

Monday 30 June 2025

INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS CELEBRATED AT ENTAIN'S INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS



Group photo of all the winners and finalists of Entain's Industry Excellence Awards (supplied)

One half of New Zealand's most dominant thoroughbred training partnership has been recognised at the Industry Excellence Awards, with Sam Bergerson claiming the supreme Entain Excellence Award at a function at Ellerslie last night (29 June).

Bergerson (31) has been in partnership with Mark Walker at Te Akau Racing for the past two seasons, and has quickly established himself as one of New Zealand's most talented trainers, winning the New Zealand Trainers' Premiership in 2023/24.

With Mark Walker now largely based at Te Akau's Melbourne stable, Bergerson has led the New Zealand arm of the powerful operation to a

commanding 26-win lead with a month to go in the premiership, and has already eclipsed the record for stakes won in New Zealand, passing \$9 million earlier this month.

Bergerson was eligible for the overall Entain Excellence Award after winning the Equine Licence Holder Excellence category earlier in the night. He was ecstatic to be named as the supreme winner out of the nine category winners, with nominations open to all New Zealanders under the age of 40 involved in the racing and breeding industry.

"It's fantastic to be recognised by Entain, who are doing so much for the industry," Bergerson said.

"I feel very privileged to receive

these awards, and privileged to be in the position I'm in. I love what I do, and I don't think I could do what I do without loving it."

Nathan Purdon, who has formed a successful partnership with his father Mark Purdon, was recognised as the winner of the Leadership Excellence category having impressed the judges with his foresight to adapt and deliver at the top level of harness racing.

Emma Thompson was the driving force behind the promotion of the inaugural running of The NZB Kiwi in March, and her efforts to raise the profile of the brand-new race, earned her the award for Administration and Innovation Excellence.

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INDUSTRY PARTICIPANTS CELEBRATED AT ENTAIN'S INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

(Continued from page 1)

The future of the breeding industry looks strong, with Waikato Stud yearling manager Olivia Blane collecting the Stud, Stable & Kennel Excellence prize, Wentwood Grange yearling manager Brad Molander earning the Dedication To Breeding Excellence award, and Cambridge Stud assistant yearling manager Alice Jeffries being named as the Newcomer Excellence winner.

Lisa Kennedy's efforts in re-educating and rehoming former racehorses as the lead re-trainer at EventStars were acknowledged when she was announced as the Care & Welfare Excellence winner. Caitlyn O'Sullivan Doyle's multi-faceted involvement in the racing industry – as a marketer, a communicator, ambassador, presenter and owner – made her a popular winner of the National Racing Woman Of The Year category, and the Greyhound Excellence award was won by Katie Wyllie, who trains in partnership with greyhound racing icon Dave Fahey.

Category winners received \$10,000

with finalists in each category receiving \$2,000. As the Entain Excellence Award winner, Bergerson received an extra \$5,000 and a \$5,000 educational package.

Entain's General Manager – New Zealand and member of the judging panel, Jessica Meech, said the award winners are a reminder of the emerging talent that abounds in a New Zealand industry so steeped in history.

"The younger generation are making their mark in a huge way, and we're blessed with the talented leaders and influential Kiwis who were nominated, finalists, or won their categories," Meech said.

"Sam Bergerson is the perfect example of a Kiwi in the racing industry grabbing an opportunity with both hands, then building on it to scale new and impressive heights.

"We congratulate Sam, the eight other category winners, and everyone who was nominated for the 2025 Industry Excellence Awards."

Industry Excellence Awards Category winners:

Administration and Innovation Excellence:

Emma Thompson (NZTR)

Care & Welfare Excellence:

Lisa Kennedy (Event Stars Ltd)

Newcomer Excellence:

Alice Jeffries (Cambridge Stud)

Stud, Stable & Kennel Excellence:

Olivia Blane (Waikato Stud)

Dedication to Breeding Excellence:
Brad Molander (Wentwood Grange)

Equine Licence Holder Excellence:
Sam Bergerson (Te Akau Racing)

Greyhound Excellence:
Katie Wyllie (Fahey/Wyllie training partnership)

Leadership Excellence:
Nathan Purdon (Purdon Racing, harness racing)

National Racing Woman of the Year:
Caitlin O'Sullivan Doyle (thoroughbred & harness racing)

ENTAIN EXCELLENCE (supreme):
Sam Bergerson



Photo of Entain Australia and New Zealand Interim CEO Andrew Vouris (left) with the supreme Entain Excellence Award winner, Sam Bergerson. (supplied)



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BERGERSON TAKES TOP GONG AT ENTAIN INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Sam Bergerson, New Zealand's leading trainer, was recognised by his peers when receiving the top gong at the Entain Industry Excellence Awards on Sunday night.

Bergerson is part of the Te Akau Racing juggernaut, training in partnership with Mark Walker for the last two seasons, securing the trainers' premiership last season and currently leads this year's premiership with 127 wins and more than \$9.1 million in stakes earnings.

The 31-year-old's achievements were recognised on Sunday night, receiving the Equine Licence Holder Excellence Award before being bestowed the overall Supreme Entain Excellence Award.

"It was pretty exciting," Bergerson said. "It was a really cool night and I had family up there and plenty of friends, so it was really cool."

"To get the recognition among your peers against some really good horse people was very humbling."

"It is an exciting time to be a part of the industry with what Entain is doing. To get recognition through their awards is amazing. I can't thank them enough for the award."

Bergerson said it has been a whirlwind last couple of years, and he is grateful for the position he is in, leading the New Zealand arm of Te Akau Racing, with Walker spending the majority of his time overseeing their Cranbourne base.

"It has been a massive couple of years," Bergerson said. "I am very fortunate and privileged to be in the position I am in with Te Akau, with the backing of Mark (Walker), Karyn (Fenton-Ellis) and David (Ellis). It is just a fantastic opportunity."

"I just love it. It is a lot of work and a lot of sacrifice, but I wouldn't change it for the world. I am very grateful to them for the opportunity to work with these wonderful horses and fantastic group of staff and owners."

"It has been an awesome journey so far and I am looking forward to the future."

Bergerson said he owes a lot of his success to his training partner and staff.

"I am so grateful to Mark. He has been a fantastic mentor to me and we have got a really good relationship," he said. "I look at him like a mate, not like a boss. He has really taken me under his wing and we have had some great success together and gone through the hardships as well."

"Te Akau is a great enterprise to be a part of. I have come through the system there under Jamie (Richards) and then Mark, and I have been fortunate to get some amazing opportunities and work alongside some great people."

"I couldn't do it without the staff here, they are a really good group of people. They are the ones at the coalface and don't get



Sam Bergerson. (Nicole Troost)

the recognition and exposure I have been able to get through being the head trainer. But you can't do it without the people at the forefront there every day."

"I won a bit of money last night, so we will probably have to have a shout and a bit of a celebration, which will be cool."

Bergerson received \$10,000 as a category winner and an additional \$5,000 as the Entain Excellence Award winner, as well as a \$5,000 education package.

"I am very grateful for the monetary prize, as well as the education grant," Bergerson said.

"I would love to travel and see a few different stables. I am always looking to continue to learn, I don't think you ever stop learning."

As a past recipient of the Sunline Trust International Management Scholarship, Bergerson is aware of the opportunities educational grants provide, and he is looking forward to putting his Entain grant to good use.

"The great thing about the thoroughbred industry is that it can take you all around the world with whatever avenue you pursue," he said.

"The Sunline Scholarship was more on the breeding side, but it came at a fantastic time for me as I was at a bit of a crossroads in not knowing what to do and it gave me a grounding and a good understanding of the breeding industry, which I think helps with the racing side and what goes into these younger horses."

"That allowed me to meet a lot of people along the way and learn from people not only in New Zealand but overseas as well."

"I pinch myself with how the last five or six years have gone, it is pretty surreal." – **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**





O'SULLIVAN DOYLE TAKES OUT NATIONAL RACING WOMAN AWARD

Caitlin O'Sullivan Doyle has been immersed in racing from a young age and she was recognised for her individual contribution to the industry at Entain's Industry Excellence Awards on Sunday.

A daughter of hall-of-fame jockey turned Group One-winning trainer Lance O'Sullivan, O'Sullivan Doyle took out the National Racing Woman of the Year category for her pursuits in marketing and communications, alongside work as a presenter and ambassador.

"I was super excited to just be nominated, alongside some very worthy finalists," O'Sullivan Doyle said. "To win was great, it was an awesome night put on by Entain."

After growing up at Wexford Stables, O'Sullivan Doyle recognised a professional opportunity in racing later in her teens, and now has a range of digital marketing clients, including the family business, and various studs around the country.

"Growing up, I'd pop over and pat the horses, but in terms of being actively involved, that more so came when I was about 15 and 16," she said. "I realised I'd like to be involved in racing from a professional standpoint, and it's grown from there."

"In my line of work, no two weeks are same, which I personally love. My focus is digital marketing for a range of racing and non-racing clients, and with the racing, it is obviously seasonal, so we're looking at different times of the year with events like key race days or yearling sales."

"I love the horses, the people and the journey of following a horse all the way through, whether that be for stud clients having foaled a horse down, or the process of coming through the stables to get to race day."

"It's pretty special."

For the past two seasons, O'Sullivan Doyle has been an ambassador for Ellerslie Racecourse, following in the footsteps

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Caitlin O'Sullivan Doyle (right) receiving her National Racing Woman of the Year Award. (Supplied)





O'SULLIVAN DOYLE TAKES OUT NATIONAL RACING WOMAN AWARD

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of her mother Bridgette, who was the first to hold the position.

"My mum was the original Ellerslie ambassador in the early 2000's, so it was a nice full-circle moment when they asked me to come on board as an ambassador," she said. "It's a very easy, enjoyable role, it hardly feels like a job when you get to attend races like a Karaka Millions or NZB Kiwi.

"I go to the races, do a couple of interviews, and promote and showcase racing."

On the night, O'Sullivan Doyle expressed her gratitude to the Wexford cohort, and fellow clients Rich Hill Stud and harness racing giant Breckon Farms.

"I've had a lot of great mentors, particularly in three of my more prominent clients," she said.

"Breckon Farms, who are doing amazing things in the harness racing industry, Rich Hill Stud, and of course, Wexford. With those three operations alone, I've got fantastic people above me that I'd consider industry leaders.

"I'm very fortunate to be learning from some of the best."

As an owner, O'Sullivan Doyle has enjoyed success with small shares in the likes of stakes winner Do You Just (So You Think), and promising four-year-olds King Of The North (NZ) (Jon Snow) and Grande Gallo (NZ) (Belardo). She hopes to continue that trend with a well-related juvenile, as well as when she crosses over into the standardbred code for the first time.

"The Do You Just-King Of The North double at Ellerslie was hugely exciting, it was definitely a highlight for me as an owner," she said.

"I have a share in High Society, who is a two-year-old half-brother to Snazzytavi, and I went into a couple of yearlings this year as well, so fingers crossed they can follow in their footsteps, I've had some good fortune so far.

"I'm learning about the standardbreds through a bit of ownership too, I purchased a couple of small shares in yearlings from the Breckon Farms draft in February. Hopefully we can be up at Alexandra Park with them in the future."

– **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**

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JEFFRIES RECOGNISED AS RISING STAR IN BREEDING INDUSTRY

Alice Jeffries didn't always see a future for herself in the breeding industry, but a very special filly played a key role in getting her to where she is today, working as Cambridge Stud's Assistant Yearling Manager, and receiving Entain's Newcomer Excellence Award on Sunday.

Growing up on a sheep and beef farm in Tauranga, Jeffries' father Warwick Jeffries delved into breeding on a small scale and was rewarded in a big way, breeding glamour mare Legarto (NZ) (Proisir) out of his mare Geordie Girl (NZ) (Towkay).

Before she was a three-time Group One winner and \$2 million earner, much of Legarto's handling and early education was conducted by Jeffries, who took her through the sales ring at Karaka in 2021 where she was knocked down to Ancroft Stud for \$90,000.

"Legarto was one of the first horses I took through from a baby to the sales, I did all of the handling with her and took her through the ring," Jeffries said. "She was one of the first horses to really grab my attention in getting into the industry."

Through that period, Jeffries was attending Lincoln University, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Commerce and Agriculture. Having had experience working in studs and at the yearling sales, she decided to apply for the Keith and Faith Taylor Family Trust Equine Scholarship, which led her to a six-month stint in Ireland.

"Dad has a few broodmares as a bit of a hobby so I had breeding in my background, but I didn't think I would be working full-time in the industry until after uni," she said.

"I did a Bachelor of Commerce and

Agriculture at Lincoln, but following that, I didn't see myself in any of the roles that it directly leads to, so I applied for the Keith and Faith Taylor Family Trust Equine Scholarship to go to the Irish National Stud.

"The scholarship gave me a really good foundation, I would recommend it to anyone wanting to go overseas and learn more about the breeding industry over there, while having a great time doing so."

Just shy of a year ago, Jeffries entered her new role at Cambridge Stud, where she has been able to apply that knowledge with their large selection of young stock. She was recognised for her passion and contribution to the nursery when nominated for the Newcomer Award, and was grateful to be announced the winner, receiving the \$10,000 prize from Entain.

"It was very rewarding because you put in a lot of effort, so it was really nice to be recognised at an industry level," she said.

"The love of the horse is the main reason why I'm in this industry, and also,

you're able to do a lot, you can travel the world, meet lots of new people, and no two days are the same.

"Day to day at the moment, we are weanling handling, so mobs are coming in every week for handling, with things like having the farrier done. We'll start to bring them on to grooming and getting them ready for that final yearling prep come the end of October to January."

Cambridge Stud have committed to selling their yearlings solely at New Zealand Bloodstock's National Yearling Sale at Karaka next year, where Jeffries had a memorable experience this year, taking the farm's draft-topping lot through the ring.

The colt, lot 628, by resident sire Sword Of State out of a stakes-winning I Am Invincible mare Fuld's Bet was secured by Mulberry Racing for \$540,000.

"The colt this year was our highest-priced yearling, and he was such a dude through his yearling prep and at the sales, so it was great to take him through the ring," Jeffries said.

— **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**



Alice Jeffries receiving the Entain Newcomer Excellence Award. (Supplied)



MEMORABLE WEEKEND **FOR LAWSON**

Waikato horseman Simon Lawson has an eye for a bargain, and the product of one of his purchases turned into his first stakes winner over the weekend.

As Waikato Stud's dry mare manager for a couple of years, Lawson was looking to get into breeding himself a few years ago and an unplaced mare called Mohegan Star (NZ) (Reliable Man) caught his eye on online auction house gavelhouse.com, and he secured the her with a final bid of \$1,100.

She quickly proved to be an astute purchase, with her half-brother Little Brose coming on the scene shortly after and went on to win the Gr.1 Blue Diamond Stakes (1200m) and Listed Merson Cooper Stakes (1000m) before retiring to stand at Little Avondale Stud in New Zealand.

"I saw the mare on Gavelhouse, liked the pedigree and bought her," Lawson said. "Little Brose came along after I bought her, so that really boosted the pedigree."

Lawson sent Mohegan Star to Waikato Stud resident stallion Tivaci and the resulting colt was offered through the farm's 2024 New Zealand Bloodstock Book 1 Yearling Sale draft where he was purchased by Australian trainer Phillip Stokes for \$80,000 and was subsequently named **Matahga (NZ)**.

The colt has been a revelation for the Morphetville horseman, finishing runner-up on debut before winning his next two starts, including last Saturday's Listed Oaklands Plate (1400m) at his local track.

Matahga has given Lawson the perfect start to his breeding career, posting his first stakes victory, and now Lawson has a taste for more.

"He was just a ripper all the way through," Lawson said. "He was an absolute legend, you would take him to the pub and have a beer with him."

"It is awesome to see him go on with it and winning a stakes race at his third start is pretty exciting."

Gavelhouse is the gift that keeps on giving for Lawson, who also purchased Serenella (NZ) (Jimmy Choux), a three-quarter sister to multiple Group One winner The Bostonian (NZ) (Jimmy Choux), off the site for \$500.

Lawson scored a major result at Karaka earlier this year when selling her first foal, a colt by Noverre, to Wexford Stables for \$300,000.

"It has been a huge buzz," Lawson said of his breeding achievements to date. "It's a bit more good luck than good management, but it has worked out well for me."

"It is cool that your product and what you put out there is liked by other people. It is definitely pinch yourself sort of stuff."

Lawson has plenty of looking forward to in the coming months, on both the racing and breeding front.

He will offer two rising yearlings at Karaka next year, and he has a Banquo half-brother to Matahga that is showing early promise for Matamata trainer Daniel Miller.



Waikato horseman Simon Lawson. (Angelique Bridson)

"The Banquo is in at Dan Miller's at the moment, he is going well and is three or four weeks away from having his first jump-out. He is a lovely horse," Lawson said.

"She (Mohegan Star) has a Noverre filly that will go to Karaka next year, and she is in-foal to War Decree."

"Serenella has got a colt (rising yearling by Noverre) that will go to Karaka next year and she is in-foal to him (Noverre) again."

Lawson is looking to slowly develop his broodmare band, which currently sits at two-and-a-half, with the Waikato Stud employee also sharing in the ownership of Hawaiian Princess (NZ) (Sacred Falls), a three quarter-sister to dual Group One winner MacO'Reilly (NZ) (O'Reilly), with resident vet Matt MacKee.

"I would like to keep on expanding and keep breeding horses," he said. "You just want to keep breeding stakes winners, it's a huge buzz and it's an addictive feeling, I can't wait to do it again."

While Saturday's events were hard to top, Lawson was in the spotlight again a day later as a finalist in the Leadership Excellence category in the Entain Industry Excellence Awards.

While he missed out on taking top honours, he still received a \$2,000 cheque for being a finalist and said he had a great time at the awards dinner.

"It was a great night, they put on a great show," he said. "To see all of the other young people there and be around likeminded people was a lot of fun."

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GOODWOOD CELEBRATING SURPRISE OUTCOME

Goodwood Stud's William Fell is enjoying an exciting ride with unbeaten star steeplechaser **Jesko (NZ)** (Atlante).

While it has been an unforeseen outcome, it's nevertheless a successful one with the son of the late Atlante quickly rising to the top of the jumping ranks.

The late bloomer won three on the flat before a successful transformation for trainers Shaun and Hazel Fannin with the former also taking the reins.

Jesko began his hot run at Wanganui before claiming the Manawatu Steeplechase (4000m) and Wellington Steeplechase (4900m) titles.

"It wasn't what we were intending to breed, but it was another very good win on Saturday and we'll take it, he's an exciting horse," Fell said.

"We had a share in Atlante and that was how the mating came about, and Striking Asset was a medium sized Van Nistelrooy mare from quite a nice family.

"He was always a nice horse, but he wasn't a yearling sale horse and that's why we sold him on Gavelhouse.

"I remember him being a big, solid sort of horse who was going to need some time to mature."

Jesko was initially sold for \$800 as a yearling and subsequently purchased by Fannin for \$3,300 when again offered as a four-year-old via the online platform.

His mother Striking Asset (NZ) is a half-sister to stakes winner Al Jameel (NZ) (Tale Of The Cat) with the third dam the three-time Group One winner Canny Lass (Bletchingly).

"We had one more foal with her after Jesko and she was retired," Fell said.

"She was disappointing on the breeding front, aside from him, and she had her chance, breeding to the likes of Iffraaj and Per Incanto, but that's how it goes sometimes."

Goodwood has downsized in recent years, making the Manawatu farm a more manageable operation for Fell and wife Rosie, nee Myers.

"We're breeding from about half a-dozen mares now, which is a good number for us," he said.

"We do the foaling down here and when it comes to yearling preps, we send them out.

"We spread them around, Georgia Brown has done some locally for us and we use Wentwood Grange, Carlaw Park and Woburn Farm so we try and slot them in where it best suits.

"We want to keep building on the quality, that's always the goal and we've got a nice group of young mares."

Goodwood also has stallion shares in Little Avondale Stud's Per Incanto and Little Brose.

"We were a shareholder in Proisir but sold that about 12 or 18 months ago after getting a nice offer," Fell said.

"We're in a position now that we can race a few fillies with Rosie training so that ticks that box."

Among them is the Iffraaj mare Great Escape (NZ), a winner and multiple placegetter from a handful of starts, who is out of a half-sister to three-time Group One-winning Goodwood graduate Gingernuts (NZ) (Iffraaj).

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Jesko winning the Wellington Steeplechase (4900m) at Trentham on Saturday. (Peter Rubery (Race Images Palmerston North))

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SENTIMENTAL BREAKTHROUGH FOR BEETLEGEUSE AT RUAKAKA

It felt as though Triston Moodley had an angel on his shoulder as he steered **Beetlegeuse (NZ)** (Rageese) to victory in the Northland Business Systems (1600m) at Ruakaka on Saturday.

A son of Rageese, Beetlegeuse was bred by Windsor Park Stud co-owner Gina Schick, who races the four-year-old in the care of Sam Mynott. Just over a month ago, tragedy struck the Schick family, with 10-year-old Jimmy losing his life in an ATV accident.

In the maiden contest, Moodley wore the familiar Windsor Park colours - including Jimmy's favourite cap, and his mount was full of running early as they took up the pacemaking role. Beetlegeuse travelled beautifully, and after kicking clear at the top of the straight, he was never in danger, saluting by two lengths over Embossed (NZ) (Embellish).

Despite closing at nearly \$40, Mynott had been quietly confident in the gelding, who was third-up this preparation.

"I was actually quite confident with him, his work has been outstanding and he was quite unlucky in his first up run, then just didn't cop the wet track at Tauranga" she said.

"I was pretty happy with the way he was going, I was just praying for a semi-decent track to give him a go on, which we got up there on Saturday.

"I left it up to Triston, but I wanted to be nearer to the front, whether we led or not was up to him. It worked out well and he gave him a beautiful ride - he made all the right decisions."

Mynott shared that much of Beetlegeuse's race preparation had come at the Windsor Park property in



Beetlegeuse in full flight on his way to victory at Ruakaka on Saturday. (Trish Dunell)

Cambridge, making it very much a team effort.

"It was very special, the horse wore Jimmy's cap which was pretty cool and it was super to get this win for Gina," she said.

"His last three gallops were on the beautiful grass track out at Windsor Park, and there has been a lot of people involved with him, so it was a fitting result.

"He came to me towards the end of last year, he had a few little issues that we were able to iron out. He had to have surgery to get an infected tooth pulled out, which set us back a couple of months, so we've been patient with him.

"Fair play to Gina for giving him that time, and for trusting me that he was worth carrying on for."

Out of an unraced Niagara mare Rose Grace (NZ), Beetlegeuse was Mynott's 16th winner of the season from just 92 starters.

- LOVERACING.NZ News Desk

Race	Whangarei RC Northland Business Maiden S. 1600m
Winner	Beetlegeuse (NZ) 2020
Owners	Windsor Park Stud Ltd
Trainer	Sam Mynott (Cambridge)
Breeding	by Rageese (AUS) out of Rose Grace by Niagara (AUS)
Breeder	Windsor Park Stud Ltd





WELL-RELATED FILLY **TAKES FLIGHT**

David Greene has enjoyed a multitude of success with the progeny of Songbird (NZ) (Black Minnaloushe), and that continued at Ruakaka on Saturday with **Free Bird (NZ)** (Tarzino) breaking maiden status in the Ruakaka Your Best Bet In Winter (1200m).

A half-sister to Greene's first Group winner Stolen Dance (NZ) (Alamosa), Free Bird showed promise at the trials, before placing in her first start in early January. She followed up that effort with a sixth placing, and was subsequently sent for a break before returning in the far north.

In a market largely dominated by Top Dollar (NZ) (Ten Sovereigns), Free Bird jumped at \$14.80 under Vinnie Colgan, who pressed forward from the gate and eventually settled off the fence in sixth.

With blinkers on for the first time, Hard Attack (NZ) (All Too Hard) was full of running and led the field up to the home corner, where he found a decent kick and gave his rivals plenty to chase.

It looked like Hard Attack may hold on, but coming charging down the centre was Free Bird, who had the upper hand on another late closer in Kudos (NZ) (Belardo) to take the opener by a head.

The daughter of Tarzino was coming out of a fourth-placed trial effort behind Chicago Dream (Nicconi), who had his turn in the winner's circle in the following race.

"She trialled okay at Auckland, but David Greene talked her up a bit and was quietly confident I think," Colgan said.

"The race worked out quite well for me, I ended up six-back and one-off, and able to improve early. It was a fairly long run up the straight and she was pretty green, there's lots of improvement to come from the outing today."

Greene had thought the six-furlong journey would prove too sharp for his charge, but was rapt to be proven wrong.

"I thought 1200m would be too short for her today, but 10 out of 10

on the ride there from Vinnie," he said. "There was genuine speed on there and she finished off like a tough horse, like we know all of the horse's out of the mare are.

"She's a hard one to have all her own conditions, she doesn't want the track too hard or too wet, so it was a nice in-between track here today."

Bred by Dane and Jenna McLeod, Free Bird is out of an unraced Black Minnaloushe mare Songbird, of whom produced the Group One-winning Stolen Dance as her first foal. Of her remaining five foals to race, four have been winners, including Finest Wine (NZ) (Tavistock), who finished fourth in a Listed Rotorua Cup (2200m) in Greene's care.

The McLeod's race the filly in an ownership group that includes a number of their family members, including successful owner Gerald Shand.

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Race	Whangarei RC Ruakaka in Winter Maiden S. 1200m
Winner	Free Bird (NZ) 2021
Owners	G L Day, S G Freeman, M W Gordon, A J Griffiths, D J, D R & Mrs J C McLeod, P Morrison, Mrs J J & P W Rogers Partnership, D Owens, Mrs M A & T W Rogers, G A Shand & T Te Rito
Trainer	David Greene (Te Rapa)
Breeding	by Tarzino out of Songbird by Black Minnaloushe (USA)
Breeder	D J & Mrs J C McLeod

Free Bird powering over the top of her rivals to win the Ruakaka Your Best Bet In Winter (1200m) at Ruakaka. (Trish Dunell)





DREAM START **FOR DASCOMBE**

Ashley Dascombe couldn't have dreamed for a better start to his riding stint in New Zealand, guiding **Our Daymo (NZ)** (Zed) to victory on his opening day at the races at Trentham.

The Englishman arrived in the country just over a month ago, and basing himself with accomplished trainer Raymond Connors, he was presented with a golden opportunity aboard the hurdle debutant, who was a two-time winner on the flat in just nine starts.

In conditions beyond the point of a Heavy 10, Our Daymo closed a \$2.90 second-favourite behind Quid (NZ) (Rios) and jumped from the inside barrier, where Dascombe allowed him to settle as Main Street (NZ) (Time Test) took up the pacemaking role.

He continued to bide his time along the back straight and started to move into contention at the 600m, drawing level with Quid over the third to last fence. The pair would fight it out all the way down the straight, and just when Quid looked to have the upper hand, a tough Our Daymo fought back to get up by a nose.

A mud-splattered Dascombe was thrilled with the result, and reflecting on the run, everything went in his favour.

"That was the heaviest ground I've ever ridden on, heavy would be an understatement," he said. "We walked the track all the way around and the stick was going half-way into the ground."

"He (Our Daymo) went perfectly, we got to where we wanted to be on the rail. Getting him settled and jumping well was the main objective, considering it was his first time over hurdles."

"They kicked on quite a bit along the back, but it was a bit early for me to go, so I sat and waited for him until we turned in. He kept finding and finding down the straight, it was unbelievable really."

"A massive thank you to Raymond for letting me ride the horse, I'm very grateful to him for the opportunity."

The Trentham meeting was one to remember for Dascombe and his English counterparts, with Will Featherstone claiming a drama-filled maiden steeplechase with Hey Hey Hey (NZ) (Shocking), and Joshua Parker continuing his formidable association with Billy Boy (So You Think) to win the Aztech Engineering Wellington Hurdle (3200m).

Similar to both Featherstone and Parker, Dascombe had experience in point-to-point racing in the United Kingdom before taking his chance in the Kiwi industry.

"I started out hunting when I was young," he said "My godfather, Ben Parker, was the farrier at Phillip Hobbs Racing during that time, and I would go in with in to the stable and hold the horses for him."

"From there, I went for one week of work experience and was hooked, and Mr Hobbs and Johnson White allowed me to come in on Saturday mornings and during school holidays to ride out. I went on to the British Racing School and was lucky enough to get an apprenticeship at PJH, which I loved and I can't thank Mr Hobbs and Johnson White enough for taking me on."

"After three years, I decided to move on to Chris Barber's, who is a successful point to point trainer. I was there for a season, and gained more experience especially with young horses."

"For the next two years, I went on to different yards to ride out around the southwest area, before hearing about the opportunity to come out to New Zealand, which I've always wanted to do."

"I decided to do it, and I'm loving it." Working out of Connors' Bulls



Ashley Dascombe after winning the Life Direct Maiden Hurdle (2500m) with Our Daymo. (Peter Rubery (Race Images Palmerston North))

property, Dascombe is looking forward to seeing more of the country, particularly heading down south during Grand National Week.

"I've been here since the 27th of May and I'm based with Raymond, he's a very good trainer and I'm working for him here every day," he said.

"It means a lot for him to trust me with horses like Our Daymo, especially after he won one of the biggest flat races this year with Trav (Gr.2 Auckland Cup, 3200m)."

"While I'm here, I'm looking forward to going down to Christchurch and spending some time there before I go back to England. But, riding anywhere is a great opportunity."

– **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**

Race	WRC Life Direct Maiden Hurdle 2500m
Winner	Our Daymo (NZ) 2018
Owners	M S & R M Connors
Trainer	Raymond Connors (Bulls)
Breeding	by Zed out of Kyrenia by High Chaparral (IRE)
Breeder	Mrs A A Corcoran





STAPHANOS

GLOBAL BLOODLINES MEET CONSISTENT GROUP 1 SUCCESS
THIRD ONLY TO SAVABEEL AND SUPER SETH ON
GROUP 1 STRIKE RATE (MAY 2025)



PIGNAN
2YO G1 Winner

MOVIN OUT
G1 NZ 1000 Guineas
Placegetter



THE ENTERTAINER
3YO Group Placegetter



SASSY LASS
Group Placegetter



BASILINNA
G1 VRC Oaks Placegetter



MEDATSU
2YO Stakes Placegetter



JUST KICK
2YO Stakes Placegetter

Monday 30 June 2025

NZ STALLION AWARDS

THE CENTAINE AWARD

STALLIONS	EARNINGS
PER INCANTO	\$19,653,540
SAVABEEL	\$17,534,809
SHAMEXPRESS	\$17,024,878
TAVISTOCK	\$13,823,768
PROISIR	\$7,638,508
SUPER SETH	\$7,606,122
SHOCKING	\$7,362,512
CHARM SPIRIT	\$7,085,969
ALMANZOR	\$7,072,053
OCEAN PARK	\$6,911,031

Criteria: Sire whose NZ-conceived progeny have accumulated the highest stakes earnings worldwide

THE DEWAR STALLION TROPHY

STALLIONS	EARNINGS
SAVABEEL	\$14,003,125
PER INCANTO	\$12,834,088
TAVISTOCK	\$11,201,640
SUPER SETH	\$6,350,110
ALMANZOR	\$6,267,286
PROISIR	\$6,226,860
OCEAN PARK	\$5,996,848
SHOCKING	\$5,525,728
IFFRAAJ	\$4,756,517
REDWOOD	\$4,657,056

Criteria: Sire whose progeny have accumulated the highest combined stakes earnings in Australia & New Zealand

THE GROSVENOR AWARD

STALLIONS	EARNINGS
SAVABEEL	\$5,899,179
PROISIR	\$3,401,905
ALMANZOR	\$2,831,165
SHOCKING	\$2,668,005
PER INCANTO	\$2,282,770
TAVISTOCK	\$2,199,965
IFFRAAJ	\$2,141,335
BELARDO	\$2,128,060
DERRYIN	\$2,116,275
VADAMOS	\$2,115,320

BEST PERFORMERS	EARNINGS
DAMASK ROSE	\$2,047,975
WAITAK	\$314,700
TRAV	\$386,550
EL VENCEDOR	\$1,468,000
EVAPORATE	\$575,000
SNAZZYTAVI	\$739,125
GRAIL SEEKER	\$553,750
GRANDE GALLO	\$95,975
LEICA LUCY	\$1,014,260
LA CRIQUE	\$620,125

Criteria: Leading Sires by Earnings in New Zealand



Data Provided By
ARION PEDIGREES



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Monday 30 June 2025



NEW ZEALAND BRED WINNERS

HONG KONG (25 JUNE)

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
WOODFIRE CHAMP (NZ) 2019 by Turn Me Loose out of Te Hana by Falkirk	Windsor Park Stud Ltd; Waikato; NZ	HKJC Chester H. 1200m.	2021 Ready to Run Sale V: Woburn Farm \$40000 P: Pertab Racing
WROTE A NEW PAGE (NZ) 2021 by Wrote (IRE) out of My Amazing Cool by Danroad (AUS)	Hong Kong Breeders Club Ltd; Waikato; NZ	HKJC Lancashire H. 1650m.	2023 National Yearling Sale - Book2 V: Highview \$75000 P: HK Ma

HONG KONG (28 JUNE)

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
GALLANT CROWN (NZ) 2016 by Hallowed Crown (AUS) out of Justagem by Stravinsky (USA)	Sir Patrick & Lady Hogan; Waikato; NZ	HKJC Kam Tin River H. 1400m.	2018 National Yearling Sale - Book 1 V: Cambridge Stud \$40000 P: Kiltannon Stables
LUCKY MY WAY (NZ) 2021 by Proisir (AUS) out of Spirit of Sandford by Kilimanjaro (GB)	C T Grammer; D W Mayers; P D Stopforth & Mrs S J Taylor; Waikato; NZ	HKJC Beas River H. 1200m.	2023 National Yearling Sale - Book1 V: Landsdowne Park Ltd \$330000 P: WK Choy / P Wong

MALAYSIA (28 JUNE)

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
LET'S COME ON BABY (NZ) 2017 by Ferlax out of Iffley Road by Ifraaj (GB)	R W E Moore; Auckland; NZ	Perak TC Class 5B H. 1400	2019 Ready To Run Sale V: Kiltannon Stables Ltd \$14000 P: Jubilant Stable
AUTHORITY (NZ) 2022 by Vanbrugh (AUS) out of My Galatine by Guillotine	Windsor Park Stud Ltd; Waikato; NZ	Perak TC Restricted 2yo. 1000	2024 Gavelhouse August Sale V: Windsor Park Stud \$1600 P: Akhtar Mann
WILAMARA (MLY) Per La Vita (NZ) 2020 by Per Incanto (USA) out of La Vida Loca by Savabeel (AUS)	Jen Campin Bloodstock Ltd; Waikato; NZ	Perak TC Class 4A H. 1200	2022 National Yearling Sale - Book 1 V: Wentwood Grange \$90000 P: Mr SD Cole

MALAYSIA (29 JUNE)

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
NIMBUS STAR (MLY) Time Flies (NZ) 2019 by Time Test (GB) out of Rorippa by Towkay (AUS)	Little Avondale Trust & Ms R A Savory; Central; NZ	Selangor TC Class 4B H. 1150	2021 National Yearling Sale - Book 2 V: Little Avondale Stud \$115000
MR HOOPER (NZ) 2015 by Shamexpress out of Kate's Talent by Montjeu (IRE)	Windsor Park Stud Ltd; Waikato; NZ	Selangor TC Class 5A H. 1400	2017 Ready To Run Sale V: Woburn Farm \$50,000 P: Hardwicke Racing/Waterford Bloodstock
TREES OF VALINOR (NZ) 2021 by Telperion (AUS) out of China Choice (AUS) by Encosta De Lago (AUS)	G Harvey; Auckland; NZ	Selangor 3yo Mile Championship 1600	2023 Ready To Run Sale V: Westbury Stud \$55000 P: Shri Kanth
NAJWAN (MLY) Conquering Khan (NZ) 2017 by Mongolian Khan (AUS) out of Mabsam (AUS) by Stratum (AUS)	Inner Mongolia Rider Horse Industry (NZ) Ltd; Auckland; NZ	Selangor TC Class 4B H. 1500	2019 National Yearling Sale - Book 1 V: Windsor Park Stud \$140000 P: Mr DC Ellis



Monday 30 June 2025



GLOBAL NEW ZEALAND BRED WINNERS

2025-06-21 / 2025-06-28

Data Provided By
ARION PEDIGREES

AUSTRALIA

Ace High : Crusheen Lass (NZ) (Kilfenora by Zabeel) 2020;
28 Jun 2025, 1st Gundagai-Adelong RC Bush Battlers P. 1700m
Sold by Highview at National Yearling Sale for \$60000

Ace High : Drakaina (NZ) (Justa Secret by Sakhee's Secret) 2020;
28 Jun 2025, 1st WATC Beaufine Stakes in July H. 1400m

Almanzor : To be Frank (NZ) (Veronica Franco by Johar) 2020;
27 Jun 2025, 1st Tamworth JC Glen Innes Services H. 1400m

Ardrossan : Taken (NZ) (Katherine Wright by Henrythenavigator) 2021;
21 Jun 2025, 1st VRC Rod Johnson H. 1620m

Castledale : William (NZ) (Best French by Air de France) 2018;
21 Jun 2025, 1st Queanbeyan RC Campbell & George H. 1200m

Charm Spirit : Allentown (NZ) (She's a Screamer by Pins) 2021;
21 Jun 2025, 1st WATC Tabtouch H. 1200m
Sold by Woburn Farm at Ready to Run Sale for \$10000

Deep Field : First Landing (NZ) (Luna Rossa by Written Tycoon) 2020;
24 Jun 2025, 1st Port Macquarie RC Witchy Nook H. 1106m

El Roca : La Cometa (NZ) (Itsy Bitsy by Ocean Park) 2021;
22 Jun 2025, 1st SCTC Wade Clark Plastering H. 1600m

El Roca : Stop the Rock (NZ) (Shezablonde by Fusaichi Pegasus) 2021;
21 Jun 2025, 1st VRC Ken Cox H. 2000m
Sold by Westbury Stud at Ready to Run Sale for \$75000

Embellish : Bold Soul (NZ) (Twin Soul by Singspiel) 2020;
21 Jun 2025, 1st VRC Bruce Gadsden H. 2540m
Sold by Te Keeti Bloodstock Ltd at National Yearling Sale for \$20000

Eminent : Castle on High (NZ) (Heart of Th'castle by Castledale) 2020;
26 Jun 2025, 1st Bendigo JC Smartloans H. 1300m

Ghibellines : The Right Way (NZ) (The Choice by O'Reilly) 2019;
21 Jun 2025, 1st Ipswich TC Winter Provincial Stayers Final 2500m

Ghibellines : Flamin' Romans (NZ) (Inferno by Yamanin Vital) 2019;
28 Jun 2025, 1st MRC Sportsbet H. 2000m

Ocean Park : Arcadia Park (NZ) (Arcadia Dream by Domesday) 2021;
28 Jun 2025, 1st WATC Barragup Self Storage H. 1600m

Ocean Park : Misterkipchoge (NZ) (Porotene Mhia by Mastercraftsman) 2020;
28 Jun 2025, 1st ATC Asahi Super Dry H. 1800m

Per Incanto : Rolling Magic (NZ) (Not a Jaffa by Iffraaj) 2020;
28 Jun 2025, 1st ATC Midway H. 1300m

Per Incanto : Star Canto (NZ) (Star Guest by Pentire) 2020;
21 Jun 2025, 1st Donald DRC Russ Studio Jewellers Maiden P. 1356m
Sold by Little Avondale Stud at National Yearling Sale for \$90000

Per Incanto : Castillian (NZ) (Anaween by More Than Ready) 2019;
21 Jun 2025, 1st Ipswich TC Bundamba P. 1350m

Proisir : Le Troisir (NZ) (Teardrops by Fastnet Rock) 2021;
28 Jun 2025, 1st Newcastle JC Fay & Kalan Memorial Maiden P. 1400m
Sold by Grangewilliam Stud at National Yearling Sale for \$160000

Reliable Man : Bacio del Mist (NZ) (Bacio del Vinto by Encosta de Lago) 2017;
28 Jun 2025, 1st ATC Stayer's Cup 2400m

Savabeel : Merry Old Soul (NZ) (Tuesday Joy by Carnegie) 2018;
21 Jun 2025, 1st Innisfail TC Consider it Done H. 2000m

Super Seth : So Long Farewell (NZ) (Sound of Music by O'Reilly) 2021;
21 Jun 2025, 1st Illawarra TC Celly Off the Blocks Maiden P. 1600m

Super Seth : Frosty Girl (NZ) (Oh So Chilled by O'Reilly) 2021;
25 Jun 2025, 1st ATC Remembering John Ryan H. 1300m
Sold by Waikato Stud Ltd at National Yearling Sale for \$150000

Super Seth : Puntin (NZ) (Stella Grace by Encosta de Lago) 2021;
28 Jun 2025, 1st ATC Captivant H. 1400m
Sold by Haunui Farm at National Yearling Sale for \$60000

Sweynesse : Satness (NZ) (Satanya by Mossman) 2018;
21 Jun 2025, 1st Illawarra TC Daz's Dash H. 1600m

Tarzino : Moegreen (NZ) (Lady of the Garter by Testa Rossa) 2020;
24 Jun 2025, 1st Cairns JC Ladbroke's H. 1400m
Sold by Westbury Stud at National Yearling Sale for \$70000

Tavistock : Flash of Dallas (NZ) (Smoothing by Tale of the Cat) 2020;
23 Jun 2025, 1st Southside Racing Duffy & Simon Lawyers Maiden P. 2200m
Sold by Cambridge Stud at National Yearling Sale for \$11000

Tavistock : Stylebender (NZ) (Mary D'Or by Verglas) 2017;
28 Jun 2025, 1st Newcastle JC P&K Garage Doors H. 1890m
Sold by Blandford Lodge at National Yearling Sale for \$50000

Ten Sovereigns : Central Bank (NZ) (Petit Leon by Shamexpress) 2021;
22 Jun 2025, 1st Southside Racing Decade of Dominance H. 1000m
Sold by Leanach Lodge Ltd at National Yearling Sale for \$18000
Sold by BMD Bloodstock Ltd at Ready to Run Sale for \$35000

The Autumn Sun : Usk Valley (NZ) (Valley Girl by Mastercraftsman) 2020;
27 Jun 2025, 1st Warracknabeal TC Warrack Motel Maiden P. 2000m

Time Test : Metrical (NZ) (Affrettando by Iffraaj) 2019;
28 Jun 2025, 1st SAJC Festival Hire H. 1250m
Sold by Wainui Ltd at National Yearling Sale for \$130000

Tivaci : Monte Cassino (NZ) (Rehab by Fast 'n' Famous) 2021;
28 Jun 2025, 1st Wodonga TC Leneva Park Thoroughbreds Maiden P. 2050m
Sold by Waikato Stud Ltd at National Yearling Sale for \$140000

Tivaci : Matahga (NZ) (Mohegan Star by Reliable Man) 2022;
28 Jun 2025, 1st SAJC Oaklands P.L. 1400m
Sold by Waikato Stud Ltd at National Yearling Sale for \$80000

Turn Me Loose : Split (NZ) (Cry for Terre by Street Cry) 2019;
26 Jun 2025, 1st Bendigo JC Ranbuild Sheds Cup 3600m

Unusual Suspect : High Tempo (NZ) (Hot Tempo by Unusual Suspect) 2020;
21 Jun 2025, 1st Donald DRC Mackays Family Jewellers Maiden P. 1628m

Unusual Suspect : She's Unusual (NZ) (La Fille en Jeu by Mettre En Jeu) 2019;
21 Jun 2025, 1st ATC Elite Sand & Soil H. 1800m

Vadamos : Dougal McKeen (NZ) (Katie McKeen by Keeninsky) 2019;
22 Jun 2025, 1st Echuca RC Hygain Tractorque H. 1300m

Vadamos : Tekapo (NZ) (Snow Petal by Bernardini) 2018;
27 Jun 2025, 1st Warracknabeal TC Pony Xpress H. 2000m

Zoustar : Zouthur (NZ) (Thurlow by Sebring) 2019;
25 Jun 2025, 1st BRC XXXX Gold H. 1350m

HONG KONG

Almanzor : Szeryng (NZ) (Choctoc by Shamexpress) 2021;
22 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Diamond H. 1200m
Sold by Cambridge Stud at National Yearling Sale for \$150000

Burgundy : Golden Fairy (NZ) (Steal by Red Ransom) 2018;
22 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Spessartine Garnet H. 2000m

Charm Spirit : Lo Pan Spirit (NZ) (Potions by Encosta de Lago) 2020;
22 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Diamond H. 1200m
Sold by Phoenix Park at Ready to Run Sale for \$230000

Hallowed Crown : Gallant Crown (NZ) (Justagem by Stravinsky) 2016;
28 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Kam Tin River H. 1400m
Sold by Cambridge Stud at National Yearling Sale for \$40000

Rip Van Winkle : Fun Together (NZ) (Honorjeu by Montjeu) 2018;
22 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Emerald H. 1400m

Shamexpress : Deflation - Flying Fortress (H.K.) (NZ) (Starguru by Ishiguru) 2020;
22 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Amethyst H. 1400m

Tivaci : Mister Dapper (NZ) (Posavina by Tiger Hill) 2019;
22 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Topaz H. 1600m
Sold by Pencarrow Stud at National Yearling Sale for \$30000

Turn Me Loose : Woodfire Champ (NZ) (Te Hana by Falkirk) 2019;
25 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Chester H. 1200m
Sold by Woburn Farm at Ready to Run Sale for \$40000

Wrote : Wrote a New Page (NZ) (My Amazing Cool by Danroad) 2021;
25 Jun 2025, 1st HKJC Lancashire H. 1650m
Sold by Highview at National Yearling Sale for \$75000

MALAYSIA

Ardrossan : China Pearl (NZ) (Indian Sky by Stravinsky) 2020;
22 Jun 2025, 1st Selangor TC Class 5 H. 1150m
Sold by Jamieson Park at National Yearling Sale for \$60000
Sold by Phoenix Park at Ready to Run Sale for \$70000

Charm Spirit : Commander Jones (NZ) (Zuma by Mastercraftsman) 2020;
22 Jun 2025, 1st Selangor TC Class 4 H. 1600m

Darci Brahma : Ace Sovereign (NZ) (Ms Seneca Rock by Seneca Jones) 2017;
22 Jun 2025, 1st Selangor TC Class 5 H. 1150m

Ocean Park : Wan Legacy (NZ) (Voliera by Keeper) 2018;
22 Jun 2025, 1st Selangor TC Class 5 H. 1150m

Swiss Ace : January (NZ) (Musically by Belong To Me) 2019;
22 Jun 2025, 1st Selangor TC Class 3 H. 1400m
Sold by Westbury Stud at Ready to Run Sale for \$75000



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