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What's been happening at Waikato recently?

Mark & Charlie



"I like all of the horses!"

A look back to where it all started for the youngest Chittick, as we revisit an old video of Charlie and Mark teaching each other a thing or two about WS.

[Lessons with Dad - Video](#)

Governor-General of New Zealand visits WS



It was a privilege and an honour to welcome Governor-General of New Zealand, Dame Cindy Kiro and her husband Dr Richard Davies to Waikato Stud. A special thank you to New Zealand Thoroughbred Association, whose hard work made this unforgettable experience possible!

Winner of the week



Prise De Fer (Savabeel x Foiled) added a much-deserved Group 1 win to his record when he won the Captain Cook S. at Trentham on Saturday, giving Savabeel his 28th G1 winner.

[Read more here.](#)

Foal of the week



This flashy **Banquo** x **War Piglet** colt showing us some great **Banquo** type! The Percy family and Mitch Blackwood are sure to have some exciting days on the track with this fella.

📷 : Liz Wakeham



Well, it's finally happened, Covid has caught up with me and Mary, where from, who knows. It would appear the virus is far from over. Once you are infected your interest is intensified, every minuscule of information that I previously brushed aside gives either hope or frustration. Personally, I had a couple of difficult nights, Mary has unfortunately suffered more than me however the Covid support system and team have been uncomplicated and great to work with.

As I write, I note on the news there are 6000 recorded cases today, I would confidently suggest the number will be double that – my grapevine knows of a number of unreported cases. Interestingly the news tonight said that, of the confirmed cases, 26% are reinfections. So much for herd immunity. However, bearing in mind the impositions we along with the rest of the world had to bear as against the current approach certainly makes one question the approach of the experts at the time. The personal, financial, confidence-destroying years are but a drop in the bucket alongside the political license our leaders helped themselves to. Unravelling our new restrictions to enable us to return to the freedom of both ideas and enterprise we were accustomed to will be a great deal more than their imposition.

I have randomly thrown about the term “woke”, it's easy to use these adjectives but I need to accept that even though I am accountable to only seven of you it needs to be appropriate or my credibility as a leading commentator dissipates into a puff of lukewarm air. So, to be “woke” is to be “alert to injustice in society” and those that wave the flag are encouraged to “stay angry, stay woke”. Seriously, if we want to delve into history we could complain to the Italians that in 500ad they occupied Great Britain, Genghis Khan was no saint occupying vast areas as far South West as Ghaza, Alexander the Great took control of the forces of Macedon at the age of 20 and with this power and vision he subjugated the Middle East with little thought to wokedom.

I could go on giving you a history lesson but I have just finished Bart, the autobiography of Bart Cummings. Now I am not comparing his achievements to those of the aforementioned but among the many parts of his story is his constant belief that dwelling on the past was a wasted effort. I like that. I like to believe there is always a way forward. Looking back is not to be ignored, we shouldn't forget what we have learnt, so who gains out of the constant carping about the supposed injustices of NZ's past. You be the judge, if you can?

Who understood in 2020 we were voting to hand control of our most important national treasure, water, to an impossibility undemocratic four-board structure. I have no doubt our Māori adventurers on discovering NZ were grateful they had brought the fresh water with them. Even better, did those who believed St Jacinda, who was re-elected on the back of Covid, think we would be better co-Governed? How is this justified, more importantly, why? But what are we doing about these dramatic

intended changes to our Democracy? I am not sure if it's a kiwi malaise, you know we are decent people who believe nobody would change our long-held values. We watch, we think this won't happen, I hope you are right.

This is a racing commentary so back to what matters. Well, the Racing Integrity Boards Annual Report is out. I am amazed how racing survived in the pre-woke past. Never mind as we, as in everything, have turned the corner. I won't go through all the graphs, which are impressive, just to confirm it a \$14m cost for the three codes. In round figures, if based on thoroughbred's turnover, we allocate 60% of the costs to our code you will be fascinated to know there were 4400 thoroughbred starters in the last year at an integrity cost of \$1900 per horse, or \$3400 per race. Can you believe it \$30k per meeting? You can see why the owners aren't the winners and I haven't started on our Thoroughbred Racing Board. To be woke is to dwell on past injustices, what about current wrongs?

Cheers,
G

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