

Sunday 28 January 2024

KINGSCLERE SCORE BACK-TO-BACK VICTORIES IN KARAKA MILLIONS 3YO



Kingsclere Stables trainers Roger James and Robert Wellwood. (Race Images)

Roger James and James McDonald teamed up to win the Gr.1 New Zealand Derby (2400m) at Ellerslie in 2012 with Silent Achiever (NZ) (O'Reilly), and the pair reunited at the Auckland venue 12 years later to take out New Zealand's richest race, the \$1.5 million TAB Karaka Millions 3YO (1600m) on Saturday evening.

Fresh off taking out the TAB Karaka Millions 2YO (1200m) with the Stephen Marsh-trained Velocious (Written Tycoon),

McDonald was favoured to secure a Karaka Millions double when he jumped aboard **Orchestral (NZ)** (Savabeel) in the three-year-old contest for James and training partner Robert Wellwood.

The daughter of Savabeel was slow to jump from her ace barrier, however, McDonald kept his composure and the pair quickly regained their deficit to settle midfield. Turning for home, McDonald was able to find a passage between runners and Orchestral responded to

his urgings down the straight, reeling in pacemaker Pendragon (NZ) US Navy Flag) with 100m to go, and dashed away to a 3-1/2 length victory.

It was the second consecutive win in the race for Kingsclere Stables, having won last year's edition with subsequent Group One winner Prowess (NZ) (Proisir).

James was duly delighted with the win and is hoping Orchestral can go on to the same lofty heights as last year's victor,

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FIVE STALLIONS FIVE GR.1 SIRES



I'm Thunderstruck



SHOCKING



Pennyweka



**SATONO
ALADDIN**



Legarto



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KINGSCLERE SCORE BACK-TO-BACK VICTORIES IN KARAKA MILLIONS 3YO

(Continued from page 1)

who claimed the Gr.1 New Zealand Stakes (2000m) and Gr.1 Vinery Stud Stakes (2000m) before her retirement late last year.

"She didn't just win it, she bolted in," James said.

"To win New Zealand's richest race two years in a row is something that dreams are made of."

McDonald was left in awe of Orchestral following her win and believes she has the talent to go on and mirror the achievements of her multiple Group One-winning stable predecessor Silent

Achiever.

"She is a beautiful filly," he said. "I reckon Roger has got another Silent Achiever on his hands, she is that nice. She accelerated when I asked her and switched off well. I would have loved for her to begin a little bit better, but we got away with it today, everything panned out perfectly."

James shared McDonald's enthusiasm for Orchestral and believes she has the capability of attaining elite-level status like Silent Achiever and Prowess.

"They were multiple Group One

winners, this filly has yet to get there, but what she has done to date, there is every reason to think she will," he said.

Orchestral was purchased out of Haunui Farm's 2022 New Zealand Bloodstock Book 1 Yearling Sale draft by James and Wellwood for \$625,000, and she has now gone on to win three and place in two of his six starts to date, amassing \$870,000 in prizemoney.

Haunui Farm will offer a full brother to Orchestral, lot 464, at the New Zealand Bloodstock Book 1 Yearling Sale that begins on Sunday.

The victory cemented a Karaka Millions double for McDonald, adding to his Karaka Millions 3YO Classic victory aboard Long Leaf (Fastnet Rock) in 2019, and the Sydney-based hoop said the way the New Zealand racing industry is heading, it won't be another four years before he returns to his homeland.

"What a brilliant night they have put on," he said. "It is so good to be a part of it and I am rapt I came back. To get a couple of winners is even better."

– LOVERACING.NZ News Desk



Race	Auckland TR Karaka Million 3YO Classic (R) L 1600m
Winner	Orchestral (NZ) 2020
Owners	C R & H J Litt
Trainer	Roger James & Robert Wellwood (Cambridge)
Breeding	by Savabeel (AUS) out of Symphonic by O'Reilly
Breeder	Barneswood Farm Ltd
Sales	2022 National Yearling Sale - Book 1 V: Haunui Farm \$625000 P: RA James/R Wellwood

James McDonald salutes Orchestral's outstanding triumph in \$1.5 million TAB Karaka Millions 3YO (1600m). (Trish Dunell)





MCDONALD MAKES INSTANT IMPACT IN KARAKA MILLIONS

Ellerslie racegoers got to witness expat Kiwi jockey James McDonald have his first ride back on home soil in several years at the TAB Karaka Millions meeting at Ellerslie on Saturday, and he made an instant impact in front of the sold-out crowd.

Sydney-based McDonald had returned across the Tasman to partner the Stephen Marsh-trained filly **Velocious** (Written Tycoon) in the TAB Karaka Millions 2YO (1200m) and he showed why he is revered as one of the world's best.

After jumping away well out of the barriers, McDonald was able to secure the coveted one-one position with Velocious, where she was able to settle beautifully. Entering the straight,

McDonald guided his charge three-wide and Velocious was able to reel in the leaders and hit the front with 250m to go. She held out the late challenge of Damask Rose (NZ) (Savabeel) to win by 2-1/2 lengths, denying Te Akau Racing a record eighth straight victory in the race.

Saturday's victory completes the Karaka Millions collection for McDonald, who had previously won the Karaka Millions 3YO Classic (1600m) aboard Long Leaf (Fastnet Rock) in 2019 for trainers David and Ben Hayes and Tom Dabernig.

"It's bloody great," an enthused McDonald said post-race. "It has

eluded me a little bit this race, I have finished a few seconds, but I was on the right filly today, (who was) trained to an absolute minute. She gave me a beautiful ride and produced the goods, it was unreal."

It was an emotional homecoming for McDonald who said it was great to be back riding at Ellerslie on their new StrathAyr track.

"Ellerslie was our headquarters growing up, I was here for three or four years. It was my favourite track, and it still is. To get success here is just awesome," he said.

"There is nothing like home and even though we live in Australia, it is always great to come back and ride winners, especially big ones like that."

McDonald was impressed with Velocious' talent and tenacity, and he believes there is a bright future in store for the daughter of Written Tycoon.

"I could feel them coming (in the straight) but she pulled out all the stops, she didn't feel like she was ever going to get beaten," McDonald said. "She is very good, and I just love her tenacity, she is just a gorgeous filly."

With victory, Velocious extended her career record to three wins and a placing from four starts, with her Karaka Millions triumph joining her win in the Listed Challenge Stakes (1100m) and third placing in the Gr.2 Eclipse Stakes (1200m).

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James McDonald scores a dominant \$1 million Karaka Millions 2YO (1200m) aboard Stephen Marsh and Go Racing's Velocious. (Race Images)



MCDONALD MAKES INSTANT IMPACT IN KARAKA MILLIONS

(Continued from page 4)

Trainer Stephen Marsh was quietly confident heading into the race, saying his filly had a faultless preparation and had the benefit of McDonald aboard.

"We thought we had the right filly all the way through, and James was very keen to come and ride her," he said. "We think he (McDonald) is the world's best and for Go Racing and Marsh Racing to give him his first Karaka Million (2YO) win is exciting for everyone.

"It is one of those preparations where nothing has gone wrong – we haven't nursed her, she hasn't had shin soreness, we haven't done anything. She has been the perfect racehorse the whole way through, so we weren't actually that nervous going into it. We felt we had the right horse, and she is just an absolute gem to train, does what you like, she is unbelievable."

It was an emotional victory for Marsh, who dedicated it to his mother Kay, who is suffering from ill-health.

"I just want to say, that is for my mum," he said.

It was the second win in the race for Marsh and syndicator Go Racing, who combined to win the race in 2013 with Ruud Awakening (Bernadini), and Go Racing principal Albert Bosma was glad he could get another with his great mate, particular during trying times for his family.

"It is special for us, but it is probably more special for Stephen and his family with what they are going through. He has been like a brother, 20 years we have been doing this," Bosma said.

Velocious was purchased by Go Racing out of Inglewood Stud's 2023 New Zealand Bloodstock Book 1



Go Racing's Sean O'Conner, Pat Vinaccia, Albert Bosma and Matt Allnutt. (Race Images)

Yearling Sale draft for \$190,000 with a view towards to the Karaka Millions 2YO.

Inglewood Stud will offer a half sister to Velocious by Dundee, lot 295, at the New Zealand Bloodstock Book 1 Yearling Sale that begins on Sunday.

"Over the last five or six years we have focussed on middle-distance horses for Australia, that is where the money is," Bosma said. "Now things have changed and last year was the first time we said we have got to start focussing back on New Zealand with all these amazing changes Entain is bringing in and these great races. We bought this filly for this race, and we have done it.

"It is hard to win races and when you buy something with a plan, 99 times (out of 100) it doesn't come off, and it came off this time and we had the right

plan. I am so happy for Stephen, and I am so happy for us.

"Seven wins in a row by Te Akau may never be beaten but I think it is going to get harder and harder going forward, there are going to be so many people trying to win this race."

– **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**

Race	Auckland TR Karaka 2YO Million (R) L 1200m
Winner	Velocious (AUS) 2021
Owners	Go Racing Burrata Syndicate (Mgr Albert Bosma)
Trainer	Stephen Marsh (Cambridge)
Breeding	by Written Tycoon (AUS) out of Parmalove (AUS) by Snitzel (AUS)
Breeder	Inglewood Stud
Sales	2023 National Yearling Sale – Book 1 V: Inglewood Stud \$190000 P: Go Racing



DESERT LIGHTNING UPSETS LEGARTO IN AOTEAROA CLASSIC



Desert Lightning rises to an emphatic victory in the inaugural \$1 million Elsdon Park Aotearoa Classic (1200m) at Ellerslie. (Race Images)

Desert Lightning (NZ) (Pride Of Dubai) has spent the majority of his career flying under the radar, but there was no denying his place at the top of the tree in the inaugural \$1 million Elsdon Park Aotearoa Classic (1600m) at Ellerslie on Saturday.

The under-rated son of Pride Of Dubai has consistently been among the very best of his generation. He finished fourth in the Gr.1 Sistema Stakes (1200m) as a two-year-old, then returned as a three-year-old to win the Gr.2 Avondale Guineas (2100m) and place in the Gr.1 New Zealand 2000 Guineas (1600m) and the Karaka Million 3YO Classic (1600m).

Desert Lightning has not put a foot wrong since turning four, winning two of his first three starts this season including last month's Gr.1 TAB Classic (1600m) at Trentham. However, through no fault of his own, the false start to that race and

its effect on rival runners prevented Desert Lightning from getting the credit he deserved.

Despite being a last-start Group One winner, Desert Lightning was sent out as a \$14 outsider on Saturday. The market was dominated by the multiple Group One winner Legarto (NZ) (Proisir), who was a \$1.30 favourite and regarded as close to a certainty – so much so that the TAB announced on Wednesday that futures fixed-odds win bets would be paid out in advance of the race.

But that script was turned upside down by a spectacular performance by the Peter and Dawn Williams-trained Desert Lightning.

He was slotted into second by jockey Vinnie Colgan, who remained calm despite front-runner Wessex (NZ) (Turn Me

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DESERT LIGHTNING UPSETS LEGARTO IN AOTEAROA CLASSIC

(Continued from page 6)

Loose) opening up a huge margin through the middle stages of the race.

Desert Lightning dragged the field up behind that tearaway leader, then took command with a brilliant burst of speed at the top of the straight.

Legarto got out into clear air early in the run home and had her opportunity to run him down, but Desert Lightning never stopped. He maintained a margin of a length and three-quarters over Legarto, with an incredible seven lengths back

to the third-placed Rudyard (NZ) (Charm Spirit). The time was a slick 1:32.53 for 600m.

"This is a very good horse," Colgan said. "His TAB Classic win was outstanding. I know he hadn't run for seven or eight weeks in between times, but I rode him in a gallop two weeks ago and I knew Pete had him peachy-perfect.

"I heard George Simon (commentator) say I had them in trouble down the straight, and it put a smile on my face. Legarto couldn't have caught him today – no way."

Desert Lightning has now had 16 starts for five wins, six placings and \$1.08 million in stakes for his owners, Sarah Green and Ger Beemsterboer's Barneswood Farm. Desert Lightning was a \$190,000 purchase by Peter and Dawn Williams from Little Avondale Stud's draft in Book 1 of Karaka 2021.

Peter Williams said his confidence was boosted by Saturday's Gr.3 Cambridge Stud Almanzor Trophy (1200m) victory by Crocetti (NZ) (Zacinto), who had worked in company with Desert Lightning in an exhibition gallop at Ellerslie on January 14.

"He actually worked even better than Crocetti the other day," Williams said. "Vinnie came back after that and said, 'Don't you dare do anything else with him.' I had been thinking about another trial, but after he came home in 32 seconds in that gallop, we thought we'd just keep him at home.

"It was a great win. He's really grown a leg this year. We had a few problems with him last year, but he couldn't do anything about it. We turned him out for a good spell at the end of the season, and that's been the makings of him.

"He beat Legarto in the 3YO race on this day last year. No one ever gives him any credit. But I've always rated him as a top horse, and Vinnie has too. Everyone in our team has done a great job with him."

– **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk.**

Race	Auckland TR Elsdon Park Aotearoa Classic 1600m
Winner	Desert Lightning (NZ) 2019
Owners	Barneswood Farm Ltd for S C Green & G C Beemsterboer
Trainer	Peter & Dawn Williams (Byerly Park)
Breeding	by Pride of Dubai (AUS) out of Isstoora (AUS) by High Chaparral (IRE)
Breeder	Mahoenui Partnership
Sales	2021 National Yearling Sale - Book 1 V: Little Avondale Stud \$150000 P: PJ & DM Williams



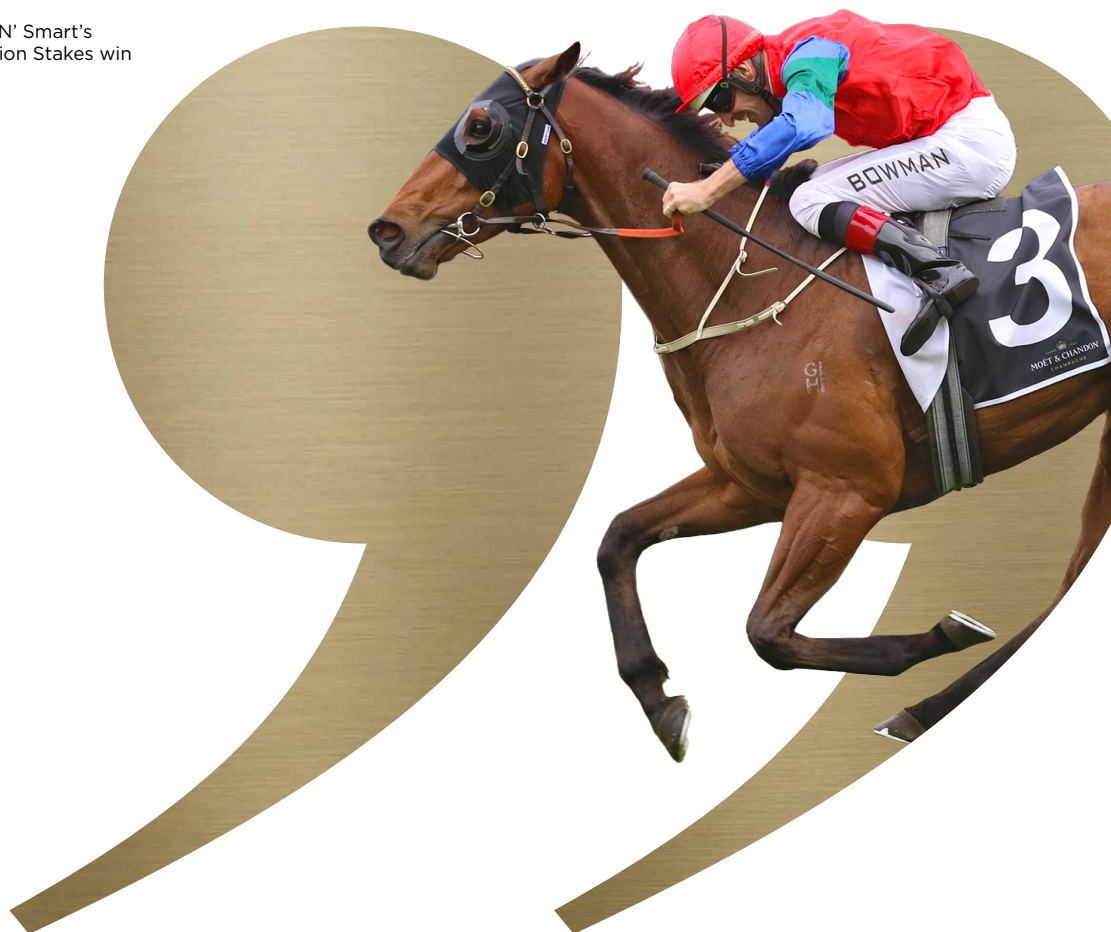
Byerley Park-based Peter and Dawn Williams.
(Race Images)

“ *He's a **VERY***
COURAGEOUS
HORSE,

I had a lot of
confidence in him,
...I was on a horse that has

A GREAT*
WILL TO WIN.
...he's very exciting.

*Hugh Bowman on Sharp 'N' Smart's
Group One Spring Champion Stakes win



KARAKA
2024

28 January — 2 February



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BELCLARE BACK IN THE WINNERS CIRCLE

Group One mare **Belclare (NZ)** (Per Incanto) returned to the peak of her powers on New Zealand racing's biggest stage on Saturday, scoring a dominant victory in the \$500,000 Gr.2 Westbury Classic (1600m) at Ellerslie.

The Per Incanto mare was a triple black-type winner last season, capturing the Gr.3 Canterbury Breeders' Stakes (1400m) and Listed Wairarapa Breeders' Stakes (1600m) before landing a Group One triumph with a three-length victory over subsequent elite performer Skew Wiff (NZ) (Savabeel) in the New Zealand Thoroughbred Breeders' Stakes (1600m) at Pukekohe.

After resuming with an eye-catching third in the Gr.2 Foxbridge Plate (1200m) in August, Belclare struggled for form with four unplaced finishes between September and early December. But she showed signs of a turnaround with a last-start second in the Gr.2 Manawatu Challenge Stakes (1400m), beaten by half a length by the subsequent Group One winner Puntura (NZ) (Vespa).

Largely overlooked in Saturday's fillies and mares' feature at odds of \$21.90, Belclare was driven forward from her wide gate by jockey Sam Spratt. By the time the field climbed the rise at the 900m mark, she was ideally placed on the outside of the front-running Express Yourself (NZ) (Shamexpress).

Belclare took command at the home turn and burst clear, opening up a big margin that the late-finishing Faraglioni (NZ) (El Roca) and Maria Farina (NZ) (Contributer) were unable to claw back. She scored by a length and a half, stopping the clock at 1:22.28.



Belclare with part-owner David Woodhouse following the \$500,000 Gr.2 Westbury Classic (1600m) at Ellerslie. (Race Images)

"I got a phone call yesterday saying one of the owners had passed away, so it was really good to get this result, and he might have given me a bit of help," Spratt said.

"We push forward from our wide draw, and in the end it was pretty similar to the Group One she won around this time last year. She hadn't done that much in between times, but it was good that she really showed the ability that she's got today."

Belclare has now had 34 starts for 10 wins and six seconds, earning \$744,275 in stakes.

Trainer Lisa Latta was represented at Ellerslie on Saturday by her son Josh Herd.

"She's looking after the team at Trentham today – it's a bit unfortunate that the meeting got abandoned there," he said. "But it's so great to get a win on Karaka Millions night. This is the

pinnacle of New Zealand racing and we couldn't be happier.

"We had a look and there didn't seem to be too much speed in the race. We were drawn wide, so we planned to go forward from there, and it was a great ride by Sam.

"She's a very good horse. She ran good sectionals last start, where she was beaten by Puntura, who franked that form in the Thorndon Mile (1600m) last week. We're pretty happy."

– **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk.**

Race	Auckland TR Westbury Classic Gr.2 1400m
Winner	Belclare (NZ) 2017
Owners	D K Woodhouse, O Smith, Rusties Syndicate & J Clark
Trainer	Lisa Latta (Awapuni)
Breeding	by Per Incanto (USA) out of Miss Rhythmic by O'Reilly
Breeder	D K Woodhouse



Sunday 28 January 2024

CROCETTI ALL CLASS IN ELLERSLIE OPENER

Undefeated three-year-old **Crocetti (NZ)** (Zacinto) was billed as one of the headline acts of Saturday's Karaka Millions mega meeting at Ellerslie, and he got the evening off to a perfect start in the opening race on the card.

The Zacinto gelding was a \$1.40 favourite for the Gr.3 Cambridge Stud Almanzor Trophy (1200m), bringing in a perfect six-from-six record including the Gr.1 New Zealand 2000 Guineas (1600m), Gr.2 Sarten Memorial (1400m) and Gr.3 Northland Breeders' Stakes (1200m).

Attempting to join an Almanzor Trophy honour roll that features the likes of Group One winners Melody Belle (NZ) (Commands), Catalyst (NZ) (Darci Brahma), Sword Of State (Snitzel) and Maven Belle (NZ) (Burgundy), Crocetti had to carry 60kg under the set weights and penalties conditions of the race and was giving away at least 3kg to all of his rivals.

A few nerves rippled through the sold-out track as Crocetti stumbled leaving the starting gates and settled much further back in the field than normal. But jockey Warren Kennedy

never panicked and allowed him to gradually cruise closer coming around the side of the track, moving right into striking distance before the home turn.

Crocetti pounced in the straight and it was all over, charging past the previously unbeaten Merchant Queen (Merchant Navy) and opening up a winning margin of a length and a half. Egyptian Queen (NZ) (Zoustar) caught the eye with a big finish from the back of the field to run third.

"There's a bit of pressure with this horse," Kennedy admitted. "The pressure doesn't come from the owners. It's just the public and all the publicity that he's starting to have around him. He's unbeaten and was a very short favourite in the first race of the night. I wanted everyone to start the night off right.

"But he's just class, this horse. He lost his back legs coming out of the gates and I didn't end up where I wanted to be, but he just relaxed so nicely and he has a devastating turn of foot."

Crocetti has earned \$672,750 in stakes for owner and co-breeder Daniel Nakhle, and his next test is likely to be against older horses in the Gr.1 BCD Group Sprint (1400m) at Te Rapa on February 10.

"It was good to get today out of the way," said Danny Walker, who trains in partnership with Arron Tata. "I didn't feel too much pressure coming into today – this horse doesn't give us pressure. He's just so easy and a delight to train.

Race	Auckland TR Almanzor Trophy Gr.3 1200m
Winner	Crocetti (NZ) 2020
Owners	D E Nakhle
Trainer	Danny Walker & Arron Tata (Byerley Park)
Breeding	by Zacinto (GB) out of Gracehill by O'Reilly
Breeder	D E & E Y Nakhle



"We've always known he was a special horse and the journey has just been amazing. Everyone's getting on board with him now. He's a really, really good horse, and he's always shown us that. He's a little star.

"Arron and I do all the work with him, along with the staff we've got at home. I'm really grateful to all of them. The owner's a happy man, so it's all good.

"The BCD Group Sprint is the plan now. He usually comes through his races pretty easily, so hopefully he does that again from today's race and we can look forward to Te Rapa."

– **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk.**

Warren Kennedy acknowledges a seventh consecutive win by Crocetti in the Gr.3 Cambridge Stud Almanzor Trophy (1200m). (Trish Dunell)





MASTER FAY CRUISES TO CONCORDE VICTORY

Former Hong Kong galloper **Master Fay** (Deep Field) displayed a touch of real class when he scored a dominant victory in the Gr.2 Brighthill Farm Concorde Handicap (1200m) at Ellerslie.

The Chad Ormsby-trained six year-old son of Deep Field was a \$100,000 purchase out of the Highden Park Book 1 Sale draft at Karaka in 2019 by Ormsby as a pinhooking prospect but didn't make it back to the sales ring and was sold to Hong Kong interests following some impressive trial wins.

He performed well in Hong Kong, winning his only start at Sha Tin in 2021 for trainer Caspar Fownes before soundness issues struck and he was eventually retired back to New Zealand by his owner who gave permission to Ormsby to try again with him if he stood up to a racing preparation.

Ormsby was patient with the well proportioned gelding giving him three trials in preparation for his New Zealand raceday debut over 1200m at Tauranga earlier this month which he won in fine style.

Stepped up to stakes company on Saturday, rider Vinnie Colgan bounced him away nicely from an inside gate to trail pacemaker Imwonderfultonight (I Am Invincible) before dashing clear early in the run home to register a comfortable victory over the late closing Petrucci (I Am Invincible).

Ormsby cut an emotional figure as he accepted congratulations after the race.

"He is a horse who we managed to secure at Karaka and after we sold him we followed his career up in Hong Kong," Ormsby said.

"He could have been anything but unfortunately he didn't get to his best and we managed to get him back through the late Stuey Hale.

"To get him to a race like this has been a lot of hard work from a lot of people. and I was emotional before the race, let alone now.

"There are so many people to thank, but it's just great to see what the horse can do as there is a lot ahead of him if we can hold him together.

"This was a good field but he got in on a light weight so we thought it was here for the taking.

"He is a day by day prospect as he is not the

soundest so we will look after him as you have seen today what he can do."

Colgan had been doing it hard to get down to the 53kg weight carried by his mount and was glad the race had panned out in his favour.

"It's been a long day and I'm glad this ride was race two," he said.

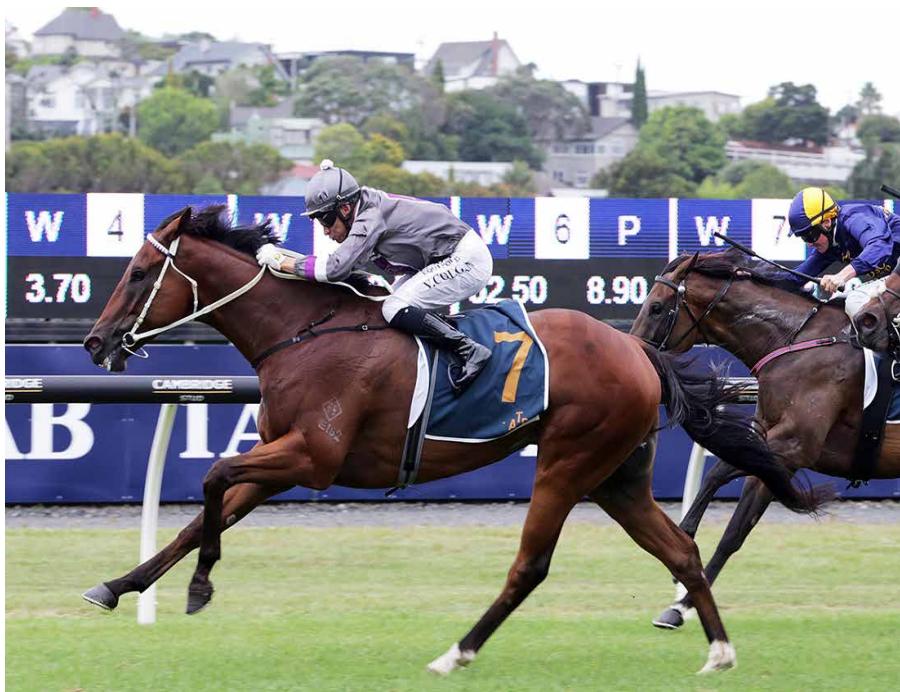
I've been on a pretty lean diet since Wednesday, mostly vegetables and no bread or nice food.

"This was well worth it as he is very smart, he is lightly raced and he did that well."

Master Fay is now unbeaten in three starts with just under \$262,000 in prizemoney earnings.

- **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**

Race	Auckland TR Concorde H. Gr.3 1200m
Winner	Master Fay (AUS) 2017
Owners	Riverrock Farm Limited
Trainer	Chad Ormsby (Matamata)
Breeding	by Deep Field (AUS) out of Keeping Score by Keeper (AUS)
Breeder	Mr MJ O'Donnell
Sales	2019 National Yearling Sale - Book 1 V: Highden Park \$100000 P: Riverrock Farm Partnership



Master Fay sprints to an impressive victory in the Gr.2 Brighthill Farm Concorde Handicap (1200m) at Ellerslie. (Trish Dunell)



BOLD SOUL BRILLIANT IN LAUNCESTON GUINEAS

On the eve of the blockbuster Karaka Millions twilight race meeting and the Karaka 2024 National Yearling Sales, an exciting three-year-old sourced from the New Zealand Bloodstock sale ring made a bold black-type statement on the other side of the Tasman.

Friday night's \$125,000 Listed Kevin Sharkie Launceston Guineas (2100m) was the scene of a breathtaking last-to-first performance by **Bold Soul (NZ)** (Embellish), who was bought for just \$20,000 from Book 2 of Karaka 2022. He has now had five starts for three wins and two placings, earning A\$188,925 in stakes.

Bold Soul ventured to Tasmania from his home state of Victoria, where

he had made a promising start to his career with two early victories including a last-start success at Flemington. He was sent out as a commanding \$1.65 favourite on Friday, and in the end he lived up to that billing.

Bold Soul is trained by Patrick Payne at Plumpton and is raced by Graham Cleary.

Notably, Bold Soul became the first stakes winner for Cambridge Stud's emerging sire Embellish (NZ). Himself a graduate of the Karaka sale ring, where he was bought by David Ellis for \$775,000 in 2016, the Group One-winning son of Savabeel has already sired 10 winners.

His oldest progeny are three-year-olds, and Embellish is also the sire of

Group One placegetter Talisker (NZ) and the stakes-placed Luberon (NZ) and Paragon (NZ).

Embellish has one yearling available in Book 1 of Karaka 2024, along with another 16 in the Book 2 catalogue.

Race	TTC Launceston Guineas L 2100m
Winner	Bold Soul (NZ) 2020
Owners	Mr G W Cleary
Trainer	Patrick Payne (Plumpton)
Breeding	by Embellish out of Twin Soul (IRE) by Singspiel (IRE)
Breeder	Te Keeti Bloodstock Ltd
Sales	2022 National Yearling Sale - Book 2 V: Te Keeti Bloodstock Ltd \$20000 P: HN Auret



Bold Soul was brilliant taking out the Listed Kevin Sharkie Launceston Guineas (2100m). (Brett Holburt, Racing Photos)



DENNIS BROTHERS GET RADIANT RESULT

Well known southern breeding and racing identities the Dennis brothers were back in the limelight at Riccarton on Saturday as their royally bred mare **The Radiant One (NZ)** (Darci Brahma) took out the Listed Speight's Timaru Stakes (1400m).

Bred, owned and trained by brothers Tony, Ray, Joe and Martin Dennis, the daughter of former The Oaks Stud resident stallion and multiple Group One winner Darci Brahma hadn't been at her best in her last two runs following a brave performance to finish fourth in the Listed Stewards Stakes (1200m) during New Zealand Cup Week last November.

The five-year-old stripped a fitter horse after finishing midfield at Gore a week ago and raced accordingly

as she justified her \$2.80 favourites tag in the hands of Tina Comignaghi to deliver a stylish victory.

Comignaghi had her sitting outside pacemaker Divine Sava (NZ) (Savabeel) throughout and took over rounding the home bend.

The Radiant One kicked powerfully to establish a three length break at the 200m and despite Miss Layla (NZ) (Burgundy) steadily closing that gap, The Radiant One had more than enough in reserve to hold her out by two lengths at the finish.

Ray Dennis was on hand at the track putting the final touches on the mare and was delighted with the run.

"I'm here at Riccarton as I drove the truck up from home," Dennis said.

"We were pleased with her as she struck a very wet track at Wingatui and the same last time at Gore where she got dragged back in the worst part of it and just couldn't quicken.

"I was surprised at her odds today as she was very short on the tote but she did the job in good fashion.

"Being breeders, we may have sacrificed a few wins in lower class chasing black type with her but this one today is a real boost and we don't think it will be her last either."

Milan Park will offer Lot 476, a half-sister by Savabeel to



Tina Comignaghi returns to scale aboard The Radiant One after her Listed Speight's Timaru Stakes (1400m) victory on Saturday. (Race Images South)

The Radiant One during the Book 1 session at Karaka when the New Zealand Bloodstock National Yearling Sale kicks off on Sunday (28 January), with Dennis hopeful this win will add some more lustre to the yearling filly.

"She (The Radiant One) comes from one of our traditional families that has been hugely successful over the years," he said.

"All five dams in her extended pedigree have produced stakes winners which we hope will play in favour of the filly we are selling at Karaka on Monday."

The Radiant One is out of the four-time Group Three winner The Diamond One (Tale Of The Cat) and is the granddaughter of dual Group One winner The Jewel (NZ) (O'Reilly) who numbered the Gr.1 New Zealand 1000 Guineas (1600m) amongst her eleven career victories.

- LOVERACING.NZ News Desk

Race	CJC Timaru S. L 1400m
Winner	The Radiant One (NZ) 2018
Owners	A G, K J, M C & P R Dennis
Trainer	Dennis Bros (Woodlands)
Breeding	by Darci Brahma out of The Diamond One (AUS) by Tale of the Cat (USA)
Breeder	A G; K J; M C & P R Dennis





AKROTIRI SHOWS STAMINA CREDENTIALS

Up-and-comer **Akrotiri (NZ)** (Tarzino) passed his first staying test with flying colours at The Valley on Saturday, heading a New Zealand-bred trifecta in the A\$130,000 Chandler Macleod Handicap (2040m).

Akrotiri jumped well from the starting gates and jockey Celine Gaudray allowed the Tarzino gelding to stride forward, taking the lead turning out of the straight on the first occasion. He dictated terms from there and kicked hard before turning for home, putting himself out of reach of Interlinked (NZ) (Savabeel) and Miss Tarzy (NZ) (Tarzino).

Trained by Cindy Alderson at Cranbourne, Akrotiri has now had six starts for three wins and A\$124,350 in stakes.

"Cindy gave me a lot of confidence before I hopped on today," Gaudray said. "She thought he'd run a good race, and she just wanted me to keep it smooth. He's a big-striding horse, so I just let him find his rhythm. He was too strong in the end."

"He's very inexperienced. He didn't handle the corner that well today, but he'll take good improvement from this and there'll be no problems going further."

Alderson was always confident that the step up beyond 1600m would bring Akrotiri into his element.

"He's a good young stayer," he said. "Blinkers were off for the first time today. Celine did a great job getting him out of the barriers and giving him a perfect run."

"He's a big, long, lanky horse. He

can't really accelerate when he's caught back behind them on the fence in a stop-start race, but today, with free running and a well-judged ride from Celine, he went really well.

"It was good to see him relaxing and striding along so nicely today. I've got no doubt he'll do 2400m, and maybe he can even go further than that. Who knows?"

Akrotiri was bred by Marie Leicester and is out of the Group One-placed Stravinsky mare Tsarina Belle (NZ) (Stravinsky), who is also the dam of the Listed Wanganui Cup (2040m) winner La Flora Belle (NZ) (Ifraaj).

Akrotiri was offered by Lilywhites Lodge at the 2021 Ready to Run Sale at

Karaka, where he was passed in. He was a trials placegetter at Cambridge in July of 2022 before relocating across the Tasman.

Haunui Farm will offer a half-brother to Akrotiri during Book 2 of Karaka 2024. The colt by Belardo is catalogued as Lot 1019.

– NZ Racing Desk.

Race	MVRC Chandler Macleod H. 2040m
Winner	Akrotiri (NZ) 2019
Owners	Mr M C Price
Trainer	Cindy Alderson (Cranbourne)
Breeding	by Tarzino out of Tsarina Belle by Stravinsky (USA)
Breeder	Mrs N M Leicester



Akrotiri headed home a New Zealand-bred trifecta in the A\$130,000 Chandler Macleod Handicap (2040m) at The Valley. (Bruno Cannatelli)



PIAGGIO TURNS VALLEY FORTUNES AROUND

A few short weeks after throwing everything away in a similar race, talented Kiwi-bred gelding **Piaggio (NZ)** (Vespa) returned to The Valley on Saturday and turned things around in emphatic style.

The six-year-old son of Vespa went into the A\$130,000 Simpson Construction Handicap (1600m) after being unplaced in all of his three previous starts at the unique circuit, including bucking soon after leaving the gates on December 30 and failing to finish.

Saturday was a completely different story. Piaggio settled into a smooth rhythm near the tail of the field for jockey Celine Gaudray, then moved through his gears and produced a brilliant turn of foot in the straight. He roared past the front-running Toronto Terrier (Toronado) and snatched a thrilling win.

"He sure is a character, and after what happened here last

time, we didn't know what to expect," Gaudray said. "But he was actually really quiet today – so much so that I thought he was going to be flat.

"He relaxed beautifully for me behind a good speed. He was off the bridle around the corner and I was pretty sure he was flat, but I kept niggling at him and he really knuckled down late.

"We all know he has a terrific turn of foot. I just think he hasn't been to the Valley that much before. He seems to just wait to straighten up before he really knuckles down. He did that today and got the job done."

Piaggio has now had a total of 22 starts for five wins, seven placings and A\$216,445 in stakes.

He began his career in the Otaki stable of John Benner and Hollie Wynyard, for whom he had five starts for a win and three placings including a second in the Gr.3 Taranaki 2YO Classic (1200m).

Piaggio was later unplaced in five starts in Hong Kong before moving into the care of Cranbourne trainer Greg Eurell. His 12 starts from his new quarters have produced four wins and four placings.

"You've always got your heart in your mouth with this little guy, waiting to see what he does," Eurell said. "Leading into this race, I was asked what I thought of his chances and I didn't know what to say. For whatever reason, this has never been a

track that's been very kind to him. Things just haven't gone right here. But fortunately they did today.

"If you take away the little incident he had here last time, his form in this campaign has been really good. He was a very solid placegetter at Flemington last time out.

"Hopefully he can carry on from here. He seems to be holding up really well in this preparation. He's not a big horse, but he has the heart of a lion. For as long as he's doing well in the stable, we'll keep on keeping on."

Piaggio is out of the two-win Scaredie Cat mare Sand'ior (NZ) and was bred by South Canterbury breeders Sue and Stuart McGiffert, who sold the now gelding as a yearling for \$8,000 at the 2019 Karaka Book 3 Sale.

– NZ Racing Desk.

Piaggio (red cap) turned his fortunes around in emphatic style taking out the Simpson Construction Handicap (1600m). (Bruno Cannatelli)

Race	MVRC Simpson Construction H. 1600m
Winner	Piaggio (NZ) 2017
Owners	Mr T K M Lam, Ms H Luo
Trainer	Greg Eurell (Cranbourne)
Breeding	by Vespa out of Sand'ior by Scaredie Cat
Breeder	S E & Mrs S J McGiffert
Sales	MVRC Simpson Construction H. 1600m





MISS TAKE MAKES A BIG IMPRESSION

Imported New Zealand mare **Miss Take (NZ)** (War Decree) took her promising career to a new level in Saturday's A\$80,000 Happy 50th Jeff Waters Handicap (1200m) at The Valley.

The daughter of Inglewood Stud stallion War Decree has now had six starts for three wins and a placing, earning more than A\$80,000 for an ownership group headed by Manoj Wanzare.

A debut winner in New Zealand in August of 2022 and successful in Benchmark 64 company at Sale just under a year later, the four-year-old mastered the step up to metropolitan class on Saturday.

Ridden by Luke Currie for trainers Anthony and Sam Freedman, Miss Take settled near the tail of the field before creeping closer and looming large behind the leaders at the home turn.

Currie found a narrow opening two off the rail and drove Miss Take through. The talented mare quickened smartly and timed her run to perfection to prevail in a three-way photo finish.

"She was good," Currie said. "She didn't jump that cleanly. Sam said that she had speed, but since she was first-up today they'd be happy to give her a bit of cover.

"She put herself there, three back on the fence, and she was always travelling. I just had to wait for an opening, and when a run did come, she quickened really well.

"Her form is good, and being first-up today, I'm sure she'll improve. She was a bit hot in the yard. Having this run under her belt will do her good. The turn of foot that she has will definitely help her go on from here."

The Freedman stable was represented at The Valley on Saturday by racing manager Brad Taylor.

"We've learned a lot about this mare in the time that we've had her," he said. "She was a three-year-old when we first got her and was still a little weak. She's certainly grown and developed a lot. She's a much bigger and stronger mare now.

"Credit to Andy Williams, who found her in New Zealand off a trial and gave her a couple of starts there before sending her over. It probably didn't work out as well as we would have liked



Miss Take timed her run to perfection in Saturday's A\$80,000 Happy 50th Jeff Waters Handicap (1200m) at The Valley. (Bruno Cannatelli)

in her first prep here, but she's returned well today and she has really good improvement to come.

"When the gap appeared today, she showed a very good turn of foot, which we knew she had in New Zealand."

Miss Take is out of the Pins mare Skite (NZ), who is the dam of six winners including Group Three winner Timy Tyler (NZ) (No Excuse Needed) and Listed winner Waldorf (NZ) (Highly Recommended).

Miss Take began her career in the Riccarton stable of Terri Rae, winning two trials before romping to a nine-length victory on debut. She then finished fourth in the Listed Canterbury Belle Stakes (1200m).

– NZ Racing Desk.

Race	MVRC Happy 50th Jeff Waters H. 1200m
Winner	Miss Take (NZ) 2019
Owners	Mr M Wanzare, M Shepherd, Mr A D Stuart, Mr S Beatson, Mangan Racing, Mr P F Tomsic, PM Racing & Breeding Pty Ltd, Mr D J Mangan, G1G Racing & Breeding, Mr D N Larkin, Mr S A Bira'm, Mr D F Camilleri, Mr J J Page, RONC, Mr J J C Rodda, Mr C Mccloud
Trainer	Anthony & Sam Freedman (Flemington)
Breeding	by War Decree (USA) out of Skite by Pins (AUS)
Breeder	H A & M J McSweeney



CEERSEVEN STRIKES AT THE VALLEY

Mitchell Freedman had already crossed the Tasman in search of new recruits for his Ballarat stable, and a win with **Ceerseven (NZ)** (Complacent) at The Valley on the eve of the Karaka 2024 yearling sale added to his affinity with New Zealand-breds.

Ceerseven recorded the third win of an eight-start career in Saturday's \$80,000 Ascend Sales Trophies Challenger Handicap (1600m), lifting his earnings to A\$97,100 for a big syndicate of owners.

Saturday's victory was Ceerseven's first appearance in metropolitan Melbourne since the Gr.2 Alister Clark Stakes (2040m) at the same venue last March, where he finished outside the placings but within four lengths of the winner in only the third race of his career.

"It was really pleasing to see him score a good, strong win today," Freedman said. "He's a horse that's always shown us a fair bit of upside and we expect to see him perform strongly over longer distances than today's 1600m.

"We gave him a shot at the Alister

Clark last season. The race was there, and he'd shown enough by that point for us to think that it was worth giving him that opportunity. In the end he was still just a little bit immature at that early stage of his career. He's making good progress now and I think we've got a bit more to look forward to with him."

Ceerseven delivered a first metropolitan win for apprentice jockey Jaylah Kennedy, who eased back to second-last from a wide gate and remained there until the 450m mark. She hooked the four-year-old to the outside at the home turn and pushed the button, and Ceerseven lengthened stride stylishly and finished over the top of Brooklyn Boss (NZ) (Prince Of Brooklyn) to score a narrow but authoritative win.

"It's unbelievable," Kennedy said. "Massive thanks to Mitch and the connections. They didn't have to keep me on today – he was only carrying 58.5kg before the claim. But they stuck with me, and I'm just glad I could repay them.

"I wanted to see him sit three

pairs back and one off, but I thought that would probably be out of my range from the barriers. I had to bite the bullet and ride him patiently. He wanted to tow me into the race before I really wanted to, but it was just about keeping him in his rhythm and keeping him balanced. He was really strong to the line."

Ceerseven was bred by Mapperley Stud and is by their stallion Complacent. Ceerseven's dam is the unraced Elnadim mare Calypso Miss (NZ), who has been represented by five winners from six foals to race including the Group Two-placed High Tower (NZ) (Keeninsky).

Mapperley Stud offered Ceerseven in Book 2 of Karaka 2021, where Freedman teamed up with Phill Cataldo Bloodstock and bought him for only \$30,000.

– NZ Racing Desk.



Race	MVRC Ascend Sales Trophies H. 1600m
Winner	Ceerseven (NZ) 2019
Owners	Mr W A Hucker, Ms R A Forrest, Mrs J R Freedman, Miss B E Forrest, Mr C G Madden, Mr J R Yean, Mrs C Guy, Mr J Sobey, Oaks Crew, Mr S L McInnes, Mr T Madden, Mr I J Everett, Mrs K Campana, Mr V P Counsel, Mr A R Schickerling, Taylors Haymarket
Trainer	Mitchell Freedman (Ballarat)
Breeding	by Complacent (AUS) out of Calypso Miss by Elnadim (USA)
Breeder	Mapperley Stud Ltd
Sales	2021 National Yearling Sale - Book 2 V: Mapperley Stud Ltd \$30000 P: Phill Cataldo B/stock (BAFNZ) / Mitch Freedman Racing

Ceerseven wins the Ascend Sales Trophies Challenger Handicap (1600m). (Bruno Cannatelli)





RICCARTON VICTORY BRINGS UP TE AKAU CENTURY

After reaching the 99 mark on Wednesday at Matamata, Mark Walker and Sam Bergerson were swift in recording their 100th domestic winner for the 2023/24 season early at Riccarton's Saturday meeting.

The powerhouse Te Akau stable has surpassed the 100 mark for the past five seasons on the bounce, initially with former trainer Jamie Richards at the helm, before Walker returned from Singapore in 2022/23 and rewrote the history books in amassing a record total of 203 winners, as well as the fastest to a century.

Sam Bergerson joined Walker in partnership this season, and from the stable's 523 starters, now has three Group One, four Group Two, three Group Three and three Listed winners to his credit with an overall strike rate of 5.2.

Te Akau principal David Ellis credited the pair alongside the remainder of their staff at both Matamata and Riccarton Park bases, the latter producing the 100th victor in Angel Wings (Heroic Valour), who was guided by former Te Akau apprentice Joe Kamaruddin in the Berkley Stud At Karaka 2024 (1100m), ahead of stablemate Superbly Written (Written Tycoon).

"What a great achievement by Mark and Sam to reach 100 wins in such a quick time again this season, and it's hugely rewarding to everyone involved; staff, owners, and for Karyn (Fenton-Ellis) and me too," Ellis said.

"Everyone that works for Te Akau gives 110%, and without that type of commitment, you just can't get these sorts of results."

Te Akau Racing established its first Trans-Tasman stable at Cranbourne earlier this season, with champion mare Imperatriz's (I Am Invincible) three Group Ones headlining nine victories from their Australian-based representatives.

"(The 100 wins) have included 18 stakes winners between New Zealand and Australia, and we've got some nice black-type chances coming up through the summer and autumn in both countries," Ellis said.

Race	CJC Berkley Stud at Karaka 2024 H. 1100m
Winner	Angel Wings (AUS) 2019
Owners	Fortuna Angels Wings Syndicate (Mgr: John Galvin)
Trainer	Mark Walker & Sam Bergerson (Matamata)
Breeding	by Heroic Valour (AUS) out of Gowana (AUS) by More Than Ready (USA)
Breeder	Mr J Hughes, Mr B Thomas



Te Akau stablemates Angel Wings (outer) and Superbly Written fight out the finish in the Berkley Stud At Karaka 2024 (1100m). (Race Images South)