

Sunday 20 March 2022

SOUTHERN BONDS TO THE FORE IN OAKS TRIUMPH



Belle En Rouge takes out the Gr.1 Al Basti Equiworld Dubai New Zealand Oaks (2400m) (Race Images)

With three premierships, countless big-race triumphs, more than \$30 million in prize-money and Hong Kong beckoning, Jamie Richards has come a long way since taking out his training licence in 2015 – but it was a nod to his southern roots that played a big part in landing Saturday's Gr.1 Al Basti Equiworld Dubai New Zealand Oaks

(2400m) at Trentham with **Belle En Rouge (NZ)** (Burgundy).

The least-fancied of three runners in the prestigious classic for Richards and the all-conquering Te Akau Racing team, Belle En Rouge was ridden by Jason Laking, whose last Group One victory came almost 20 years ago when The Jewel (NZ) (O'Reilly) won the 2002 running of the New Zealand

1000 Guineas (1600m). At that stage Laking was an apprentice based at Wingatui, where Richards was growing up nearby.

"Jason did his time at Hec Anderton's place, which was just down the road from Mum and Dad's house where I was growing up," Richards said. "He might have even driven Dad to

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ACE HIGH's Yearlings Impress @Karaka 2022

Thank you Buyers & Underbidders



Lot 7. Ace High x Tellmeaboutit filly

\$160,000 (Buyer - David Ellis)

"We're excited about the progeny of Ace High that we've seen. She's just an absolute classy filly, that was on our must have list!" **David Ellis**



Lot 68. Ace High x Zigwig colt

\$130,000 (Buyer - Bjorn Baker)

"I followed Ace High's racing career and for a Derby winner to show that sort of speed and precocity -- He has the credentials to make it as a stallion."

Bjorn Baker



Lot 193. Ace High x Dancilla filly

\$150,000 (Buyers - Lance O'Sullivan & Andrew Scott)

"Ace High appealed as a son of High Chaparral and as an incredibly tough racehorse. This filly was beautifully relaxed through-out and she took our eye as a great walking athletic type." **Lance O'Sullivan**



Lot 937. Ace High x Miss Milliner colt

\$140,000 (Buyer - Patrick Payne)

"He is a beautiful looking horse! We paid up there for him, but I said to David (Price Bloodstock) we might have to pay a bit more for this one." **Patrick Payne**

Buyers also included: Roger James & Robert Wellwood, Tony Pike, Phill Cataldo, Paul Moroney, Stephen Marsh, Allan Sharrock, Andrew Williams, Brewer Bloodstock, Lisa Latta, Greg Hickman, Shaun Clotworthy, Glenn Old, Danny Frye, Jenna Mahoney, Stuart Hale, Sam Beatson, John Malcolm, Joanne Rathbone...

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SOUTHERN BONDS TO THE FORE IN OAKS TRIUMPH

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and from the races a few times when he was an apprentice.

"I've known Jason for a long time, and he's been a quality jockey all the way through. He gave that filly a great ride today."

The New Zealand Oaks had previously been a frustrating race for Laking, who finished second on The Jewel in 2003 and was declared a non-runner on pre-post favourite Justine Coup (NZ) (Entrepreneur) a year later.

"It means a lot to win the Oaks," he said. "I've only had two rides in it before – I got beaten on The Jewel, and then Justine Coup reared and went over backwards when the gates opened. I'm just happy to have another ride in the race, but to win it is bloody awesome."

"I remember Jamie from my apprentice days. When I was in the sauna, he used to sneak in and turn the bloody thing off on me!

"But he's a terrific guy and a terrific trainer, and I hope he does well when he heads over to Hong Kong. He gives me rides whenever he can, and I really appreciate that. I'm happy to repay him for it today."

This year's Oaks was expected to be a coronation for the \$2.10 favourite Self Obsession (NZ) (Shocking), who came into the race with a commanding

lead in the New Zealand Bloodstock Filly of the Year Series. She had 24 points, with Belle En Rouge the closest challenger on 19. Remarkably, the points earned from that pair's first and second placings mean that they now end up joint winners with 31 points.

Belle En Rouge was a quality performer in the spring and early

summer, placing in the Gr.3 Soliloquy Stakes (1400m) and Gr.1 New Zealand 1000 Guineas (1600m) before winning the Gr.3 Eulogy Stakes (1600m) and Gr.2 Eight Carat Classic (1600m). But after a few weeks on the sidelines, she slipped from the radar with sixth placings in the Gr.2 David & Karyn Ellis

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A smiling Jason Laking after his win aboard Belle En Rouge (Race Images)



SOUTHERN BONDS TO THE FORE IN OAKS TRIUMPH

(Continued from page 3)

Fillies' Classic (2000m) and Gr.3 Sunline Vase (2100m). She started Saturday's Oaks as a \$26.70 outsider, but she crashed her stablemate's party.

Laking took advantage of an inside gate and put Belle En Rouge in a perfect position, just ahead of midfield and travelling smoothly behind a solid pace set by Flash Mary (NZ) (El Roca). Belle En Rouge peeled out wide coming up to the home turn and went for gold a long way out, surging forward and thrusting her head in front with 250 metres to run.

Self Obsession responded gamely along the inside, with Aspen Colorado (NZ) (Proisir) flashing home late after struggling to find clear running in the straight, but Belle En Rouge was too strong and scored by half a length. Self Obsession edged out Aspen Colorado by a nose for second, with the other Richards-trained runner, The Perfect Pink (NZ) (Savabeel), close up in fourth.

"I got a nice run, four back and one off the fence, and she just went to sleep," Laking said. "All credit to Jamie and the staff, they put in hours and hours of work, and he said to me that she would be a big chance today.

"I got her out into the open, and I wondered if I might have gone a bit too early, but she toughed it out and won bloody well."

Raced by the Te Akau Beautiful in Red Racing Partnership and bred by Te

Akau's David Ellis and Karyn Fenton-Ellis, Belle En Rouge has now won four of her 10 starts and \$391,680 in stakes.

Her Oaks triumph capped a remarkable day for Richards and the Te Akau team, who had previously won the Listed Barneswood Farm St Leger (2600m) with Leaderboard (Street Cry) and saddled the first four placegetters in the Gr.1 Wellington Seamarket Levin Classic (1600m) with Imperatriz (I Am Invincible), On The Bubbles (Brazen Beau), I Wish I Win (NZ) (Savabeel) and Mohawk Brave (Extreme Choice).

"We were 50/50 whether we were going to run this filly after her performance at Ellerslie, but she's just got so much toughness about her," Richards said. "She was able to overcome a few little things that haven't been going her way.

"To get these two Group One wins today is a great result, and full credit to the team at home. We've been under the pump a little bit, with everything that's been happening with COVID and all that. The staff have done an amazing job. They've stood up to be counted when we've needed them – as they have done all season, and as they have done ever since I took over the licence. So a big thank you to everyone at home."

Richards was also far from disappointed with Self Obsession, who added an Oaks second placing to her

Group Two treble in the Royal Stakes (2000m), David & Karyn Ellis Fillies' Classic (2000m) and Lowland Stakes (2100m).

"She tried hard," Richards said. "She's been up for a long time and has had a few little aches and pains to deal with along the way, so she's done a wonderful job."

– NZ Racing Desk

Race	WRC Al Basti Equiworld Dubai New Zealand Oaks Gr.1 2400m
Winner	Belle En Rouge (NZ) 2018
Owners	Te Akau Beautiful In Red Racing Partnership (Mgr: Karyn Fenton-Ellis MNZM)
Trainer	Jamie Richards (Matamata)
Breeding	by Burgundy out of Cavendish Belle by Thorn Park (AUS)
Breeder	D C Ellis & K W Fenton-Ellis MNZM



DAZZLING IMPERATRIZ HEADS LEVIN CLASSIC SWEEP FOR RICHARDS



*Imperatriz downs stablemates On The Bubbles and I Wish I Win (rail) to win the Gr.1 Wellington Seamarket Levin Classic (1600m)
(Race Images - Grant Matthew)*

Jamie Richards' relentless dominance of New Zealand racing keeps rolling on into his final few weeks on these shores, saddling all of the first four placegetters in Saturday's Gr.1 Wellington Seamarket Levin Classic (1600m) at Trentham – the second time he has achieved that remarkable feat this season alone.

Richards – who will head to Hong Kong later in the autumn as just the second New Zealander (after Paul O'Sullivan) invited to join their red-hot training ranks – had five runners

in Saturday's three-year-old feature and dominated the finish with **Imperatriz** (I Am Invincible), On The Bubbles (Brazen Beau), I Wish I Win (NZ) (Savabeel) and Mohawk Brave (Extreme Choice).

Imperatriz had also featured in Richards' previous Group One first-four, chasing home stablemates The Perfect Pink (NZ) (Savabeel), Shepherd's Delight (NZ) (Rip Van Winkle) and Belle En Rouge (NZ) (Burgundy) in the New Zealand 1000 Guineas (1600m) at Riccarton in November. But on

Saturday she was the undisputed star of the show.

Rated a \$2 favourite after a breathtaking five-length romp against older mares in last month's Lisa Chittick Plate (1400m) at Matamata, the I Am Invincible filly's dark coat sparkled in the sun during Saturday's pre-race parade, and she produced a performance to match on the track.

Having settled in fourth spot and one off the rail behind a moderate tempo set by Miss Ella (NZ) (Iffraaj) and

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DAZZLING IMPERATRIZ HEADS LEVIN CLASSIC SWEEP FOR RICHARDS

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Blissful Belle (NZ) (Belardo), Imperatriz ambled up alongside that pair under a firm hold from rider Michael McNab at the top of the straight.

McNab released the brakes with 300 metres to run and Imperatriz exploded clear. Stablemates On The Bubbles and I Wish I Win chased hard on either side of her and made her work for the win, but the favourite kept finding all the way to the finish and scored by three-quarters of a length.

"She's a weapon – just an absolute weapon," McNab said. "She put herself there, and I had to be so patient. I didn't want to go too soon, because she was just that little bit suspect at the mile. At the same time, I knew where 'Parkesy' (Johnathan Parkes) was on On The Bubbles, and I didn't want to let him out either.

"But when she went, there was no stopping her."

A classy daughter of the Gr.2 Moonee Valley Fillies' Classic

(1600m) placegetter Berimbau (Shamardal), Imperatriz was bought on the Gold Coast for A\$360,000 by Te Akau Racing principal David Ellis. She has now won six of her nine starts and \$373,200 in stakes, having previously won the Gr.2 Eclipse Stakes (1200m), Gr.3 Northland Breeders' Stakes (1200m) and Gr.3 Soliloquy Stakes (1400m).

"She was brilliant today," Richards said. "She's a very good filly, and I'm very proud of her.

"She was able to hold her spot today from her good barrier. They didn't run overly quick and it wasn't a truly run mile, which probably suited her. It took the backmarkers out of the race."

Richards, who won the Listed Barneswood Farm New Zealand St Leger (2600m) earlier on Saturday afternoon and has now won 27 black-type races in New Zealand this season, also spoke highly about the performances of his Levin Classic placegetters.

"On The Bubbles just got held up a little bit in the straight," he said. "He was always a little bit susceptible to her (Imperatriz) turn of foot – she's lightning, whereas he just needs a bit more time to warm into it. But he's lost no admirers and has run another great race today.

"I Wish I Win bombed the start and over-raced a bit in the early stages. It might have been interesting if he'd been able to step away and race in the first four or five. But he's got it all in front of him."

– NZ Racing Desk



Michael McNab brings Imperatriz back to the Trentham birdcage (Race Images - Peter Rubery)

Race	WRC Wellington Seamarket Levin Classic Gr.1 1600m
Winner	Imperatriz 2018
Owners	Te Akau Invincible Empress Racing Partnership (Mgr: Karyn Fenton-Ellis MNZM)
Trainer	Jamie Richards (Matamata)
Breeding	by I Am Invincible (AUS) out of Berimbau (AUS) by Shamardal (USA)
Breeder	Raffles Dancers (NZ) Pty Ltd





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GROUP THREE BREAKTHROUGH FOR NO COMPROMISE

Five-year-old gelding **No Compromise (NZ)** (Pins) ran out a game winner of the Gr.3 Queen's Cup (2400m) at Rosehill on Saturday as the former Kiwi gears up for a tilt at the Gr.1 Sydney Cup (3200m).

The son of Pins, who began his career with Waverley trainer Bill Thurlow before transferring to Chris Waller, was ridden a lot handier to the speed than usual by jockey Jay Ford and kicked gamely to defeat stablemates Surefire (Fastnet Rock) and Chalk Stream (Sea The Stars) by half a length.

It was a black-type breakthrough for the impeccably bred stayer, who is a half-brother to star mare Tofane (NZ) (Ocean Park) and all roads now lead to the Sydney Cup on April 9.

"He was (positioned) certainly a lot closer than I expected and all I've got on my mind is the Sydney Cup," Waller said.

"Obviously, you want to win every start, but you don't want to undo the plans. If he had got posted deep, it would have been a tricky run but to Jay's credit he backed himself and got the job done."

Winning rider Jay Ford was not intending to be as forward on the progressive stayer who has now won A\$424,515, with six wins from 25 starts and a further 12 placings.

"We were just looking to ride him in the second half of the field but the problem was he took a step forward as the gates opened and he just launched straight into the bridle and put me a lot closer than I was hoping.

"I took my time trying to find some sort of position, sort of three pairs back but it was never going to eventuate.

"I just had to let him slide forward to outside lead. It just shows, the horse has been going really good from bad barriers, we've been riding him quiet, that was the plan again today but it just shows his versatility and it's a good reward for him because his last two runs have been terrific.

"He's a horse on the rise, he'll stay, he handles all



No Compromise wins the Gr.3 Queen's Cup (2400m) at Rosehill (Bradleyphotos.com.au)

conditions, he still has to tick the two mile box but he's well on his way."

Bred and raised at Curraghmore, No Compromise was purchased at Karaka 2018 by former trainer Bill Thurlow for \$40,000 and is raced by his brother Grant and his wife Patty.

Out of Galileo mare Baggy Green, No Compromise is also a half-brother to Group Three galloper Benaud (Reliable Man) and closely related to Group One winners Funstar (Adelaide) and Youngstar (High Chaparral).

– NZ Racing Desk

Race	ATC Queen's Cup Gr.3 2400m
Winner	No Compromise (NZ) 2016
Owners	Mr G D Thurlow, Mrs P A Thurlow
Trainer	Chris Waller (Rosehill)
Breeding	by Pins (AUS) out of Baggy Green (AUS) by Galileo (IRE)
Breeder	G R Cunningham
Sales	2018 National Yearling Sales – Book 1; V: Curraghmore, P: Mr W J Thurlow; \$40,000



SINARAHMA PREVAILS IN DESPERATE FINISH TO CUDDLE STAKES

A well-timed run that saw her thrust her head in front just two strides prior to the winning post ensured rugged mare **Sinarahma (NZ)** (Darci Brahma) took victory in the Gr.3 Wentwood Grange Cuddle Stakes (1600m) on Saturday.

The Allan Sharrock-trained seven-year-old was given a perfect trip in transit as she tracked race favourite Mai Tai (Atlante) (\$4.20) throughout before peeling off her back early in the run home.

Mai Tai and Samiam Seussie (Hinchinbrook) had looked likely to fight out the finish at the 250m, however rider Lisa Allpress was gradually winding up Sinarahma for a final charge, which saw her hit top gear at the 100m and nab Mai Tai right on the post with Samiam Seussie battling on gamely to take third ahead of Les Crayeres (NZ) (Redoute's Choice).

Sharrock has always held the daughter of Darci Brahma in high regard and was confident of a good showing although he felt she might have been able to win by a greater margin had the race been over 2000m.

"It was a lovely ride although I thought she might have been more confident in winning, but I think she might be crying out for 2000m to be honest," Sharrock said.

"She did the job and will go to stud next season with three black type wins to her name, which will make her worth a lot of money in the breeding barn."

Sharrock is keen to step the mare up in distance for the rest of her campaign and has earmarked several middle-distance events for her during the autumn.

"There are a couple of weight-for-age, 2000m fillies and mares' races that we will have a look at," he said.

"She had a back issue which the vet at home remedied and she was a very happy mare today, very bouncy and I thought she could win.

"She is a mare that can run sectionals, who's mother was a great mare too and she is a good horse."

Bred by Greg Tomlinson (Nearco Stud) and Peter Gillespie (Pee Gee Bloodstock), Sinarahma is a

Sinarahma (black & white chequers) defeats Mai Tai and Samiam Seussie (rail) in the Gr.3 Wentwood Grange Cuddle Stakes (1600m) at Trentham (Race Images - Peter Rubery)

daughter of four-time Group One winner Shez Sinsational (NZ) (Ekraar), who Sharrock trained to win twelve of her 30 starts and over \$1.4 million in prizemoney.

Allpress had been aware of the mare's tendency to be slow out of the barrier and made sure she bounced her out nicely from an inside barrier draw (2).

"I tried to put it out of my mind as there is nothing worse than missing the kick," she said.

"She jumped away really well and was probably a fraction handier than she needed to be as it showed when she took so long to wind up.

"She is nice and genuine and Allan Sharrock knows how to get them ready, so it's always easy when you are on such a decent horse."

Sinarahma has now won seven of her 31 starts and over \$256,000 in prizemoney.

– NZ Racing Desk

Race	WRC Wentwood Grange Cuddle Stakes Gr.3 1600m
Winner	Sinarahma (NZ) 2014
Owners	J P Goodin, G H Phillips, S A Sharrock, B R Sharrock & T Kemp
Trainer	Allan Sharrock (New Plymouth)
Breeding	by Darci Brahma out of Shez Sinsational by Ekraar (USA)
Breeder	Nearco Stud Ltd & Pee Gee Bloodstock





LOWRY AND CULLEN MARE ANSWERS PUNTERS PRAYERS AT TRENTHAM

Underrated sprinter **Can I Get An Amen (NZ)** (Hallowed Crown) justified some inspired support at Trentham on Saturday when she captured the Listed Race A Horse With Te Akau NZ's No. 1 Stable Lightning Handicap (1200m).

The Guy Lowry and Grant Cullen-trained five-year-old brought an impeccable form reference into the race having finished fourth behind Levante (NZ) (Proisir) and Roch 'N'

Horse (NZ) (Per Incanto) in the Gr.1 Telegraph (1200m) at the venue back in January.

After Roch 'N' Horse and Levante finished first and fourth respectively in last weekend's Gr.1 Newmarket Handicap (1200m) at Flemington, that last start performance ensured the daughter of Hallowed Crown started a warmly backed \$5.50 second favourite on Saturday and she didn't disappoint.

Rider Kate Hercock had her

positioned handily off the rail behind the pacemakers before angling into the centre of the track to make her challenge.

Can I Get An Amen joined issue at the 250m and in a driving finish defeated Burgundy Rose (NZ) (Burgundy) and the late closing Cavallo Veloce (NZ) (O'Reilly) to take the victory.

Lowry had been expecting a good

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Can I Get An Amen (yellow cap) heads to the winning post at Trentham (Race Images - Peter Rubery)





LOWRY AND CULLEN MARE ANSWERS PUNTERS PRAYERS AT TRENTHAM

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showing as the mare had performed well in a fresh state in the past, although he acknowledged the weight of expectations given the mare's lead-up form.

"There was a little bit of pressure," he said.

"She has won well and it is nice to get black type with these very valuable mares, so we are very happy.

"Eventually she will probably go to Australia to try and get some black type over there, but it's nice to get in her in this race."

Hercok acknowledged some valuable assistance from fellow rider Danielle Johnson, who is recovering from a broken leg suffered at Ellerslie on New Year's day, before the race with Johnson having been aboard Can I Get An Amen in two of her three previous wins.

"I was really lucky today as on the way to the races I rang Danielle Johnson and spoke to her about a couple of my rides, so thanks Dani," she said.

"She actually travelled a lot keener than I thought she would as during her jumpouts and trials she settles nicely, but she was really keen and when I got to the top of the straight I thought I might have gone a bit soon.

"She just wouldn't lie down though."

Bred and co-owned by Milan Park

principal Tony Rider, Can I Get An Amen is out of stakes winning mare Brianna (Sudurka), who also finished third in the Gr.1 Railway Handicap (1200m), and has now won four races and over \$100,000 in prizemoney.

There was sensation late in the race when the Chrissy Bambry-trained Scotch (I Am Invincible) lost rider Sarah Macnab as she attempted a run between Can I Get An Amen and Burgundy Rose at the 75m mark.

Macnab was immediately attended by paramedics and was conscious

and talking as she was transferred to hospital by ambulance for further assessment on a potential shoulder injury. – **NZ Racing Desk**

Race	WRC Race A Horse With Te Akau NZ's No.1 Stable Lightning Hcp. L. 1200m
Winner	Can I Get An Amen (NZ) 2016
Owners	Mrs L M & R L Bonnington, P M Jeffares & T V Rider
Trainer	Guy Lowry & Grant Cullen (Hastings)
Breeding	by Hallowed Crown (AUS) out of Brianna by Sudurka (AUS)
Breeder	T V Rider



Kate Hercok aboard Can I Get An Amen after their Trentham victory (Race Images - Peter Rubery)

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LEADERBOARD TOO TOUGH IN ST LEGER

Enigmatic performer **Leaderboard** (Street Cry) put his best foot forward when he produced a superior staying effort to take out the Listed Barneswood Farm New Zealand St Leger (2600m) at Trentham.

The former European stayer, who won once in his homeland before being purchased out of a UK sale for owners the Fortuna Leaderboard Syndicate, had won on four occasions in New Zealand before his victory on Saturday, but had largely failed to deliver on his early promise.

The seven-year-old son of Street Cry showed all his fighting qualities and a penchant for the roomy Trentham surface as he refused to yield in the home straight after being given a soft trip in transit by replacement rider Michael McNab, who took over for Ryan Elliot who was stood down from his first two rides on the day.

Richards, who will soon hand over the reins at Te Akau Racing to Mark Walker before he prepares to head up to Hong Kong in the second week of May, was delighted to see his charge show his true worth over ground.

"He just out-stayed them after they went along at a genuine tempo," Richards said.

"He is a horse who has always promised a lot, the best-looking horse in the birdcage with the best walk, but he has just had a few problems with his feet.

"The team at home have done a great job with him and he was given a lovely ride by Michael and just toughed it out.

"I thought he might need a little more easing in the ground and it's just a shame we couldn't get him right for the Wellington Cup (Gr.3, 3200m) as I thought he would have been a big chance in a race like that."

Richards also predicted that the horse could excel in a different role in the future.

"I think he has a very bright future as a jumper, as he is very good at that," he said.

"We will see what happens as he is going well and he is a nice one for Mark and the team to kick on with next season."

Out of the Dynaformer mare Flower Fairy, Leaderboard has now won six of his 32 starts and over \$140,00 in prizemoney. The win was his first at stakes level while he was also placed third in



Leaderboard takes out the Listed Barneswood Farm New Zealand St Leger (2600m) at Trentham (Race Images - Grant Matthew)

the Gr.3 New Zealand Cup (3200m) at Riccarton last November.

Richards was back in the limelight later in the programme when he produced the first four home in the Gr.1 Wellington Seamarket Levin Classic (1600m) which was taken out by three-year-old filly Imperatriz (I Am Invincible) ahead of stablemates On The Bubbles (Brazen Beau), I Wish I Win (NZ) (Savabeel) and Mohawk Brave (Extreme Choice).

He went agonisingly close to landing the trifecta in the other feature event on the day, the Gr.1 Al Basti Equiworld Dubai New Zealand Oaks (2400m), as Belle En Rouge (NZ) (Burgundy) defeated Self Obsession (NZ) (Shocking) with The Perfect Pink (NZ) (Savabeel) close up in fourth.

- NZ Racing Desk

Race	WRC Barneswood Farm New Zealand St Leger L. 2600m
Winner	Leaderboard 2015
Owners	Fortuna Leaderboard Syndicate (Mgr: John Galvin)
Trainer	Jamie Richards (Matamata)
Breeding	by Street Cry (IRE) out of Flower Fairy (USA) by Dynaformer (USA)
Breeder	Godolphin

GROUP ONE TARGET **FOR YONCE**

The stunning inaugural campaign of unbeaten mare **Yonce (NZ)** (Proisir) will culminate in a tilt at the Gr.1 Queen of the Turf Stakes (1600m) at Randwick in three weeks' time after yet another facile victory at Flemington.

The daughter of Proisir comfortably accounted for her opposition when winning the G.H. Mumm Mystic Journey (2000m) at the Melbourne premier track on Saturday to extend her winning sequence to six victories from six starts.

Jockey John Allan has ridden Yonce to five of her six wins and rode her conservatively in a small field on Saturday, ensuring he stayed off the rails and gave the \$1.18 favourite an unimpeded run as she chased down leader Star Of Eden (Wandjina) to score by a comfortable three-quarters of a length.

The four-year-old Kiwi import won her first race for trainers Ciaron Maher and David Eustace in mid-December and has gone from strength to strength.

With both Maher and Eustace in Sydney on Saturday, Lucy Yeomans was left to deputise in Melbourne.

"It's such a relief. To be fair to her she makes it look easy and it was never in doubt. Credit to the team at home for keeping a filly like this up for so long," Yeomans said.

"Dave just called me and said depending on how she pulls up we will look to send her to the Queen Of The Turf in Sydney in three weeks. I'm sure she won't do much between now and then."

Winning jockey John Allen said the mare handled the step up to 2000m comfortably but would be suited in the Queen Of The Turf in a high-pressure mile.

"I wanted to stay off the fence early just to make sure to make a good thing of it and not getting hemmed in on the fence. As it transpired, box

set behind the runner-up, she would have been a lot easier winner," Allan said.

"Probably a high pressure mile you would imagine would be right up her sleeve now. The going is probably going to be soft up there (Sydney) and she showed last time that she handled that well, so if she pulls up and is 100 percent going in there, I'm sure she will give it a big shout."

Out of the Zabeel mare Ziva, Yonce was passed in as a yearling for \$30,000 during the New Zealand Bloodstock Book 2 Sale from the Woburn Farm draft.

She was later purchased by Cambridge trainer Ross McCarroll, for whom she finished third in two trials and caught the eye of prominent Australian owner Ozzie Kheir.

Kheir bought an interest in the Proisir mare, but McCarroll and his fellow Kiwi owners - Shane McAlister, Stephen Kneebone and Lyn McMullan - remain in the ownership.

- NZ Racing Desk

Race	VRC Mystic Journey Stakes 2000m
Winner	Yonce (NZ) 2017
Owners	Mr A Kheir, Mr J A O'Neill, Mr C R McCarroll, Mrs D S McCarroll, Mr V Kheir, Mr B D Nettlefold, Mr G J Skien, Carty Racing, Mr D Edmonds, Mr S A Lewin, A K Racing, Mr S Kneebone, Mrs E M McMullan, Mr S McAlister
Trainer	Ciaron Maher & David Eustace (Ballarat)
Breeding	by Proisir (AUS) out of Ziva (AUS) by Zabeel
Breeder	L de Souza & T Hartley



Yonce extends her winning sequence to six victories from six starts (Bruno Cannatelli)



BLANDFORD LAD BACK IN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE

Six-year-old gelding **Blandford Lad (NZ)** (Savabeel) notched his sixth win from 37 career starts when coming from off the pace to land the Kennedy Grand Handicap Classic (2500m) at Flemington on Saturday.

The son of Savabeel was sent out a \$31 chance after entering the race with some indifferent form but relished the genuine tempo with Craig Williams presenting Blandford Lad late in the piece to get over the top of Steel Skies (Fiorente) and Through Irish Eyes (NZ) (Tavistock).

Moe trainer Peter Gelagotis was not totally surprised to see the New Zealand-bred salute.

"On one side of the fence I'm very surprised, on the other side I've always thought that he had Saturday class ability. I've resorted to the fact that he's just a wet-tracker," Gelagotis said.

"He had a hurdle school last Friday because that's where he's going. His last four or five runs have been a bit below par and going through the motions, whether that has switched him on and he thought 'I'm going to have a crack today' and he's shown what he can do when he does try.

"Congratulations to Craig (Williams). It was a great ride. He was patient and gave him his opportunity.

"When he loomed up at the 200 (metres), I thought 'hello, he's going to win this' and I was yelling and cheering and he got up and won.

"Congratulations to the ownership group."

November 2020 was the last time



Craig Williams guides Blandford Lad to victory at Flemington (Bruno Cannatelli)

Blandford Lad had been in the winner's circle and winning rider Craig Williams believed he had learned from two previous rides on the gelding, including an eighth placing over the course and distance in December.

"I did learn something about him that day and spoke to Pete about what I'd do differently. He's a lovely horse to ride but does take a lot of riding. Onwards and upwards for that horse and he'll get a lot of confidence out of today's win," Williams said.

"Credit to Peter Gelagotis, he's an owner in the horse. He's jumped him in between his last race and they've got no illusions about the horse's ability, but today we saw him at his best."

Among the ownership are breeders Graham and Helen-Gaye Bax of

Blandford Lodge in Matamata, who retained equity in the full brother to star mare Lucia Valentina (NZ) after he was passed in for \$250,000 at Karaka as a yearling.

He has now amassed A\$339,425 in prizemoney. – **NZ Racing Desk**

Race	VRC Grand Classic Hcp. 2500m
Winner	Blandford Lad (NZ) 2015
Owners	Mr W G Bax, Mrs H Bax, Mr G T Taplin, Surf Coast Racing, B M & W Racing, Mr B J Nowell, Mr J H Bongard, Metcap Mgt No3, Mrs S Kanga, Metcap Mgt No 1
Trainer	Peter Gelagotis (Moe)
Breeding	by Savabeel (AUS) out of Staryn Glenn by Montjeu (IRE)
Breeder	Mrs H G & W G Bax



TURN ME LOOSE COLT WINS ALISTER CLARK

Three-year-old colt **Prix de Turn (NZ)** (Turn Me Loose) relished being ridden closer to the speed when comfortably taking out the Gr.2 Alister Clark Stakes (2040m) at Moonee Valley on Friday night for young Cranbourne trainer Matthew Brown.

Sent out a \$26 chance, Prix de Turn swept to the lead under Beau Mertens and powered away to win by one and a quarter lengths ahead of second placed Can't Go Wong (NZ) (Per Incanto) with a further half-length back to War Eternal (NZ) (Pierro) as New Zealand-breds provided the Group Two trifecta.

Brown has long held the colt, by Windsor Park Stud resident stallion Turn Me Loose, in high-regard, campaigning him in the best of company, including running in the Gr.1 Caulfield

Guineas (1600m) at just his second start.

"It's petty surreal, it hasn't quite sunk in to be honest," Brown said.

"It was tempting to go to the Rosehill Guineas (Gr.1, 2000m). He has been perfect all prep. I stuck to my gut to start here.

"He probably raced a little flat last start with the quick back-up but his previous start at Sandown indicated he warranted a start in the Australian Guineas (Gr.1, 1600m). He bounced through that I could not have been any happier coming here.

"I copped a lot of flack running this horse in races he probably could not win. I thought he could be more than competitive in those races and the only times he has drawn a barrier, he has won both.

"I always thought he was a proper horse. He has had a few colty moments, but we have worked hard to keep his mind on the job.

"It was a grouse ride by Beau.

"To get a feature win like this with a colt is so exciting and a lot of the boys that are in him raced Turn Me Loose as well, so to have one of his progeny win a big feature is pretty exciting."

Prix de Turn advanced his record to two wins and a third from seven starts with earnings of A\$556,900.

Bred by Steve Till and Windsor Park Stud, Prix de Turn becomes the fifth individual stakes winner for Turn Me Loose,

who has enjoyed a bumper few weeks.

With his eldest only three, the son of Iffraaj sired last Sunday's Gr.1 Sistema Stakes (1200m) winner Lickety Split and Monday's Listed Morphetville Guineas (1600m) winner Ancient Girl.

From 54 runners, the young Windsor Park Stud stallion has sired eight stakes performers.

Out of the three-time winning Red Ransom mare Prix Du Sang, who placed in the Gr.3 Manawatu Classic (2000m) and was fourth in the Gr.1 Queensland Derby (2400m), Brown will now let the dust settle as he ponders a start in the Gr.1 Australian Derby (2400m) with Prix de Turn.

-NZ Racing Desk

Prix De Turn wins the Gr.2 Alister Clark Stakes (2040m) at The Valley (Brett Holburt - Racing Photos)

Race	MVRC Alister Clark Stakes Gr.2 20140m
Winner	Prix De Turn (NZ) 2018
Owners	Browns & Kirks, Mr T A Hartley, Mr B D'Abaco, Mr P Emini, Mr P Emini, Mr J R Hicks, Mr P T Tancredi, Mr D Prins, Mr R Rastogi, Mr P Boulton, Mr W J Rilen, Mr W R Rilen, Mr B J Rilen, Mr M Rudy, Mr W Rudy, Mr N De Prazer, Mr P Deveney, Mr M F O'shea, Mr F De Pasquale, Mr D Painter
Trainer	Matthew Brown (Cranbourne)
Breeding	by Turn Me Loose out of Prix Du Sang (AUS) by Red Ransom (USA)
Breeder	Alchemy Family Trust & Windsor Park Stud Ltd

