



PRIME DISPATCH

EDITION 286 – 06/11/2020

COMPILED BY JOE O'NEILL



Tillotson by Deep Field is coming along nicely for John Thompson at Randwick!!!

The first three days of the Flemington Carnival are behind us and apart from one unfortunate incident has gone very well. The death of a runner in the Melbourne Cup has become an all too regular occurrence. The track at Flemington on Tuesday was very firm. I'm not sure if this contributed to the injury that caused the demise of Anthony Van Dyck but it may have been a factor.

I have been advocating for years that the VRC Derby and Oaks come back to 2000m. While I don't want to be seen to detract from the performances of the winners of these two races I believe the results again this year strongly support dropping the distance. In the Oaks half the field was beaten by 20 lengths or more with one of the leaders having to be pulled up with exhaustion. This is a poor look for the industry. Congratulations to Bruce Neil for breeding the winner of the Oaks. I have raced a number of horses bred by Bruce over the years and I'm sure he would have been thrilled with the win.

The International gallopers looked to be stronger than the local and NZ bred stayers in this year's Cup and that's the way it panned out. Matthew Sandblom wrote a very interesting piece in today's edition of the tdnausnz.com.au on the Cup. I agree with his sentiments.

I have been keeping a tally of the success of the locally and NZ bred horses since the start of October with the results reflecting very strongly in favour of the local and NZ product. 28 races have been contested at Flemington this week with the locals winning 19, NZ five and internationals four. It will be interesting to see how the results line up after tomorrow's Stakes Day meeting.

Tomorrow's meeting is a ripper. The track is likely to be firm again. I will send out a track report tomorrow morning. Two big Group 1 races are to be contested again with the Mackinnon Stakes and the Darley Classic. These are very good races. The Mackinnon Stakes is better placed here with the Cox Plate runners having had two weeks to get over the race before lining up. Arcadia Queen loves firm going and will be hard to beat. Melody Belle is one of my favourite horses and it is good to see her back for another crack at the big race.

The Darley Classic has attracted a very good field. Barrier draws have a big say in who wins these straight races. Bivouac loves the straight and was very good in the Everest. Whatever beats him wins the race. It should be a cracking contest.

Oaks Day was a great day for more than one reason. Finally, Victoria had no residents of aged care facilities infected with Covid-19. The virus has taken a terrible toll on the elderly housed in these facilities with over 800 deaths attributed to it.

Today marks the 7th day with no new infections or deaths recorded in Victoria from the virus. Once again this is great news. The sooner we get the borders open across Australia the better it will be for everyone. I haven't been into the city but the suburbs around where I live are buzzing with activity. It is often impossible to get a car park in the shopping centres.

I speak with people from most states on a daily basis and most find it amazing I don't personally know of anyone who was infected with Covid-19 in Victoria. The level of infection was very low with most of the issues surrounding aged care facilities. I hope for the sake of all Victorians the virus is behind us and we get on with life. The lock down was far more severe than it needed to be with the Premier, some of his ministers and state government officials paranoid about a 3rd wave after their complete incompetent handling of the hotel quarantine programme. This caused the second wave, nothing else!!! We haven't heard the end of that tragedy yet. It will be interesting to see if charges are laid against some very high public officers in Victoria.

The virus is creating havoc in many other countries with Europe, the Americas, Africa, the Middle East and some of Asia in the grip of the worst of it. I'm certain the figures of infection in some countries are way off the mark. We should be thankful we live here. Australia is the only country situated on a continent that doesn't share a common border with one of more other countries. I feel for the French people at present trying to cope with the virus and the disgraceful terrorist attacks of the past couple of weeks.

HELLBENT / ISLAND PAGO FILLY 2019



Hellbent / Island Pago filly 2019
John Thompson to train - \$4,950 for 5%

This is a really nice type of a filly by the exciting first season sire Hellbent out of the well related mare Island Pago.

She is a ½ sister to our 2yo filly by Astern out of Island Pago which is trained by Patrick Payne. Patrick has a very good opinion of the filly. This is good information and the reason I was so keen to get my hands on her. She ticks a lot of boxes.

I love purchasing weanlings and yearlings by the *first season sires*. About 30% of our best mares go to these sires. Our current outstanding fillies Rubisaki, Fituese and Miss Divine Em were out of the first crops of their respective sires.

Other good horses I have been associated with by young sires include Under Command, Unchain My Heart, Horrocks, Bedi, Huiskes and Rose Of Scotland. These were outstanding

horses. In any year I will normally purchase three or four yearlings by the new sires. While I don't always get it right, I have had a lot of success with this strategy.

On my way back to Melbourne from the Magic Millions National Sale I stayed at Yarraman Park and inspected this filly by exciting young sire Hellbent out of the Choisir mare Island Pago. She has a nice hindquarter and is strong through the hocks. I expected this to be the case given how good a sort her sister is. I've seen quite a few foals by Hellbent and like what I see.

The filly is a beautiful mover. She has a great swagger and gets along nicely. This is important. We are looking at buying athletes, not cart horses. She is a nice filly with good length of reign and deep girth. This is where the engine is located. She has plenty of scope to further develop through her girth and through her chest. She is strong behind and through the hocks.

A strong pointer to this filly's prospects is the record his sire I Am Invincible has achieved when mated to Choisir mares. Nine have raced with all nine winning including the Group winner Eckstein and Stakes winner I Am Eloquent.

The filly was reared at Yarraman Park in the Hunter Valley, one of our elite nurseries. I have had great success purchasing horses from Yarraman Park. Some of the horses I purchased include Desk Top Lover, Invincible Al, Believe 'n Achieve and Too Many Reds.

Hellbent

The filly is by the Group 1 winning sprinter Hellbent, a son of Champion Sire and sire of sires I Am Invincible. I Am Invincible is one of the most exciting sires in Australia with his sons Brazen Beau and Super One doing a good job.

I remember the first time I inspected In Am Invincible at Yarraman Park. He is an impressive animal, strong and imposing. He has gone on to be one of the best sires of the modern era in Australia and currently leads the Australian Sires List. He is a super star and should establish a dynasty through his deeds and those of his sons and daughters.

I know the Mitchell family from Yarraman Park had been looking for a sire to come in behind I Am Invincible and Hellbent ticked all the boxes.

I was at Moonee Valley the night Hellbent won the Group 1 William Reid Stakes. His turn of foot and acceleration was spectacular. Australian racing is all about speed and he certainly had that to burn.

He is out of a Volksraad mare who also threw the talented sprinter Hulk. Hellbent's female line is quite good with the smart sprinters Second Effort and Diamond Effort featuring.

Volksraad is the broodmare sire of successful sire Shamexpress as well as the very good mare Lights Of Heaven and Champion Hong Kong galloper Able Friend.

Island Pago

Island Pago is a very well related mare by the emerging broodmare sire Choisir. He is already represented by 36 stakes horses out of his daughters including four Group 1 winners. It shouldn't be surprising as he was a very fast horse and highly successful sire and served good books of mares.

Island Pago won at 1200m and is the $\frac{3}{4}$ sister to the Stakes winners **Pago Rock** and **Rock My Pago**. This family also gave us the multiple Group winner Special Reward and WA Sires Produce winner Showy Chloe.

This is Island Pago's 4th live foal. Her second foal is a filly by I Am Invincible named In de Sun Iwilcome which showed good ability but hurt herself and is now back in work.

I spoke to Keith Dryden who trains her and he said a horse got away and she was spooked when it ran towards them and flipped over on the concrete damaging her wither. He has a good opinion of her.

I purchased the 3rd foal by Astern. Patrick Payne trains her. From day one her breaker Shane Stockdale talked her up with Lee Powell from Fulmen Park calling me after she arrived from the yearling sale to say she was the nicest filly on his property which is quite a statement.

I have had great success buying yearlings out of WA mares. Some of my best horses were out of mares from the west including Zero Drama, Unabated and Raido. The best horse I have been associated with was Dignity Dancer who was also out of a WA mare.

In conclusion, where is the downside for this filly? As I see it, we have ticks across the board from her sire, her dam and the farm she was reared. She is also a great type. I could not recommend a better filly to you. Good luck with her.