

# ATBC Newsletter

October 2011



## ATBC

ACN 41 003 084 839

This publication is the official Newsletter of the

### Australian Thoroughbred Breeders Club Limited

The Club, which currently has over 200 members, was formed to assist thoroughbred breeders through the presentation of talks, seminars, stud visits and social activities as well as providing incentive schemes and a Stallion Tender Scheme. New members are always welcome and the membership can be arranged by contacting the Club Secretary. Annual membership fees are \$ 50 for a single member or \$ 70 for a joint membership, which includes families, partnerships or corporate bodies

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### Coming Events

#### Melbourne Cup Calcutta

This year's Melbourne Cup Calcutta will remain in the same format as for the previous, very successful, few years. That is it will be held in the dining room at **Hawkesbury Racecourse** commencing at noon on **Sunday 30th October**.

A \$10 ticket will get you a horse and two drinks from the bar.

You should bring your own snacks/nibbles for an exciting afternoon in advance of The Big Day.

The event is open to all, so why not bring some of your friends to join in.

#### Annual General Meeting

The 25th AGM took place on Friday 21 st October.

Two Special Resolutions were passed. The effect of these amendments to the Constitution of the Company is that the company's will no longer be required to produce and distribute annual audited financial reports. Being a small company limited by guarantee, we were effected by a change in the law, whereby ASIC no longer requires this to be done and as a result ATBC Ltd will save more than \$ 3,000 per annum in fees.

We will continue to keep proper accounts and other records and details will be available, on request, to all members at no cost to

**Production Deadline:** Please note that advertisements and articles must be received by the third Tuesday of Each month to guarantee their appearance in that month's Newsletter

themselves. Any member wishing a copy of this years accounts should contact Brian Bresnahan who will arrange for a copy to be mailed to them.

It came as a shock to the outgoing Board members that there had been no new nominations for the vacant Board positions and so there was no need for a vote. The outgoing board were, therefore, reappointed for the coming year.

Barbara Robertson was reappointed Secretary with Ethne Potowski as Assistant Secretary.

As previously advised the operation of the Club resulted in a loss of approximately \$21,500 after the distribution of approximately \$ 26,000 in incentive bonuses to members and a donation of \$ 2,500 to RIRDC'S horse programme. Les Young again accepted our cheque and stressed how grateful the horse unit was for our continued support. Our donation is matched 100% and so provides \$ 5,000 to support that organisation's valuable work on equine research. Not bad for a club with about 130 memberships!

The meeting confirmed that Membership fees will remain at current levels for 2012 / 2013

### **Broodmare of the Year Awards 2011**

And the winners were:

#### **Division 3**

- 1st 52 points      **David Parker's *Hot 'n' Breezy*** by Zephyr Zip (NZ)  
 Dam of Hot Danish by Nothin' Leica Dane-2 wins, Rosehill Premier Stks G2 and Randwick The Shorts G2 for a career total of 16 wins and \$ 2.3 million
- 2nd 41 points      **Paul Tuck's *Grey Jest*** by Rory's Jester  
 Dam of Force and Effect by Johannesburg (USA)-2 wins, Cairns and Atherton for a total of \$ 56,000. Also dam of Lotseventy by Choisir- 2 wins, Gosford and Doomben for a total of \$154,000
- 3rd 26 points      **Duncan Page's *Joy To The World*** by Balmerino  
 Dam of Zendi by Ghataas (GB)- 3wins, 2 Warrnambool, Hamilton for a total of 7 wins and \$ 110,000

#### **Division 2**

- 1st 35 points      **Lyn Barlow's *Knucklemania*** by Mister C (USA)  
 Dam of Macknuckle by Moon Rocket (JPN)- 2 wins, Rosehill and Canberra Cup for a total of 10 wins and \$ 637,000
- 2nd 34 points      **Peter Robinson's mare *Heart Of Angels*** by Canny Lad  
 Dam of Zellarcy by Tully Zeal (NZ)- 3 wins Launceston for a total of 9 wins and \$ 102,000
- 3rd 32 points      **Charles Cropper's *Spritzer*** by Woodman (USA)  
 Dam of Supertax by Danewin- 4 wins North Queensland for a total of 12 wins and \$ 66,000

### Division 3

- 1st 79 points      **Don Storey's *I Believe*** by Octagonal (NZ)  
Dam of Rain Affair by Commands, 6 wins- Rosehill, Kensington, 2 Warwick Farm, 2 Canterbury for a total of 7 and \$ 350,000
- 2nd 48 points      **Hobartville Stud's *Best Out West*** by Best Western  
Dam of Shadows In The Sun by Dane Shadow, 2 wins- Caulfield and SA Derby G1 for a total of 3 wins and \$ 392,000
- 3rd 46 points      **Mike Van Gestel's *Magic Drop*** by Magic Ring (GB)  
Dam of Drop Of Magic by Magic Albert, 8 wins- 4 Cessnock, 2 Bathurst, Wyong and Hawkesbury for a total of 10 wins and \$ 102,000

### John Messara and Susan Archer of Arrowfield

We were incredibly fortunate that Arrowfield's John Messara accepted our invitation to address our meeting and outline his views on the current issues and challenges that face the thoroughbred breeding industry. He was accompanied by Arrowfield's Manager- Communications and Marketing, Susan Archer. All will be aware of John Messara's achievements and standing within the industry, but some might not know that Susan bred the mighty Sunline. I shall also always remember her as the only Kiwi that I encountered this week who didn't mention a recent Rugby World Cup semi-final.

Susan opened by highlighting the importance of those who bred to race. Already this season 6 of the 15 Group 1 winners were raced by their breeders. A certain Arab gentleman accounted for two of those but that still left Lion Tamer, Streama, Secret Admirer and Doctor Doom. She also noted that the Members of our little club were punching well above their weight.

John acknowledged that the last few years had been pretty tough for breeders as the industry battled with the effects of high service fees and costs, the financial impacts of the Global Financial Crisis and hurdles posed by the EI outbreak. The stallion owners do very well in the good times but also have to grit their teeth during the bad times. Even the major studs have suffered significant financial losses.

But John is cautiously optimistic about the future, suggesting that a turnaround is just around the corner. He cites the relative success of the most recent international sales in Japan, England, France and U.S., where prices have certainly come off their previous lows. Also in the Australian context the value of the A\$ has come off a bit, making purchases of Australian stock a little more attractive to overseas buyers.

We anxiously await the court's decision on the appeal in the Bookmakers case, where there is hope that significant additional revenue will flow to RacingNSW. If the corporate bookmakers' appeal is lost this additional revenue will result in an increase in prize money in NSW of approximately 40% across the board.

Furthermore there is the unquantifiable 'Black Caviar' effect, whereby she in particular and a number of other very exciting prospects are capturing the general public's attention and bringing racing from the sports section to the front page of newspapers. Service fees are down by about 60% from their highs, so that breeders are in a far better position than recent

years where they can breed at a lower cost into what should be an improving market for their produce.

John is also enthusiastic about the potential involvement of the new NSW government. The minister, George Souris, has already done much to restructure the administration of the industry which John sees as boding well for the future. We face competition from all other sports and we need be more creative and smarter in the things that we do.

On the downside the financial challenges facing Europe and U.S are far worse than here, where half of our two-speed economy at least remains very strong. So while very positive John is not suggesting a sudden boom, just that the worst is over and we can look forward to steady improvement in trading conditions.

He then reflected on the breeding season effected by EI which seems to have produced one of the best crops of horses seen for many a year. He said that many would never know just how close we came to not having a crop at all. The controversial zonal structure which allowed limited movement within zones saved the industry from such disaster. John said he woke one night in the realisation that the government just weren't getting it. They understood the racing industry, but not the breeding industry. The problem needed to be put in those terms There would be few 2yos and the Slipper could be contested by a handful of horses from W.A., S.A, and New Zealand (I think that Susan didn't see the later as a problem), racing at Randwick and Rosehill would be a shadow of its former self and that there would be mini fields with little TAB interest and thus significantly reduced government revenue. The penny dropped and a solution hammered out. It was a close run race.

The main driver to horse ownership is the potential to earn prize money. In Australia the average prize money is 38% of the cost of racing the horse (that's training costs etc. and doesn't take account of the cost of breeding or purchase price). This must be improved and the Bookmakers case would see the return lifted to about 60%. It is currently slightly better than England and about the same as U.S. In France the return is approximately 70%. The Asian countries leave us for dead with Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan all giving a positive average return to expenses. This is because the racing economies are 'closed' with everyone licensed and fixed populations of horses. It is doubtful whether this form of control would ever be acceptable in Australia where there is a different ethos. However, the return in Australia must be improved and victory in the Bookmakers case would see it lifted to about 60%.

Other sources of optimism include the government grant of \$ 176 million to redevelop the facilities at Randwick, which after years of neglect have declined to unacceptable standards. Sydney needs to emulate Melbourne. Although you will not get huge crowds to the races week in week out, we need be prepared for the carnivals and to accommodate big numbers and accommodate them well, at least as well as at Flemington or other sporting venues in Sydney.

John told of his company's sponsorship of Epsom Day. After there was a debrief and plan for the following year. During these discussions there was no mention of the words 'racetrack' or 'horse'. There was instead plenty about 'Princesses' and 'champagne'. It should be all about the horse. Anyone can hold a party. We have a much more sustainable product and the thoroughbred should always be at the centre of the sport's promotion. That is not to say that there is not room for the other stuff. We can do both.

John suggested that our view has been narrowed and that perhaps the popular interest in Black Caviar has shown us that, yes, we do have something to sell. There are human interest stories every week and we need to broaden the base of those that read and hear about

them. Racing needs to become more mainstream. The carnivals can be the hook that lands that interest.

Jeff Kennett in Victoria realised the tourism potential of racing. Our premier will be in Melbourne for the Cup. It is hoped that he will see the potential that a well run racing carnival presents to the economy. John sees government involvement in developing the NSW industry as essential to eventual success and is hopeful that our new government will come along for the ride.

John gave a nod to the elephant in the room, being China. He believes that within 5 years the Chinese government may allow gambling on horse races. They have racetracks already but there is no gambling outside of Hong Kong and Macau. John invited the audience to imagine the potential demand if all big cities in China created race clubs. Sheik Mohammed announced this week that he was donating two stallions to China and was building a racecourse. Australia is in a unique position to take advantage of any such developments.

John's opposition to AI is well known. His initial research in 2001 led him to believe that on balance it was not a good idea. In his view the downsides outweighed the potential benefits. Since then he has researched the subject extensively, talked to other experts here and overseas, and is even firmer of the view that it is the wrong thing to do. The Federal Court hearing is drawing to a close and we can expect a decision in April/May 2012. Apart from his belief that AI is not justified for fertility/prevention of disease/diversity of the breed/concentration of power arguments, John warns of the potential effect of a negative judgement on Australia's position in the international breeding/racing world whereby Australian bred horses will be excluded.

There followed a spirited Q&A session where such diverse subjects as the merger of the two Sydney clubs, the need for a national approach to the industry as a whole, race programming, the plight of country racing, and the encroachment of the mining industry in the Hunter Valley. I think that the discussions could have gone on all night.

It was an excellent evening and we are indeed fortunate that John and Susan were so gracious with their time. I'm sure everyone left with a feeling of a greater sense of optimism than they had come with. Passion for the thoroughbred and the industry was mentioned on a number of occasions and nowhere is it more apparent than in these representatives from Arrowfield

## **Racing en France** by Dianne Lanham

Following in the footsteps of travelling members Barbara Robertson, Colleen Goth, Virginia Harvey and Kaye Goodwin I was fortunate to spend a morning on the rounds of husband and wife veterinarians' Michel and Carol Pasheyre thanks to Hawkesbury trainers and members Tara and Philippe Vigouroux.

Their practice Clinique L'Aigle is in Lamorlay which adjoins Chantilly.

Following "un briefing" (more and more English creeping into French) over coffee and croissants the workload for the day was allocated.

First up were the stables of M. Lellouche. The boxes were within a large barn appreciated by Carole in the cold of winter. Planteur by evergreen Danehill Dancer was a recent Group 1 winner and a solid looking horse.

Michel explained that what seemed to me to be rather dry looking hay was indeed a highly nutritious one from the Crau area north of Marseille. It can be identified by its striped binding twine. He also explained that horses go out for training after sunrise all year round and a group was just setting out for the forest at about 10.30am. He felt it makes more sense to train without the extra stress of cold air on the respiratory system.

Further along are the second stables of M. Lellouche, set around a large beautiful garden.

The stables of young Japanese trainer now residing in France, M. Kobahshi, housed Hiruno D'Amour a compact 4 yo by Manhattan Café (by Sunday Silence) due to run in the Qatar Prix de L'Arc de Triomphe. Unfortunately he was unplaced.

M. Bary's stables are surrounded by a large lawn area. He is the winner of many group races. Here Carol was treating a horse with the ubiquitous penicillin and bute combination as she said everyone's knows.

All the stables and surrounds were immaculate with large numbers of workers, although I would not see any day yards. As is the case in Australia the majority of veterinary students in France are girls.

Instead of visiting the Chateau de Chantilly I opted for the Grandes Ecuries, the magnificent stables complex which housed hunting horses.

Each day as part of training there is a small show starting with an explanation of the basics of dressage, followed by a group of three riders in resplendent 18th century costumes who put these points into action. However, the highlight for me was a pony, hardly knee high with golden mane and tail decorated with the red ribbons, which performed all these movements under the command of a young woman with a long whip. A little expert! Remembering Derek Major's statement that a horse's brain is about the size of a cricket ball, this pony's was perhaps that of a golf ball. He finished with a bow to the audience and one could only wonder at the perseverance of the trainer.

The day of the Grand Prix was unseasonably warm resulting in a large crowd. Unless you arrive early there is squashed standing room only in the stands. Whereas we are used to 2400 metre races passing by the finishing post twice, this course seems very long and the horses disappear into the shadows of the back stretch. The straight seems a long arduous test and although there are T.V. monitors the horses' numbers are not on the screen.

It is interesting that the Arc and the Caulfield Cup are each claimed by promoters to be the most 'disputee' or 'toughest' 2400 m races in the world and this year were won by a filly and a mare respectively. In fact second in the Arc was a filly Shareta and third was a mare, Snow Fairy. Arc winner Danedream by Lomitas from a Danehill mare was bred and trained in Germany and cost only 9,000 Euros, the cheapest horse in the race.

The free glossy-page race guide is outstanding. For the main race there is a full pedigree of all the horses, a photo of each jockey, the racing colours and the flag of each country where the horse is trained. So You Think, under the Irish flag managed 4th place.

Eleven of the horses had Sadlers Wells in their pedigrees, 4 via the dam line, 2 each for Galileo and Montjeu and one each for In The Wings, High Chaparral and Refuse To Bend. Danehill appeared in the dam-line of two runners.

The presentation is quite a spectacle with the Garde Republicaine on deep chestnut horses and the owners, trainer and jockey each in a carriage driven onto the course up to a small stand drawn by two horses. The anthem of the winning country closes the ceremony, although there was not the same patriotic fervour as last year when U.K. trained Workforce was the winner.



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