds suggested the win was widely expected.

"Azhar has been around for a while and knows what he is doing. He rode this horse in a barrier trial and handled him

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Mighty Conqueror gives Azhar Ismail a tough time but a winning ride at Kranji on Friday night.





CONQUEROR IMPRESSIVE IN KRANJI DEBUT

(Continued from page 12)

very well," said the Kiwi. "The horse is still green and did a few things wrong but he sure has got some potential. He was a trial winner in New Zealand and also won a trial here.

"He is a lovely big scopy horse but will need to fill out more.

"The owners are Malaysian and know Azhar well. They also own Hello Michelle, who has pulled up well since her two-year-old campaign and will be back racing at the end of the month in a Novice race over 1100 metres."

Hello Michelle (NZ) (Minstrel Court) won the second leg of the Singapore Golden Horseshoe series then ran on late to finish eighth but only around three lengths off the winner Lim's Racer (NZ) (Red Giant) in the Sgp-Group Two third leg.

Walker also hoped the win from Mighty Conqueror will

herald the return to form of his stable, which has been enduring a bit of a lean spell. He currently lies in third place on 45 winners, eleven behind leader Alwin Tan.

"It's been a very disruptive season with the stable renovation, but things should improve when we return to our own barn next week," he said.

– Singapore Turf Club

Race	Singapore TC Initiation P. 1200m
Winner	Mighty Conqueror (NZ) 2012
Owners	Synthetic Stable
Trainer	Mark Walker (Kranji)
Breeding	by Patapan (USA) out of Sarah San by San Luis (Aus)
Breeder	Mrs J E C & Est late P M Dean

NEWS IN BRIEF

Robin Hood rewards Olivier's hard work

Trainer Alwin Tan had nothing but high praise for Olivier Placais' strong work ethic after he drove the vastly improved **Robin Hood (NZ)** (Nom du Jeu) to a scintillating win at Kranji on Friday night, saying the French jockey is always one of the first to show up at his stables in the morning to help out with trackwork.

Placais first jumped on the five-year-old on June 10 and has not been off since, taking him to his second win at his last start in a Kranji Stakes D over 1600 metres three weeks ago then doubling up when raised in class in Friday's \$560,000 Open Benchmark 67 over the same distance on Polytrack.

"Olivier works this horse every day and gives me a lot of feedback about him. His workouts have been very good leading to this race," said Tan. "Tonight, Olivier held him in a good spot and when they got a gap at the top of the straight he was just too good.

"I still think he's better over turf but he proved tonight he can handle the Polytrack as well. On his last runs, he's shown a lot of heart and that's why we've stepped him up in distance and class and put him back on Polytrack."

– Singapore Turf Club

Eleventh win for Bruce's oldtimer

Old stager **Daad's The Way (NZ)** (Istidaad) sent out a clear signal he was not ready to be put to pasture after he brained his rivals like a three-year-old at Kranji on Friday night.

The eleven-year-old might not have saluted since November, and his subsequent forward runs had been few and far between, but a drop in class to the \$535,000 Class 5 Division 2 race over 1700 metres suddenly saw those aging legs turn back the years.

Ridden by Michael Rodd, Daad's The Way improved from a midfield spot around runners to be within striking distance by the home turn, and the moment his jockey let go the handbrakes, the race was over. The eleventh win may have come in a modest race against moderate company, but the reception from the Bruce Marsh stable and his owners, the Country Rose Stable, to their beloved horse was worthy of a standing ovation.

"What a remarkable performance. I honestly thought this could be his last race if he didn't run well tonight and a career as a clerk of the course horse would be appealing as he's such a quiet animal," said Marsh.

Daad's The Way has now brought his astounding record to 11 wins, 14 seconds and 16 thirds from 117 starts for stakes that have now tipped over the \$560,000 mark.

– Singapore Turf Club

