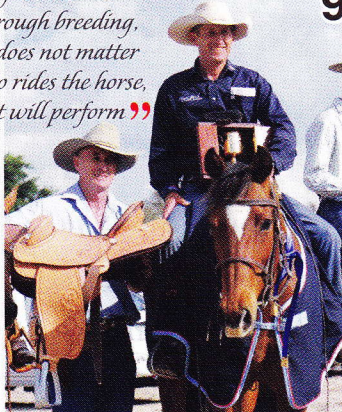


STORIES...

“If it's instinct through breeding, it does not matter who rides the horse, it will perform”

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21ST CENTURY COWBOY
Tom Williamson, 2011 Black Toyota
Warwick Gold Cup Winner

Kenyon Sports Photos



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Nuance Photography

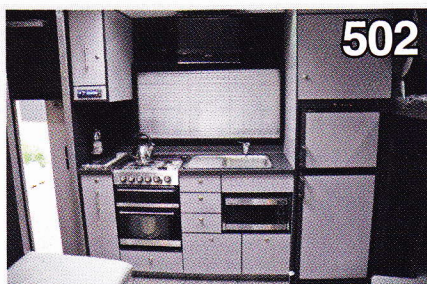
SIGNATURE PROPERTIES Pt I
Sydney Polo Club

HORSE MATTERS 190

Do you need an answer to your equine related question? Drop us a line at horsematters@horsesdeals.com.au
The best question will WIN a **Eurohunter Collar Check cotton rug and hood.**
This month's winner is Amina Mahmoud from Blackrock, Vic

This month's topics...

1. Training exercises to build topline
2. Basic cross country penalties
3. Fire safety preparation
4. The value of paddock boots



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DREAM RIG
George Sanna's luxury rig, with some handy storage ideas.

UPCOMING DEADLINES

January Issue Deadline

\$1,000 & Under deadline2nd Dec
Advertising deadline (Thurs).....8th Dec
On Sale (Wed)28th Dec

EVERY MONTH

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February Issue Deadline

\$1,000 & Under deadline 6th Jan
Advertising deadline (Thurs)..... 12th Jan
On Sale (Wed) 1st Feb



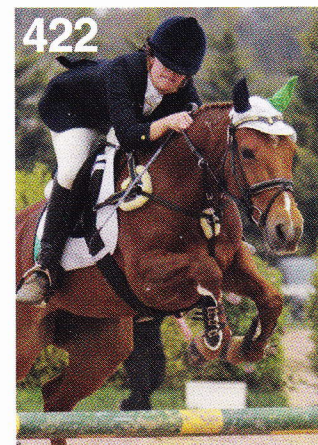
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“I love seeing those light-bulb moments in horses and riders”



Super Scoop - Stacy Westfall

All American QH Congress Freestyle winner and much more, Stacy is an inspirational rider.



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“Kara is fantastic and such an honest jumper; she is very bold and would never stop at a fence.”

Stephanie Lew

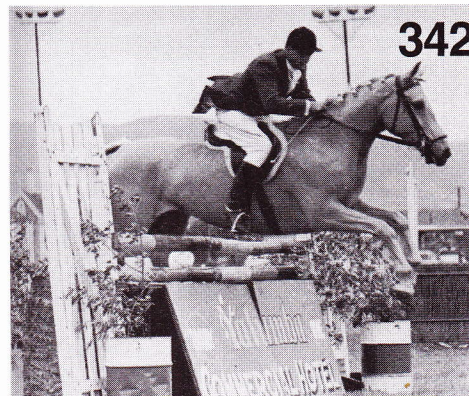
Off the Track - 'Karama Ecstasy'

The young horse/young rider combination is risky, but for this partnership it has worked brilliantly.



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Tribute - Ocean Midnight
A brief but brilliant career.



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Memory Lane

A man who had a huge influence on the equestrian world.

21ST CENTURY

2011 BLACK TOYOTA
WARWICK GOLD CUP WINNER

TOM WILLIAMSON

Sometimes when you go looking, you are surprised what you find. What was to be a fairly standard interview with Warwick Gold Cup winner, Tom Williamson, resulted in a lengthy and interesting discussion with a man who is a talented rider and trainer, a breeder, amateur geneticist, horticulturalist and potential motivational speaker. Tom is a Glen Innes man born and bred and operates the Moore Park breeding farm with his wife, Jane, five year old son Tommy and six week old daughter India.

Glen Innes is eight hours north of Sydney, but more importantly, two and a half hours north of Tamworth and two and a half hours south of Warwick; real cattle performance horse country. Tom explains; "In the Glen Innes area there are a lot of campdrafts and that is what everyone did if they rode a horse; and I started drafting when I was 12. I did a lot of drafting when I was younger and was ABCRA Champion in 1996. I have won the Australian Open Campdraft twice and the Walcha Golden Gate Open twice and I was runner up

at the Gold Cup in 2000. I thought then that I had missed my chance to win, as sometimes the opportunities pass you by. But in campdrafting a lot comes down to the luck of the draw. I have competed in every Gold Cup since I was 17, (Tom turned 40 on the 30th October, the day he won the Gold Cup) and this year I had three nominated. I won riding the 12 year old gelding, Serene Acres that is by Richard Bull's stallion, Acres Destiny out of Bruce McNaughton's great campdraft mare, Oaks Serene. Bullseye, as my son Tommy calls him, was actually an embryo transfer foal and was given to me by Richard as a two year old ready to break in. I brought him home, broke him in and took him to his Cutting Futurity and he has been campdrafting ever since. He was not the horse I thought had the best chance, but he is very consistent. The important thing is, if you get a good cow don't waste it. The Gold Cup is won with an aggregate score and this year seven hundred started in the first round and I came equal first; the sec-

ond round was down to 200 and then 26 in the Final. I had a good lead and I drew late. I knew I did not have to run too many risks; I just had to get a score; be penalty free with a clean yard and clean pegs. I didn't notice what scores the others got, my main focus was to get my horse ready, get myself ready and to do what I had to do, and the beast will tell me what I have to do.

They say the Warwick Gold Cup is the Melbourne Cup of campdrafting and I suppose it is; it is prestigious, it's the one everyone wants to win because it has a history going back to 1928, and a culture, and it's a tough event. I felt very pleased with the win, pleased and lucky and appreciative of all the support I received before the event and congratulations after it. People asked me if my dream came true, but I don't believe in dreaming too much; what I try and do is to put the things in place that you need to put in place; get a well bred horse and train it and do the best you can every day, and what will be will be. If you are the most committed you will win; you have to be committed to be competitive."

It was easy to determine from the name that Serene Acres is a Quarter Horse, and there has been some resistance to them amongst the campdrafting fraternity. "I grew up on Australian Stock Horses and was as sceptical as anyone about the Quarter Horse as campdrafters. So I went to the USA to see for myself and what made me go and how I came to get the stallion, One Moore Playboy, was seeing Todd Graham riding the brilliant Cutting mare One Moore Spin at Sydney Royal. How do you get a horse to do that, I asked him? I thought if she was campdrafting she would be a sensation. I went up and spent a couple of weeks with Todd and he had a lot of Spinifex mares and I saw how good they were. I went to the US to see the Cutting Horse Finals in the late 1990s, and I saw what athletic horses they were and thought they would fit right in with campdrafting; they were fine, low to the ground, naturally collected and they could stop like they hit a brick wall, turn around and run in an instant. I saw a mare over there called Rey Down Sally and I said to my wife, Jane, we have to get some of that and a week later we met Linda Holmes, the owner of Dual Rey and that's how it fell into place. What started off as a hobby turned in to a breeding farm and that has become a business. I came to realise that the best training aid you can have is a well bred, well conformed horse and I became interested in genetics. We are the agents for Dual Rey who is the world's leading cattle horse performance stallion and we have his



COWBOY

Full brother, Rey Dual owned by Linda Holmes that's standing here at Moore Park along with One Moore Playboy (by Playboy Roy imp. dec.) and One Moore Duck (One Moore Playboy/Oaks Fancy Duckling).

"I don't have many Stock Horses left but if one came along that was what I was looking for, I would use it. If something is in front of you and it's good, you can't deny it, regardless of the breed. You have to be honest with yourself and if you have a stallion and its foals aren't what you want them to be; you sack it; champions first crop, champions every crop. The Quarter Horses have been bred longer to work cattle and they have really become the all round performance horses, and they are the ones that are worth a lot of money. The Quarter Horse gives you that easy trainability and that cattle instinct and the beauty of them is that they mature early. They can be as good as they are ever going to be at three years old, just like the racehorses. But just because you start them early does not mean they finish early, not if you go about it the right way. I stick to the genetics of the horses that are good at three years old; I don't use anything that does not have great Futurity genetics. The correct work, conformation and feeding regime, and you cannot short cut on feed, ensure that the horses are fit to perform. Soundness is not an issue with the three year olds, as the genetics have been refined over the years to enable them to physically and mentally withstand the demands at that age.

» IF ITS INSTINCT THROUGH BREEDING, IT DOES NOT MATTER WHO RIDES THE HORSE, IT WILL PERFORM

The market has dictated this as the main money is for the horses at Futurity age. With the well bred Cutting Futurity horses, when the rider puts his hand down, it's in the horses' head to want to work. A lot of horses come good later, but that is more likely to be a man made ability, and that won't breed on. If its instinct through breeding, it does not matter who rides the horse, it will perform. All you have to do is to give them the basics and the good horses rise to the top and the average horses stay where they are. By the basics I mean, stop, turn left and right, back up and be responsive to your legs. The stop and back up are most important. I like them to be able to back up as quick as they can trot, and if they can't back up and side pass, you can't really train them to do anything else. I look for horses that back up easily and they are the ones that are built collected. Ideally I like to put the horses through a Cutting Futurity preparation and then they are trained, mentally and physically and you will never take that off them. And that's the beauty when you send them campdrafting; they have the breeding and the training. Nowadays if you are involved in breeding you have to be a student of genetics.

People say, you breed to the best and hope for the best, which is true, but some crosses, despite both horses being good just don't match some times. You have to know what matches top and bottom for it to work and that does not guarantee it will work, but it gives you a better chance.



"The stallions we stand at the farm here breed about 250-300 horses a year and it is all AI. Personally we breed 4/5 ourselves and at any given time there are about 60 horses on the property and about 450 head of cattle. My wife Jane does the lab work and we do some embryo transfer, but it has to be with a very good mare. I know in America they tend to over embryo and we have all that ahead of us in Australia. We are very interested in nutrition and we are thankful to Prydes for their support and their mare cubes are fantastic. We grow some Red Clover hay, but we have had the agronomist in and we are told the climate and soil is perfect to grow Timothy hay, which is the number one horse hay in the world and is very hard to buy commercially in Australia". Tom Williamson is aware and interested in every aspect that goes in to producing good horses; he is a real 21st century cowboy who embraces technology. His advice; "If you see something that is better, don't ignore it, and always have an open mind".

Story by Anna Sharpley, pics Kenyon Sports Photos.

