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What's been happening at Waikato recently?



The leading the first-season sire by stakes winners in NZ, he strikes at an impressive 25% stakes winners-to-runners. Following three individual stakes winners, his book is full for 2023.

We couldn't do it without them! Meet a key part of the WS team... Glenda Knight



1. Introduce yourself!

Hello I am Glenda! I have worked at Waikato Stud for 17 fun years.

2. What previous experiences have led you to where you are?

I worked at Marks+Ewen vet clinic for 10 years.

3. Go-to beverage?

Gin gin gin!

4. What section of the farm do you mainly work in and what do you enjoy about it?

I manage the WS office. I enjoy how social the job is, seeing the WS team everyday as well as chatting to clients on the phone.

5. Explain the highlight of your career so far.

I Wish I Win's success.

6. A piece of advice you would give someone who is keen to get into the thoroughbred industry?

Always own a dog...



NZ Broodmare Sires Premiership



As we approach the end of the season, it's clear that WS sires dominate the NZ Broodmare Sire Premiership.

O'Reilly leads the table while Pins and Savabeel also feature in the Top 5!

[See more here.](#)

IWIW continues his rise



Australia's best racehorse?

The LONGINES World's Best Racehorse Rankings say just that!

[See the list here.](#)

Bring on the The TAB Everest in October #IWishIWinTheEverest



READ THE WHISPERS AROUND WAIKATO THIS WEEK...

There are plenty of 'tipping experts' amongst the Waikato team. It's time they show us what they're made of...

TOUGH TEST HARRY

(Time Test x Megan's Tough Love) 3YO gelding

Trainer(s): Roger James & Rob Wellwood

Jockey: Warren Kennedy

Upcoming Race: Ruakaka, Race 7 - 3YO Winter Championship Final (1600m)

Comment: Nice boost for Little Avondale.



I awoke in time to catch the the last 50 runs required by England to win the test at Headingley. I am not really a cricket watcher but any sporting contest where there was so much at stake is great theatre, and win they did. I can't get over how tense I was, probably because of our neighbours' involvement, coaching the English side.

Good on you Baz, you went there to change the English team's approach to the and change it you have. You are only coaching white ball contests and I believe the team has won 11 out of 14 of the contested tests under your leadership.

This led me to ponder the examples of inspired coaches: Razor Robertson's Crusaders, Steve Hansen's All Blacks, enemy the Warriors seem to be responding, then what about Wayne Smith's remarkable transformation of our Black Ferns and so on?

This led me to asking the question: 'Can a horse trainer reverse the form of our runners? What separates the best from the average when you are training an animal that can't communicate?' I read where the late Colin Hayes once said it's 90% commonsense and hard work and, importantly, 10% instinct. I wonder what role instinct plays in coaching our high-performing athletes. I believe it certainly does. Now instinct is the intangible that separates the best from the good.

In racing we are now experiencing larger stables, some in the hundreds. No doubt those with those numbers are supported by very capable lieutenants, the difficulty if instinct plays a role is the ability to communicate in a manner that is understandable.

We have had and still have a spread of trainers, we try to support those who support us. As a result of the amount we spend, we think we are entitled to an opinion, trainers are a hard-working, rare breed who generally, on receipt of the horse we have bred and retained or have purchased for

\$500k, take ownership. It is often comical to see remarkably successful businessmen (people) entrust their recent expensive purchase to be trained when from the fall of the hammer the horse disappears, the new owner comforts themselves knowing they have insured the their new love so apart from the next twelve months of agistment, vet accounts, breaking in, pre-training, they wouldn't know it's alive. When the horse finally presents at barrier trials, the excitement is insurmountable. The now not new owner is surprised at his inability to identify his purchase, he or she has changed so much. To be fair, this embarrassment is avoided by the big trainer. He or she will be, like the owner, delighted at the horse's development when it has now finally reached the stable.

The disappointing jump-out is when our trainers display why we gave them the horse, that intangible, that mystery that we can't see, that INSTINCT will confidently predict the eight length deficit of the day will be forgotten when that so-far hidden talent bursts into life.

With many similar first timers there for the day, if the jump-out is one of the earlier events a quick half a coffee will see our trainer disappear, the later jump outs will be shared over a beverage when hopefully the intangibles are even more positive.

So, you can see selecting a trainer is just as difficult as selecting the horse was. Established trainers have results to promote, the reason you join them. However, we are still entitled as owners to dissect their performances. The mystery is how do we differentiate between a good storyteller and the genuine instinct – then does it matter?

Well, like top coaches, with top athletes (our Group horses) there is something that just sifts the oats from the chaff. Call it what you like, look for it and hope you find it – it's all part of the pieces we need to knit together. It is fun though, so stick with it.

Cheers,

G

Last week's corner...

Well, lo and behold, one of my ten has seen fit to critique a previous corner. Not that he was able to dispute the content; his point was that there are years when the TJ Smith sprint and the Derby were not run on the same day, hence unable to win both.

Mind you, I have a great deal of support for the nostalgia, you know, the longing for days gone by. I think it reflects the age of my readers. One who will no longer be worried about being scammed is Stu Hale. Regretfully, he has lost his battle with that terrible disease, cancer, which is hard to beat. A unique and colourful character, he lost the battle with dignity. I am very proud of our industry, who, upon being made aware of the possibility that his life may have been extended with one of the new advanced medications which required funding, were prepared to stump up. There was no expectation from his family; the assistance was entirely voluntary. He didn't quite make it as long as his oncologist predicted, so be it, but we gave him something you can't value: hope.

Winter racing has never quite grabbed me. I respect the courage of the horses, as well as the skill of the limited supply of riders. I have attended Grand Nationals at Riccarton where the enthusiasm and hospitality made up for the freezing cold. There was, in the birdcage, a historic wooden stewards stand. Those with their courage enhanced by copious quantities of mulled wine would climb up the various levels to arrive on a corrugated iron roof no more than four meters wide to

watch the National. I did this. Buzz Williams, who had been there before, encouraged me to accompany him. There was a strong westerly coming straight off the Southern Alps. Was it worth it? Well, my legs shook as if I had Parkinson's. I wasn't sure if it was the cold or fear, or both. Like many things in life, I can say I did it, but then who cares?

The car parks close to the stand were long held. Their boot parties were second to none. Hospitality the next day was like moving into a time warp, a good one. There was hot soup, freshly baked bread, and of course, more mulled wine.

Why am I telling you ten this? You probably all participated at some stage, but it would have been some time ago. That's my point. The whole week where more than half the card were jumps races, we were surrounded and hosted by genuine enthusiasts for the sport. These were people who hunted, rode at shows, mustered on horseback. More importantly, they seemed to have time. The expression "do you work to live or live to work," well, they were certainly of the work to enable you to live ilk.

What's happened to them and this love of the jumper they all had? Well, farming changed in the South. There is no need for a horse to muster your dairy cows. What's more, those now milking won't make room for a couple of horses where they can milk two cows. The car parks are now still sought after, but the boots are empty. Bringing alcohol on course is illegal, so rather than going from one mulled wine to another, a police officer will accompany you off course.

Jumping requires a special owner and, for that matter, trainer. These horses take time, and the punters are not big supporters, so it is turnover from other racing funding jumpers' prize money. We are now watching a couple of trainers dominating the racing with small field sizes.

I miss those winter events but have never raced a jumper. But what is and was important was the camaraderie, the genuine reason to be at the races: friends and horses. We need to continue to colour our days of racing with numbers of these enthusiasts, or it will be like betting on live poker machines.

I will say, watching Australian racing on TV, the outpouring of emotion when they win is great, but I doubt it's about the horse. No, it's about winning.

Still, that's not all bad.

Cheers,

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