

Sunday 28 April 2024

CLIMBING STAR UPSETS IN ROBERT SANGSTER STAKES



Climbing Star claims Group One honours at Morphettville. (Atkins Photography)

Jockey Lachlan Neindorf celebrated a Group One milestone as he guided Zoustar mare **Climbing High (NZ)** to the pair's first Group One victory in the Robert Sangster Stakes (1200m) at Morphettville.

After stepping slowly, Climbing Star, who carries the NZ suffix, settled near last in a strongly run race. The Phillip Stokes-trained four-year-old spotted the leaders in excess of ten lengths

and was down on the inner of the track which jockeys had avoided for most of the day.

Neindorf didn't panic and gambled on a rails run which he gratefully accepted as the majority of the field rolled out towards the middle of the track.

Climbing Star dashed into contention and narrowly defeated Learning To Fly (Justify) who came

deepest of all, with Benedetta (Hellbent) back in third.

It was the first success at the highest level for the twenty-two-year-old Neindorf and he was trying to remain calm immediately after the race, although the emotion of the moment was clearly playing out as he accepted congratulations from well-wishers.

"I'm trying to keep it together but it

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CLIMBING STAR UPSETS IN ROBERT SANGSTER STAKES

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was a really good win," Neindorf said.

"She stumbled at the start as I wanted to be a lot closer and from that point on, I just went bugger this, let's go back to the inside and try and ride a race.

"We got the favours and here we are.

"A lot was going through my head and I was just trying to treat it like another race, thinking I'd cut my losses and run home into a place with even luck but this is very special.

"This is for everyone in the Stokes stable and for my family and everyone here."

Stokes had been cautiously confident in the buildup regarding the chances of both his runners, with Stretan Angel (Harry Angel) also engaged and felt the outside barrier for Climbing Star might be to her

advantage although those thoughts went out the window as the barriers opened.

"I thought the outside barrier may not be as bad the way the track was playing," he said.

"She has been aimed at this, was third up and going super so we thought she would give a sight.

"When I was watching the race, I was thinking what is happening here as we were meant to be on the outer, but it is just great for Lachie to get the win.

"I've got some really good friends in this horse so it is a big thrill.

"She has just come of age and is starting to blossom and she has a big Spring ahead of her."

Bred by Sheikh Fahad and the Royal Family of Qatar under their Qatar

Bloodstock banner, Climbing Star is out of the Fastnet Rock mare Bryony, who visited Windsor Park Stud stallion Charm Spirit on three occasions, with that stallion raced by Qatar Bloodstock.

– NZ Racing Desk

Race	SAJC Robert Sangster Stakes Gr.1 1200m
Winner	Climbing Star (NZ) 2019
Owners	Mr P J Stokes, Mr J Robinson, Qatar Bloodstock Ltd, G & C Pastoral Co Pty Ltd, Mr H P Sambor, Mr M J Burns, Mr P G Wells, Mr D M Robertson, Mr P McGreal, Mrs A Stokes, Mr B J Baker
Trainer	Phillip Stokes (Morphettville)
Breeding	by Zoustar (AUS) out of Bryony (AUS) by Fastnet Rock (AUS)
Breeder	Qatar Bloodstock



*Trainer Phillip Stokes.
(Scott Barbour, Racing Photos)*





APOSTROPHE SIGNS OFF IN STYLE



Apostrophe parades in the birdcage following her Group Two win. (Trish Dunell)

f Apostrophe (NZ) (Tavistock) has run her final race, the talented mare signed off on a successful career in style with a powerful finish to capture the Gr.2 Travis Stakes (2000m) at Te Rapa on Saturday.

Apostrophe was purchased by her trainers Roger James and Robert Wellwood for \$60,000 at Karaka in 2019 and debuted in the middle of her three-year-old season and has aged like fine wine with each racing season bringing new heights for the now six-year-old mare.

This term has been the best yet with her familiar barnstorming finishes

coming to the fore in stakes company, narrowly missing Group success in the Gr.3 Anniversary Handicap (1600m) in January going down by a head, and it was the same story back at Trentham two starts later with a long neck separating her from victory in the Gr.3 Cuddle Stakes (1600m).

Stepping out over 2100m in the Gr.3 Manawatu Breeders' Stakes last time out, Apostrophe dominated the fillies and mares' feature, and punters expected a repeat performance at Te Rapa backing her into \$1.60 favouritism ahead of Saint Alice (So You Think) (\$7).

The daughter of Tavistock was

settled just worse than midfield by regular rider Masa Hashizume, with pacemaker Madame Le Fay (Smart Missile) taking control at the top. Last year's Gr.2 Lowland Stakes (2100m) winner Val Di Zoldo (NZ) (War Decree) made a break on the field turning for home, Apostrophe having a decent margin to make up with 300m to go.

She used the entire length of the Te Rapa straight to reel in her rivals, but the mare provided her signature late sprint to narrowly secure the victory over Saint Alice by a half-head, with Final Purchase (NZ) (Savabeel) running

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APOSTROPHE SIGNS OFF IN STYLE

(Continued from page 4)

into third ahead of Val Di Zoldo, whose jockey Wiremu Pinn did a sterling effort to round out the top four after losing an iron late in the race.

James admired the performance of the mare, and indicated she may have made her final appearance on race-day after the Group Two feature.

“That was a tremendous effort today, halfway down the straight I

though she couldn’t win, but she often does that, she hits a flat patch then sprints quickly. She did that at the end of a mile, and now has done it at the end of 2000m,” James said.

“Whether we go on I don’t know, she has had soundness issues and she’s done what every breeder wants to do with a mare, and she’s rising seven. This could be her last run.

“All credit to the staff at home, she’s high maintenance and there’s a lot of icing, poulticing and bandaging that goes into a horse like this. It’s a team effort, and it brings our team together when you get a win like this too.”

The Cambridge horseman paid credit to long-term Kingsclere Stables client Jim Hannan, who has had a string of success in thoroughbred ownership alongside his late wife Helen.

Based in Invercargill, the couple won the 1997 edition of Gr.1 New Zealand 2000 Guineas (1600m) with their first horse in Foxwood (NZ) (Centaine), and also were victorious in the Gr.3 Manawatu Classic (2000m) of 2000 with Spottswoode (NZ) (Centaine).

“This win was made far more special by Jim Hannan being here, he was up at 5 o’clock this morning, well into his 80’s, to catch a flight, and has been to Matamata to see his yearling as well. It would’ve made his day,” James said.

“His first horse with me was Foxwood who won a 2000 Guineas, and he’s been a very loyal and lucky owner since.”

In a 21-start career, Apostrophe has earned \$314,810 in stakes with seven wins and six minor placings for the Inglewood Partnership, and was bred

by the Greenwich Stud Pty Ltd.

- LOVERACING.NZ News Desk

Race	WTR Travis Stakes Gr.2 2000m
Winner	Apostrophe (NZ) 2017
Owners	Inglewood Partnership
Trainer	Roger James & Robert Wellwood (Cambridge)
Breeding	by Tavistock out of Cape South by Cape Cross (IRE)
Breeder	Greenwich Stud Ltd Pty
Sales	2019 National Yearling Sales – Book 1; V: Cambridge Stud, P: Mr RA James/Mr R Wellwood; \$60,000



Apostrophe sprints to victory in the closing stages over Saint Alice in the Gr.2 Travis Stakes (2000m) at Te Rapa on Saturday. (Kenton Wright (Race Images))





ANOTHER DERBY **BECKONS BOLD SOUL**

Progressive staying three-year-old **Bold Soul (NZ)** (Embellish) tuned up for next week's Gr.1 South Australian Derby (2500m) with a strong win in the Gr.3 Chairman's Stakes (2000m) at Morphettville for trainer Patrick Payne and jockey Jake Noonan.

The son of Embellish has followed a similar path to the Payne-trained Dunkel (NZ) (Dundeel), who won last year's South Australian Derby after spring-boarding off a successful campaign in Tasmania.

Like Dunkel, Bold Soul won both the Listed Launceston Guineas (2100m) and Listed Tasmanian Derby (2200m) on a successful working holiday in the Apple Isle.

The Kiwi-bred gelding travelled sweetly throughout on Saturday in the back quarter of the field and picked up well late to suggest he will relish getting over next week's extended trip on the roomy Adelaide track.

Winning rider Jake Noonan said he had taken plenty of learnings from Bold Soul's third placing in the Listed Port Adelaide Guineas (1800m) at his previous outing.

"I probably didn't put enough trust in the horse last start when he hit a flat-spot," Noonan said. "Today I just trusted the horse and Patrick just instilled it in me to do that.

"When he hit a flat-spot I didn't rush him through it which

gave himself a chance to pick himself up and then from the 400m I travelled like the winner from a long way out.

"I had the stick in the left hand ready to go today as I know he can lay in. But for me he went pretty straight, and it took until the last 100m to get him to flatten out, but he got there.

"I wasn't too worried about where I was and who I was following, I was just trying to ride my horse.

"This horse looks in great order physically still. He has had a Tasmanian preparation and as Pat suggested they don't have a hard time in Tassie. They train down there with Adam Trinder and they're in a good environment."

By Cambridge Stud's Group One winning son of Savabeel, Embellish, Bold Soul is the last foal of the now retired Singspiel mare Twin Soul and was bred by Lou Te Keeti.

Bold Soul was sold at New Zealand Bloodstock's Book 2 Yearling Sale for \$20,000 to Wanganui horseman Hamish Auret.

He subsequently won a jump-out for Auret and was purchased privately before joining Payne's Victorian operation.

A genuine galloper, Bold Soul has now won five of his eight starts with a further three placings and has amassed prize money of A\$371,675 to date.

– NZ Racing Desk



Race	SAJC Chairman's Stakes Gr.3 2000m
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 Sales – Book 1; V: Te Keeti Bloodstock Ltd, P: Mr HN Auret; \$20,000

Bold Soul on his way to winning the Gr.3 Chairman's Stakes (2000m) at Morphettville. (Atkins Photography)





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I'MUNSTOPPABLE LIVES UP TO NAME IN BREEDERS' STAKES

Just twenty-four hours after the passing of Wexford Stables figurehead Dave "DJ" O'Sullivan, the New Zealand training icon would have been looking down on Te Rapa with a beaming smile as promising filly **I'munstoppable (NZ)** (Charm Spirit) led from go to whoa to capture the Gr.3 Inglis Sales Cambridge Breeders' Stakes (1200m) for the Matamata operation.

Prepared by O'Sullivan's fellow New Zealand Hall of Fame member and son Lance alongside Andrew Scott, the three-year-old daughter of Charm Spirit led her age group rivals a merry dash throughout in the hands of Sam Spratt.

Spratt bounced her out nicely from barrier five and enjoyed an uncontested lead, quickening nicely around the home bend where she established a three-length break on her nearest rival.

Rank outsider Our Absolute (NZ) (Niagara) (\$61) got closest to the flying I'munstoppable but she was still over three lengths in arrears at the winning post with Impendabelle (Impending) shading Egyptian Queen (NZ) (Zoustar) for third.

"Early in the spring we thought she was up to this (level) but she was getting things wrong," Andrew Scott said.

"She has built well for this with her last run a fortnight ago, then a week out on the farm before coming back in good form.

"It's good team effort by everyone and I'm so pleased for John and Julie (McLachlan, owners) as they have been so patient with her.

"That is her ability as she can really burn, and she will be a good Kiwi sprinter when she is four and five.

"Around Ellerslie three starts ago she



I'munstoppable led from start to finish in the Gr.3 Inglis Sales Cambridge Breeders' Stakes. (Trish Dunell)

was a bit stiff and today she has just run them into the ground."

Spratt was delighted a pre-race game plan had worked to perfection.

"She doesn't mind the sting out of the ground and there wasn't any real speed in the race so both Scotty and I thought we could lead," she said.

"It all panned out well as she came up underneath me fine, although halfway up the straight I thought she might be shortening stride, but she had the others under plenty of strife.

"I knew she could skip through the ground and sneak away so it was lovely we could manage to do that."

Bred and raced by John McLachlan and his wife Julie-Anne, I'munstoppable is out of their Rip Van Winkle mare Sisterella (NZ), who is a daughter of Gr.2 Awapuni Gold Cup (2000m) placegetter Arabian Nights (NZ) (Almutawakel).

She is the older half-sister of two-year-old Belardo gelding Lachie (NZ) who ran fourth on debut in the second race on the card, and has now won three of her eight starts and \$97,000 in prizemoney.

The victory provided the O'Sullivan-Scott partnership with a double on the day and broke their previous season's best winning tally with the duo now sitting at 50 wins for the year.

- **LOVERACING.NZ News Desk**

Race	WTR Inglis Sales Cambridge Breeders' Stakes Gr.3 1200m
Winner	I'munstoppable (NZ) 2020
Owners	J K & Mrs J M Maclachlan
Trainer	Lance O'Sullivan & Andrew Scott (Matamata)
Breeding	by Charm Spirit (IRE) out of Sisterella by Rip Van Winkle (IRE)
Breeder	Masterpiece Enterprises Ltd





SNAZZYTAVI SUPERB IN EASTER HANDICAP

Two years after taking out the Gr.3 Manco Easter Handicap (1600m) with Carolina Reaper (NZ) (Vespa), Matamata trainers Graham Richardson and Rogan Norvall have repeated and surpassed that result with a one-three finish headed by the rising star **Snazzytavi (NZ)** (Tavistock).

The time-honoured autumn showpiece was run for the 150th time on Saturday, a week later than expected and at a new home of Te Rapa due to the abandonment of the Ellerslie meeting last weekend. But despite the unusual circumstances, Snazzytavi

produced a performance that will take a special place in the Easter Handicap's recent history.

The four-year-old daughter of Tavistock was having only the 10th start of her career, and she settled near the back of a strung-out field for jockey Warren Kennedy. Coming up to the home turn, she had only three horses behind her and was close to 10 lengths from the lead.

But then Kennedy brought Snazzytavi to the outside and let her rip down the Te Rapa straight. She charged past nine rivals within the space of a

few powerful strides, taking command at the 150m mark and opening up a winning margin of three and three-quarter lengths.

Making the result even sweeter for Richardson and Norvall, the winner's stablemate Channel Surfer (NZ) (Derryn) also produced an eye-catching finish into third.

"That was enormous, and what a great run from the third horse too," Richardson said. "I can't wait until next year with Snazzytavi. I think she'll get up over more ground in time as well –

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Snazzytavi dominates a competitive line-up to win the time-honoured Gr.3 Manco Easter Handicap (1600m) on Saturday at Te Rapa. (Trish Dunell)





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SNAZZYTAVI SUPERB IN EASTER HANDICAP

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she just needs to learn a little bit more about being a racehorse. Races like the Herbie Dyke Stakes (Gr.1, 2000m) and Zabeel Classic (Gr.1, 2000m) are great targets that we can try to work towards.

“Channel Surfer will be even better next year too. He’s just a little bit funny in the head, but he’s a very cool horse and has much more in front of him.”

Snazzytavi capped a four-win day for Kennedy, who had previously scored aboard Tomodachi (NZ) (Tarzino), Thooza (NZ) (Almanzor) and Freeze Frame (NZ) (Vadamos).

“I think the step back down to the mile today suited her – she’ll get up over further in time, but at the moment she’s just not quite doing everything right over those longer distances,” the premiership-leading jockey said.

“But she can really turn it on. They went at a good clip out in front, and then she made up five or six lengths in the space of about 100m in the straight. It was really quick, really sharp, and she sustained it to the line. I think they’ll have a lot of fun with her next season, and I think she can definitely be up to that Group One sort of level in time.”

Snazzytavi has now had 10 starts for five wins, four placings and \$231,275 in stakes. She began the season with only one win and one placing to her name from three appearances, but has made giant strides in her four-year-old preparation with four wins out of seven. She also placed behind Town Cryer (NZ) (Tavistock) in the Listed Wairarapa Thoroughbred Breeders’ Stakes (1600m) in February.

Saturday’s win was a case of so close, but so far for long-time Easter Handicap sponsor Bryan Black, who races the gallant runner-up Chattahoochee (NZ) (Reliable Man).

“Our champion ran a great race but was just beaten by a better one today,” he said. “It was a fantastic race and there’s nothing wrong with being second.”

Snazzytavi is raced by Cambridge Stud owners Brendan and Jo Lindsay. The Easter Handicap was the second leg of a Group double on the Te Rapa card for former Cambridge Stud stallion Tavistock, who also sired the Gr.2 Travis Stakes (2000m) winner Apostrophe (NZ).

“It’s not often you beat the sponsor,” Lindsay said with a hint of embarrassment. “We came into today thinking we had a good chance, but we certainly didn’t expect her to win it as easily as she did.

“We didn’t breed this one ourselves, but we liked what we saw from her in a trial and we bought her off Gordon Cunningham. Graham Richardson and Rogan Norvall have done a terrific job with her.

“Jo and I just love our racing, and there’s nothing quite like winning a Group race like this with such a promising mare – and especially when she’s a daughter of our late stallion Tavistock.”

- LOVERACING.NZ News Desk

Race	WTR Manco Easter Hcp Gr.3 1600m
Winner	Snazzytavi (NZ) 2019
Owners	Brendan Lindsay MNZM & Mrs J E A Lindsay
Trainer	Graham Richardson & Rogan Norvall (Matamata)
Breeding	by Tavistock out of Ritzy Lady by Zabeel
Breeder	Suncroft Bloodstock



Trainer Graham Richardson. (Trish Dunell)





WAIKATO GIRL ON QUEENSLAND OAKS PATH

Impeccably bred Savabeel filly **Waikato Girl (NZ)** has added valuable black-type to her CV with a brave victory in the Listed Princess Stakes (1600m) at Eagle Farm on Saturday for trainer Michael Freedman.

Bred and part-owned by Sir Peter Vela, Waikato Girl is out of Scintillula, a Group Three winning and multiple Group One placed daughter of champion sire Galileo.

Sporting the colours of Gandharvi Racing, Waikato Girl broke maiden ranks when successful at Rosehill in November.

She found her way to Queensland for the upcoming Brisbane winter carnival off the back of finishing just beyond midfield in the Gr.3 Adrian Knox Stakes (2000m) on a Heavy track at Randwick earlier in the month.

Specked late in the betting the filly travelled in midfield before sneaking up one off the fence early in the run home.

Rider Vlad Duric got to work in the final 200m and she slowly reeled in Amazonian Lass (More Than Ready), who looked set for victory after moving clear of the field at that point, gaining the upper hand in the shadows of the post to register her second career success at just her seventh start.

Kiwi import Firestorm (NZ) (Satono Aladdin) was a shade unlucky in third in what was a messy race.

Duric admitted the confidence of Freedman had him feeling good about his chances prior to the race, although he had to overcome plenty of adversity in the run.

"Michael was very bullish about her with blinkers on today," Duric said.

"Gee it was a rough race. There were horses that nearly fell in front of me and the horse inside me clipped heels and bumped into her and put her into the fence.

"The win was first-class. To pick herself up and then fight at the end of the race, all credit goes to her and goes to Michael.

"She has got black-type and I know there are a few people who will be very chuffed about this win. My good friend Mike Kneebone (Director of New Zealand Bloodstock) will be rapt, so it's very good."

Purchased by Bloodstock Agent Michael Wallace for \$600,000 out of Pencarrow Stud's 2022 Karaka Book 1 draft, Waikato Girl is raced by Bangalore-born, Boston-based Kuldeep Singh Rajput under his Gandharvi banner in conjunction with



Waikato Girl (blue cap) and Vlad Duric stuck close to the rails to get up and win the Listed Princess Stakes at Eagle Farm. (Grant Peters, Trackside Photography)

New Zealand Bloodstock proprietor Sir Peter Vela.

She is the younger sister of Gr.2 Autumn Classic (1800m) runner-up Butter Chicken (NZ) (Savabeel) and comes from an extended family that includes multiple European stakes winners.

Waikato Girl's four-time winning half-sister Stella Splendida (NZ) (Zoustar) recently sold for \$410,000 on gavelhouse.com.

Waikato Girl has now won two races with a further three placings, including a third placing in the Gr.3 Kembla Grange Classic (1600m).

The blueblood filly has plenty of Queensland options and is in the market for the Gr.1 Queensland Oaks (2200m) at Eagle Farm on June 8. – **NZ Racing Desk**

Race	BRC Princess Stakes L. 1600m
Winner	Waikato Girl (NZ) 2020
Owners	Gandharvi, Sir P J Vela
Trainer	Michael Freedman
Breeding	by Savabeel (AUS) out of Scintillula (IRE) by Galileo (IRE)
Breeder	Pencarrow Thoroughbreds Ltd
Sales	2022 National Yearling Sale – Book 1; V: Pencarrow Stud, P: Michael Wallace; \$600,000





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TRAINING GREAT

DAVE O'SULLIVAN PASSES AWAY

The racing industry is mourning the death of training great Dave O'Sullivan, 90, following his passing on Friday.

David John O'Sullivan, OBE and New Zealand Racing Hall of Fame member, first made his mark as a jockey before increasing weight forced his hand to take up training in 1961.

From humble beginnings he established Wexford Stables as a force throughout New Zealand, in Australia and as far afield as Japan where he and his sons – training partner Paul and stable jockey Lance – were to share in the crowning glory of victory with Hall of Fame racehorse Horlicks in the 1989 Japan Cup.

Tough times shared with his wife Marie and backed by a fastidious approach exemplified by the O'Sullivan motto "Even if a horse isn't the best in the race, it should still look the best", he forged an outstanding career underlined by 1,877 wins by the time he retired in 1998.

O'Sullivan's first major win was the 1973 Hawke's Bay Guineas with Oopik, who was to add the 1976 Sydney Cup, the first of many major wins in Australia.

Countless notable performers both at home and in Australia included Hall of Fame sprinter Mr Tiz, Waverley Star, Surfers Paradise, Shivaree, Blue Denim and Miltak.

Known universally by his initials DJ, he won his first trainer's premiership with 62 wins in the 1978-79 season and added another 11 titles in partnership with his son Paul, who was to become



Training great Dave O'Sullivan has passed away. (Trish Dunell)

the first New Zealander to be granted a licence by the Hong Kong Jockey Club.

O'Sullivan and his champion jockey son Lance were honoured for their respective achievements as inaugural New Zealand Racing Hall of Fame inductees in 2006, and were joined by Paul and the O'Sullivan-mentored Mike Moroney in the 2023 Hall Of Fame inductees' draft.

Fellow Hall of Fame trainer Jim Gibbs, a contemporary of O'Sullivan during his many years training in Matamata, is one of many paying tribute to the much-admired trainer.

"DJ got his licence about 18 months before me and although we were both very competitive, we became good friends," Gibbs said.

"He was an outstanding horseman with a huge work ethic and attention to detail, and he can take credit for raising the bar for the rest of us.

"He dragged me up to improve and I have to say I was lucky to be training in the same era."

Having celebrated his 90th birthday late last year, O'Sullivan's health deteriorated recently and he passed away at his Matamata home in the company of family members.

"Dad would be the first to admit he had a wonderful life," his son Lance said. "He was a world-class horse trainer and highly competitive, but most of all for us, he was a wonderful family man.

"He worked hard and expected others to as well, but he was always very fair. I would describe him as one of the last living legends of the old school."

O'Sullivan's funeral will be held at 11:30am this coming Thursday, May 2, at the Church of the Holy Angels in Matamata.





EMOTIONS HIGH AFTER TOMODACHI'S WIN

Progressive filly **Tomodachi (NZ)** (Tarzino) provided a fitting result in the opening event at Te Rapa on Saturday, a day where one of the greats of the New Zealand training ranks was remembered after the passing of Dave "DJ" O'Sullivan twenty-four hours earlier.

The Sir Peter Vela-bred and owned daughter of Tarzino is trained by O'Sullivan's legendary jockey and now trainer son Lance, in partnership with

Andrew Scott and as she hit the line in front there were many dabbling away tears at the result.

Guided to perfection by National Jockeys' premiership leader Warren Kennedy, Tomodachi came with an irresistible finish to score comfortably from Taranaki visitor Bridal Train (NZ) (U S Navy Flag) and Solidify (NZ) (Redwood) in the three-year-old 1600m contest.

Scott was quick to thank racing fans for their kind wishes to the O'Sullivan family and Wexford Stable staff after the race.

"It was great for all the team at home and on behalf of team Wexford we'd like to thank everyone for their support and messages as it means a lot to us," Scott said.

"What a promising filly she is for Sir Peter as she won with a bit in hand and

hopefully we can take her to Brisbane with a bit of confidence after a chat with Sir Peter.

"She is a very promising stayer and will make a Group (stakes) horse in time as she has just quickened so well today.

"We've had to teach her to stay, so to see her kick on is great and she is bred to go a lot further."

Tomodachi is out of Vela's lightly raced High Chaparral mare Quintessentially (NZ) and comes from a female line that includes horses of the calibre of multiple Group One winner Ethereal (NZ) (Rhythm) and Hong Kong Cup (1600m) winner Romanee Conti (NZ) (Sir Tristram).

Kennedy was full of praise for the effort.

"She was just fantastic and was a real treat today as she did everything right," he said.

"She settled really well and when I let her build into the race she quickened nicely.

"She was looking around and waiting for a challenge after I hit the front as she wanted something to chase."

Tomodachi has now won three races in a row after finishing third at Taupo on debut.

The win equalled the O'Sullivan/Scott partnership's previous best for a season of 49 wins, with three months of the current racing season still to come.

- LOVERACING.NZ News Desk

Race	WTR Aon Insurance Brokers 3yo 1600m
Winner	Tomodachi (NZ) 2020
Owners	Sir Peter Vela
Trainer	Lance O'Sullivan & Andrew Scott (Matamata)
Breeding	by Tarzino (AUS) out of Quintessentially by High Chaparral (IRE)
Breeder	Pencarrow Thoroughbreds Ltd



Tomodachi powers away to score in the Aon Insurance Brokers 3YO (1600m) at Te Rapa on Saturday. (Trish Dunell)





LANTERN WAY LANDS **WANGANUI WIN**

Handy three-year-old **Lantern Way (NZ)** (Satono Aladdin) returned to his best at Wanganui on Saturday with the aid of a gear change paving the way for a visit to the winners' enclosure following the running of the Commdives NZ 3YO (1340m).

The strapping son of Satono Aladdin had looked to have immense promise when he took out the Gr.2 Hawke's Bay Guineas (1400m) at Hastings back in September last year, and followed up with a meritorious fifth in the Gr.1 New Zealand 2000 Guineas (1600m) before heading to the spelling paddock.

Much was expected upon his return to racing last month but a middling effort for seventh in the Gr.2 Wellington Guineas (1400m) at Trentham and an abject failure next up at the same venue left trainer Lisa Latta scratching her head.

The Manawatu mentor added a tongue tie to his gear for Saturday and he produced in fine style as he stormed home in the hands of Jonathan Riddell to head Matamata filly Loch Katrine (NZ) (Ardrossan) in the shadows of the post and register his second career victory.

"We left Wellington pretty dejected three weeks ago as he was gone a long way out," Latta said.

"We couldn't put it down to a lot, so we added the tongue tie, and he looked super today.

"I was a little bit worried about the real heavy track (Heavy 8) but he has dug deep to win.

"While the weather is still good, we will put him out for six weeks then have him ready for Hastings in the Spring.

"He has always shown a lot and he is an absolute beauty."

Riddell also made mention of his disappointment in Lantern Way's Trentham run.

"I was so frustrated last start as I went to races and thought he would win but he dropped out," he said.

"He went through his gears today coming around the corner and that tongue tie has helped.

"He is a lovely horse, so nice around the stable and he is one on my favourites."

Lantern Way was bred by Rich Hill Thoroughbreds, who will stand his sire Satono Aladdin for a service fee of \$65,000 +GST for the 2024 breeding season.

Rich Hill offered Lantern Way as a yearling in Book 2 at Karaka in 2022, where Latta secured him for \$40,000. His eleven-start career has now produced two wins and four placings, earning more than \$184,000 in stakes.

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Race	WJC Commdives NZ 3yo 1340
Winner	Lantern Way (NZ) 2020
Owners	S W Dais, T Hudson, D J McLean, J C McNeill, Mrs L M Purvis & Mrs P A Shearer S W Dais, T Hudson, D J McLean, J C McNeill, Mrs L M Purvis & Mrs P A Shearer
Trainer	Lisa Latta (Awapuni)
Breeding	by Satono Aladdin (JPN) out of No More Doubt by Redoute's Choice (AUS)
Breeder	Rich Hill Thoroughbreds Ltd
Sales	2022 National Yearling Sales - Book 2; V: Rich Hill Stud, P: Lisa Latta Racing; \$40,000



Lantern Way (inside) returns to the winner's circle with a powerful showing at Wanganui on Saturday. (Peter Rubery (Race Images Palmerston North))

