

Sunday 27 August 2023

DRAGON LEAPS HIS RIVALS TO CLAIM NARROW VICTORY IN FOXBRIDGE



Dragon Leap takes the Gr.2 Waikato Stud Foxbridge Plate (1200m) in a barnstorming finish under Warren Kennedy. (Kenton Wright (Race Images))

Punters got it spot on in the feature event at Te Rapa on Saturday, as favourite **Dragon Leap** (Pierro) defeated second elect Skew Wiff in a thrilling finish to the Gr.2 Waikato Stud Foxbridge Plate (1200m).

The Lance O'Sullivan and Andrew Scott trained seven-year-old had looked

to be peaking nicely after he boomed home to take an Open 1100m contest at Ruakaka earlier in the month, and took plenty of late money to close as the \$3 favourite.

Jockey Warren Kennedy had him nicely situated in midfield as El Vencedor and Wewillrock shared a

steady tempo in front, before creeping forward approaching the home bend.

Skew Wiff, racing in the ownership of sponsors Waikato Stud looked to have a fairy tale result in the bag at the 200m as she burst to the lead, however Kennedy had Dragon Leap in full flight

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DRAGON LEAPS HIS RIVALS TO CLAIM NARROW VICTORY IN FOXBRIDGE

(Continued from page 1)

at this point as he joined issue quickly before putting his head in front to claim a well-deserved victory.

O'Sullivan, who describes the horse as one of the most popular in their Matamata stable, was feeling deeply satisfied with result.

"That was just fantastic and great to see a horse, who is a real favourite at home, get a reward like that," he said.

"Some say he is better than ever, but I think in reality it is the fact that his feet are fine, his action is good, and he is as sound as he has ever been.

"We were a little concerned that the track might be too wet for him, but Andrew and I planned to have him close to the mark by sending him to Ruakaka, which really cleaned him up nicely.

"He also got a great run and ride from Warren, who had him in the right part of the track and he did the rest."

O'Sullivan will now attempt to snare a Group One prize for owners Hermitage Thoroughbreds with the next start for his charge being the Gr.1 Tarzino Trophy (1400m) at Hastings.

"The Tarzino is our next plan as Scotty and I both believe he is a short course type," he said.

"He did go over ground as a three-year-old but he really does seem better kept to sprinting.

"If he can go well at Hastings we will probably look to give him a break as he does well with his races spaced and the Railway (Gr.1, 1200m) and Telegraph (Gr.1, 1200m) are nice options in the summer."

TAB Bookmakers reacted swiftly as they installed the son of Pierro the \$5 Fixed Odds third favourite for the Gr.1 Tarzino Trophy (1400m) at Hastings on 9 September behind La Crique and Legarto, who are both listed at a quote of \$4.50.

A high class three-year-old where he won the Gr.2 Auckland Guineas (1600m) and Gr.2 Avondale Guineas (2100m) in successive starts before finishing fourth in the Gr.1 New Zealand

Derby (2400m), Dragon Leap has now won six of his 20 starts and in excess of \$491,000 in prizemoney.

The win also rounded out a treble on the day for the stable with promising maiden stayer Strathtay successful over 1600m in race three, while honest mare Highlighter made in three wins on end when successful over 1200m at Awapuni.

- **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**

Race	Group Two Waikato Stud Foxbridge Plate (1200m)
Winner	Dragon Leap (AUS) (2016)
Owners	Hermitage Thoroughbreds Pty Ltd
Trainer	Lance O'Sullivan and Andrew Scott (Matamata)
Breeding	by Pierro (AUS) out of Pontiana (AUS) by Redoute's Choice (AUS)
Breeder	GP Ingham



Matamata trainer Andrew Scott.
(Trish Dunell)

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FOUR IN A ROW AS MARQUESS RULES SUPREME AT ROSEHILL

Five-year-old gelding **Marquess (NZ)** (Tavistock) has made it four wins in succession for trainer James Cummings after narrowly prevailing in the Mounties Group Handicap (1500m) at Rosehill as he stepped up to Saturday company for the first time.

Ridden by James McDonald, the son of Tavistock raced just off the speed on the rails for much of the contest in what was a sedately run affair.

The \$2.70 favourite found room at the top of the straight to make his run and narrowly prevailed from the fast-finishing Gracilistyla with Danish Prince third.

"It is a big step up for the horse and a pretty capable and consistent Saturday performer (Gracilistyla) came at him late," Cummings said.

"It was a good race and while he was getting all the favours, he was still able to get up and win so it is an impressive resumption for the campaign, and not many horses get to win a double hat-trick (four in a row).

"We had to give him a little bit of time. There were times where we weren't that happy with him, but he has got a wonderful pedigree to keep improving and he might be able

to get further.

"Nevertheless he is going about it the right way now and he should have a good base and now he can aim at a couple of targets."

Winning jockey James McDonald was pleased with the BenchMark 78 victory,

with the race shape not particularly suiting the progressive bay.

"He has got good quality and I thought that was a pretty strong 78," McDonald said.

"Especially coming from midweek, he is lightly raced and he is only a big baby but he has got talent and it would have been better with a flowing race."

By the late Cambridge Stud stallion Tavistock, Marquess is out of the multiple Group One winning mare Purple, who boasts the Gr.1 Vinery Stud Stakes (2000m) and Gr.1 Queensland Oaks (2400m) on her resume. Marquess is bred and raced by Godolphin.

– NZ Racing Desk

Race	Mounties Group Handicap (1500m)
Winner	Marquess (NZ) 2018
Owners	Godolphin
Trainer	James Cummings (Agnes Bank)
Breeding	by Tavistock (NZ) out of Purple (AUS) by Commands (AUS)
Breeder	Godolphin



Tavistock gelding Marquess winning at Rosehill on Saturday (Bradleyphotos.com.au)



COFFEY PRODUCES GEM ON DUKE OF HASTINGS

Affable jockey Harry Coffey was keen to push his case for three votes in the Scobie Breasley Medal voting after a ground-saving ride to land the spoils on **Duke Of Hastings (NZ)** (Sacred Falls) in the Ladbrokes Yard Comments Handicap (2500m) at The Valley on Saturday.

The five-year-old son of Sacred Falls came from worse than midfield, but only went around one horse as he went on to win comfortably, from United Nations who followed him through with pacesetter Magnaspin finishing third.

"I was just saying to Mr Montgomery (chief steward) that I would have thought that would be three Scobies the way that ride panned out," Coffey quipped.

Race	Ladbrokes Yard Comments Handicap 2500m
Winner	Duke Of Hastings (NZ) 2018
Owners	Mr M J Bracchi, Mrs E M Bracchi, Mrs A Kempster, Mr S D Kempster, Miss P M Ferrari, Mr D W Headrick, Mr S Barry, Mr M J McDonald, Mr A Zamanis, Mrs K Zamanis, Mr D Curavic, Friends of Mr Ed 13, The Magnificent 5, Nuggets Angels
Trainer	Simon Zahra (Flemington)
Breeding	by Sacred Falls (NZ) out of Fairygem (NZ) by Viscount (AUS)
Breeder	D H Morris & J Thomasen
Sales	2020 National Yearling Sales – Book 1; V: Blandford Lodge, P: Cranton Bloodstock \$10,000

"We had a lovely run, did no work and the horse was too good, so there was a bit of banter with the Chief Steward to let him know to look at the lighter side of life."

Coffey said the Simon Zahra-trained galloper had been building to a winning performance and he got the race run to suit.

"They went along at a nice gallop and he is a big strong horse who has got really nice staying potential, so that was one thing that aided him, but also it has just taken him a little while to get warm this prep," Coffey said.

"Last run it looked like he might have been working towards a win and that was definitely the case. We went up 500m in distance and got the job done, so really well done by the stable.

"Sometimes horses that are staying three-year-olds do battle to come back and find form and it looked like for a while that would be the case with this horse, but I think now that he has had today's win he will really get a lot of confidence and it is a nice time of year for a stayer to be around.

"They were rolling along and there were two of the better front-running riders out in front in Craig Williams and Jordan Childs so even though it was a strong gallop, you know they are going to get their fractions right at some stage.

"In the middle stages we were able to join back in and then

everyone left the fence and left a beautiful passage for me to come through, so I couldn't have asked for a smoother run in transit and that is why he won so well."

Bred by Blandford Lodge's Graham and Helen-Gaye Bax, Duke Of Hastings is by Sacred Falls out of the Viscount mare Fairygem.

A half-sister to Group One winner Penny Gem, Fairygem herself won five races including the Listed Australia Day Cup (2400m) at Randwick. She is the dam of five winners from seven foals to race, including the Listed-placed Dottie Dee.

Duke Of Hastings was purchased for just \$10,000 as a yearling by Peter Franklin's Cranton Bloodstock from Blandford Lodge's Book 1 draft at Karaka 2020 and he has continued to furnish, with the handy stayer now the winner of A\$210,100 in prizemoney. – **NZ Racing Desk**

Harry Coffey guides Duke Of Hastings to victory at The Valley (Bruno Cannatelli)





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VALLEY VICTORY FOR CONSISTENT HENNESSY LAD

Four-year-old gelding **Hennessy Lad (NZ)** (Belardo) continues to prove a model of consistency, claiming his fourth career victory from nine starts when successful in the Spring Dining On Sale Handicap (1600m) at The Valley on Saturday.

Prepared by Peter Moody and Katherine Coleman, Hennessy Lad was sent out the \$3.10 favourite on the back of two strong runs at Flemington, including a last start runner-up finish.

Given a perfect ride by Luke Nolen, the son of Belardo travelled just behind the speed and produced a good turn of foot when presented at the top of the straight to score by half a length from Legend Of Dubai.

Raced by a syndicate headed by Wylie Dalziel, Hennessy Lad has now won A\$253,900 in prizemoney.

"He's such an honest horse," Dalziel said. "We bought him out of New Zealand, myself and Moods, and he's never finished further back than fourth.

"You know he's just going to give a tough, honest effort and he did that today, so our thanks to Mr Moody and Katherine and all the team."

Despite having competed well at Group Two level when fourth in the Autumn Classic (1800m) won by Pericles, Dalziel was keen to just take small steps.

"He could get out over more ground. We tested him a bit last preparation. We are all for taking them through the grades and we won't rush him up to any Group races I don't think.

"Moods will take him through the grades – he felt like he might be another Pounding, where he might just progressively work his way through the grades, and maybe get to the top company one day.

"He is certainly honest and it was a great ride."

Nolen concurred with Dalziel's assessment and said the horse was a tough performer.

"I thought he was good and sound, he's a horse that probably likes to build and we got an opportunity to do that," Nolen said.

"He quickens well enough to get himself well and truly into a race, but then he holds that gallop. We had an opportunity to build to our top before straightening and he held that gallop to the line.

"Around this grade, he's going to keep winning races when placed to advantage."



Hennessy Lad on his way to victory at The Valley (Bruno Cannatelli)

Hennessy Lad was bred and sold by Trelawney Stud, knocked down for \$80,000 at the 2021 New Zealand Bloodstock National Yearling Sales to Dalziel and Peter Moody in conjunction with Bloodstock Agent John White.

By former Haunui Farm shuttle stallion Belardo, Hennessy Lad is a half-brother to stakes placed mare Campari, with the pair out of the Zabeel mare Lillet, a daughter of Group One winner Pernot. – **NZ Racing Desk**

Race	Spring Dining on Sale Handicap (1800m)
Winner	Hennessy Lad (NZ) 2019
Owners	Wylie Dalziel Roy Higgins Racing, Ms M Pratt, Mr M J Mckinnon, Tooferwon, Mr D J Connolly, Mr W M Patullo, Mr L Marin, Mr S J Tagliaferri, Mr B A Menzies, Mr O K Chan, Mr D H Chapis, Sabai Gai, Moama Magic No.2, Dr J W Quayle, Deep Fire Racing 2, Ms J Bartram, Mr RY Recep, Ms M S Jenkins, Mr R C Brooker, Three D B Racing
Trainer	Peter G Moody & Katherine Coleman (Pakenham OC)
Breeding	by Belardo (AUS) out of Lillet (NZ) by Zabeel (NZ)
Breeder	Mrs F P Taylor & Trelawney Thoroughbred Ltd
Sales	2021 National Yearling Sales – Book 1; V: Trelawney Stud, P: John White Bloodstock/Peter Moody Racing/Dalziel Bloodstock \$80,000



ROSEHILL BREAKTHROUGH FOR ELETTRICA

Five-year-old mare **Elettrica (NZ)** (Vespa) has broken through for a well-deserved Australian victory when scoring in the Midway Handicap (1800m) for trainers Richard and Will Freedman at Rosehill on Saturday.

The former Kiwi sports the colours of James Moss' Tricolours Racing & Syndications and has raced consistently but without luck of late.

Sent out the \$5 equal favourite, the daughter of **Vespa (NZ)** (Elusive City) was given a beautiful ride from Jason Collett, racing midfield on the fence before getting the breaks in the straight and going on to score from Monfelicity and Real Peace.

"She has been a pretty consistent horse and it took us a little while to figure her out," Will Freedman said.

"She doesn't cop a lot of work and she races in a manner that is prone to getting bad luck.

"She has probably made a couple of jockeys look foolish but she gets dictated to a bit because she can't be

maneuvered early. But the breaks came today and she got the job done.

"I am thrilled for the owners, including James Moss. It is the first horse he has given us and it is great to repay the faith."

Winning jockey Jason Collett was pleased to see the mare get the breaks today, having finished runner-up on four occasions in the past 12 months.

"She was due," Collett said. "Going up to 1800m was a bit of a question mark but I got a lovely run and the inside barrier definitely helped. She was pretty electric when she quickened, and she held them at bay."

Elettrica commenced her career in New Zealand and initially raced for breeder Kevin Hickman, winning two of her eight starts for Stephen Autridge and Kris Shailer.

Out of the More Than Ready mare On The Move, Elettrica is a half-sister to exciting three-year-old filly **Chantilly Lace** (U S Navy Flag), who is already a Listed winner at two.

Elettrica was purchased for \$51,000 by James Moss from the Valachi Downs Dispersal Sale on Gavelhouse Plus last year. – *NZ Racing Desk*

Race	Midway Handicap (1800m)
Winner	Elettrica (NZ) 2018
Owners	Tricolours Racing & Syndications Pty Ltd, Picko, Mr M Ryan, Yagoona Schooners Racing, Mr S Hannan, Mr D E Menzies, Forest Six, Lucky Eight Racing, Shamrock Racing, Mr C Payne, Mr R G Armstrong, Mrs M L Sayers, Wing House Racing
Trainer	Richard and Will Freedman (Rosehill)
Breeding	by Vespa (NZ) out of On The Move (AUS) by More Than Ready (USA)
Breeder	K J Hickman ONZM
Sales	Gavelhouse Plus V: Valachi Downs Unreserved Racing and Young Stock Dispersal Sale P: James Moss \$51,000



Former Kiwi Elettrica scores a deserved win at Rosehill on Saturday (Bradleyphotos.com.au)



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THE COSSACK PREVAILS IN PAKURANGA HUNT CUP

The Cossack (NZ) (Mastercraftsman) reminded racegoers just what a class jumper he is when he strode away from his rivals carrying the topweight of 71.5kgs to capture the CLC Pakuranga Hunt Cup (4800m) at Te Rapa.

Given a blowout on the flat over 2200m at Rotorua on Tuesday, the Paul Nelson and Corrina McDougal-trained ten-year-old provided a complete exhibition in the art of steeplechasing as he loped along behind pacemaker **Des De Jeu** (Mettre En Jeu) before rider Aaron Kuru, who made the trip from Australia for the mount, pushed the button at the 1000m and shot to the front.

Despite being chased hard in the closing stages by stablemate **Raucous** (Nom Du Jeu) and the late-closing **Donardo** (Don Eduardo), the son of Mastercraftsman had the

situation well in hand doing pacework to the winning post to score by more than five lengths.

Despite a minor glitch at the second-to-last fence, Kuru never felt his mount was in any trouble throughout the contest although he admitted it wasn't an easy ride as it appeared.

"He is probably not as straightforward as he looks on TV at times," Kuru said.

"Today he was a different animal as he was on the bridle and travelling and I was confident a long way out.

"We hit the second last fairly hard but and I thought it might empty him out, but he just took off again which came as a bit of surprise.

"I was just flowing down to the last and after that he idled to the line although it would have been nice to have something chase us a little harder as he can tend to loaf a bit out on his own."

Kuru is keen to return and ride The Cossack in the Ben & Ryan Foote Racing Great Northern Steeplechase (6400m) back at the venue on 17 September, a race that Nelson confirmed was next on his agenda.

"That couldn't be better could it," Nelson said.

"We were a little worried having to run on Tuesday and then

back up today, but it appears to have done him no harm.

"If we could win it (the Great Northern) it would complete the set for both him and us as we've never won it, with a runner-up the best I think we have done."

The Cossack took his record to seventeen wins from 55 starts and over \$596,000 in prizemoney. Thirteen of those victories have come over fences including races such as the Waikato Steeplechase (3900m), the Great Northern Hurdle (4200m) twice and Grand National Hurdles (4200m).

- **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**

Aaron Kuru checks the extensive winning margin by The Cossack in Saturday's CLC Pakuranga Hunt Cup (4800m). (Kenton Wright (Race Images))

Race	CLC Pakuranga Hunt Cup 4800m
Winner	The Cossack (NZ) (2013)
Owners	J A Frizzell, D P W & P H Grieve & P S Nelson
Trainer	Paul Nelson & Corrina McDougal (Hastings)
Breeding	by Mastercraftsman (IRE) out of Stewardelmar (AUS) by Galileo (IRE)
Breeder	I D Grieve





MARSH DUO SHINE AT TE RAPA

Trainer Stephen Marsh looks to be in for a good spring with a pair of promising gallopers after **Burn To Shine** (So You Think) and **Financier** (NZ) (Tavistock) provided the quinella in the Ardrossan 1200 (1200m) at Te Rapa.

Both horses had looked good in their brief careers to date with Burn To Shine closing out his two-year-old preparation with a fighting third behind **Tokyo Tycoon** (Satono Aladdin) and **Trobriand** (Kermadec) in the Gr.3 Matamata Slipper (1200m).

Given two trials to prepare for his new season debut, the strapping son of So You Think was sent out the \$3.10 favourite ahead of his stablemate and didn't disappoint, courtesy of a copybook ride by last season's National Jockeys premiership winner, Michael McNab.

McNab had him positioned beautifully one off the rail behind the pacemakers, and when asked for an effort early in the home straight he bounded clear before holding out Financier comfortably in the final stages to win by just over a length.

Marsh was delighted with the result as he looks towards bigger targets over the next few months for his charge.

"He is a lovely horse (Burn To Shine) and it is never easy taking on the older horses," Marsh said.

"He just got bogged down a little at his last trial but back on better footing today he showed his rue worth.

"There were some nice horses behind him, so it is pretty exciting.

"He might go down to Hastings next for the El Roca (Listed 1200m) and he will be certainly heading towards the Hawke's Bay Guineas (Gr.2, 1400m) and then I'd love to get to the 2000 Guineas



Burn To Shine (left) betters stablemate Financier in the Ardrossan 1200 at Te Rapa on Saturday. (Kenton Wright (Race Images))

(Gr.1, 1600m) at Riccarton."

Marsh was also pleased with the performance by Financier.

"It was always going to be short of his best today, but up to 1400m next and then a mile, he will be a horse you can follow in the spring," he said.

McNab shared the enthusiasm of Marsh for the winner who he believes has more in store for him.

"He showed good ability today although his brain has taken a little while to catch up to his body," he said.

"The main thing is he needs to improve mentally and if he can then I don't see any reason why he can't on to better things."

Bred by owner Dick Karreman at his The Oaks Stud, Burn To Shine is out

of the top class racemare Smoulder who numbered the Gr.2 Eight Carat Classic (1600m) amongst her four race wins while she was also placed in both the Gr.1 New Zealand 1000 Guineas (1600m) and Gr.1 New Zealand Thoroughbred Breeders' Stakes (1600m).

- LOVERACING.NZ News Desk

Race	BM65 Ardrossan 1200m
Winner	Burn To Shine (NZ) 2020
Owners	D Karreman
Trainer	Stephen Marsh (Cambridge)
Breeding	by So You Think (NZ) out of Smoulder (AUS) by Traditionally (USA)
Breeder	The Oaks Stud

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