

Monday 15 July 2019

GRAY READY FOR NEW SEASON CHALLENGES

While he may have recently celebrated his eighty-second birthday, there is no suggestion that well-respected Central Districts horseman Kevin Gray is showing any signs of slowing down.

Gray will enter his fortieth season of training in 2019/20 with the same enthusiasm that he did when it all started for him back in Waverley in 1980.

"I guess you can say that I'm a lucky man in that in the forty years I have been training I've enjoyed pretty good health all the way through," Gray said.

"I've had the odd injury like a broken leg and the like but really nothing that ever put my training career in jeopardy.

"I've loved every minute of it and I'm looking forward to

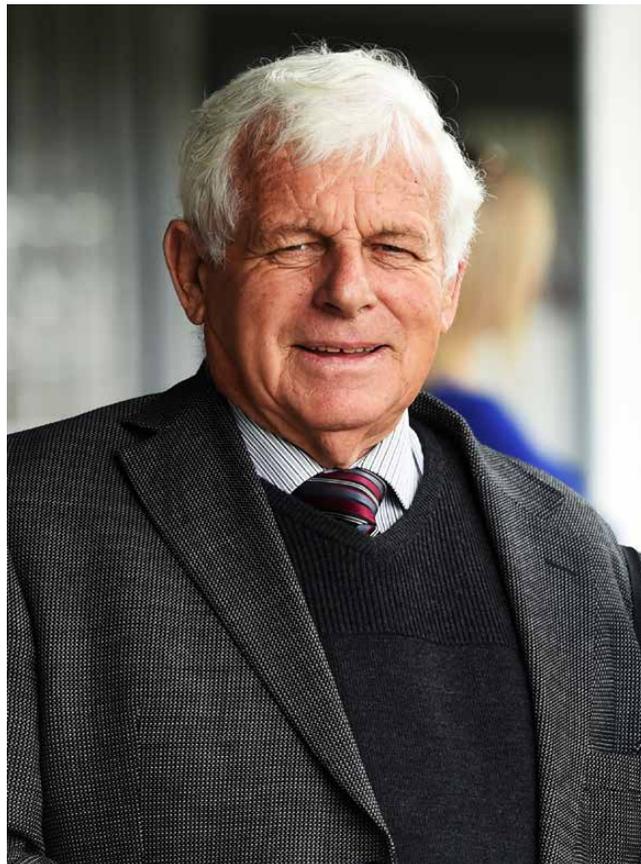
next season just as much as I did when I first started."

Born in 1937, Gray's love of horses began during his formative years when he would ride a pony to school.

"I think I started riding ponies when I was about eight or nine as that's how we got to school," he said.

"I started work in the Patea Freezing Works when I left school at 16 as my grandfather was a foreman there.

"Back in those days they used to bring the stock in by train and I used to be involved with unloading them.



Respected Central Districts trainer, Kevin Gray
(Race Images – Peter Rubery)

"When I left the works, I started as a stock agent which I did for about 23 years. Back then I was riding showjumpers and eventers while riding trackwork for some of the trainers in the local area.

"I rode work for people like Brian Deacon, Herb Bergerson, Wally McEwan and the like and learned much of what I know from them.

"I was doing a bit of pre-training and with so many good trainers around at that time, I tried to soak up what I could."

Deacon's decision to move from Waverley to Takanini in 1980 was the forerunner for Gray to take out his own trainer's license at the urgings of Deacon.

"Brian made his move up

north and he said to me then I should take out a license of my own," Gray said.

"I started off with a permit to train and then moved on from there. I ended up training for some of the biggest owners in the Taranaki region and we had some great success."

After more than twenty years at their Waverley base, Gray and his wife Kathleen moved to a new 52-hectare property outside of Palmerston North in 2006, which carries the name of their top-class galloper Copper Belt (NZ) (Gold Sovereign),

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GRAY READY FOR NEW SEASON CHALLENGES

(Continued from page 1)

who Gray had purchased as a yearling from the annual sale at Claudelands in Hamilton back in 1973.

“Brain Deacon trained Copper Belt for us and he was just a magnificent horse,” Gray said.

“He really helped to set us up and that is why we named our property after him.

“It is a beautiful property with its own training track and all the modern facilities that we need to do the job we do.”

While Gray may be known for training horses of the calibre of Gr.1 AJC Oaks (2400m) winner Daffodil (NZ) (No Excuse Needed), it is his record with moulding some of the best riding talent New Zealand has produced that he is also justifiably proud of.

“I guess when you look at our record, it would be the people we have mentored that gives Kathleen and I as much delight as any of the horses we have had,” Gray said.

“Riders like Hayden Tinsley, Eddie Lamb, Paul Shailer, Bruce Herd and Lisa Allpress all started their careers with us and went on to achieve big things in the game.

“Most, if not all of the staff we have here at the property have been here since we started or have come back to us and that gives you a special feeling as well.

“When I celebrated my birthday the other day, I think there was something like 30-40 texts or messages from people who have worked for us over the years, so I found that very touching.”

Looking ahead to the new season, Gray is quietly confident he will have some significant firepower available to him once the tracks start to dry out.

“I don’t tend to have too many go around in the winter as

the tracks are just too tough.

“We have some lovely younger horses coming through which I’m quite excited about once we start to get the drier spring surfaces.

“We have lost one of two of our better ones from this year as I’ve always been a trader and have sold them on but I do like the look of what we have coming through.”

Gray is also hopeful that the new Racing Industry Transitional Agency (RITA) will bring about the positive change required for the stagnant racing industry.

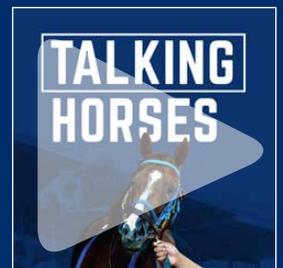
“I have had some dealings with Dean McKenzie, who is in charge of the new agency, and I think he is a very passionate and capable person,” Gray said.

“I know they have a hell of a lot on their plates but one thing I would like them to look at is the racing surfaces we operate on.

“There just hasn’t been the level of spending we need to keep the tracks up to scratch and I think that is one of the fundamentals they have to get right for any progress to be made.”

– NZ Racing Desk

AUDIO: Cambridge Stud’s Henry Plumptre discusses a bumper weekend for resident stallion, Tavistock



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TE AKAU FIREPOWER OUT IN FORCE AT TE RAPA TRIALS

It may be a far cry from the sunshine and 35-degree heat he is currently enjoying on a well-deserved Hawaiian holiday, but you can be sure that Te Akau Racing's Jamie Richards will have an eye on Monday's Te Rapa trials where the first of the spring horses go through their paces.

Te Akau Racing will be represented by more than thirty members of their potential new season line-up at Te Rapa, from unraced two-year-olds through to star performers such as **Melody Belle (NZ)** (Commands) and **Te Akau Shark (NZ)** (Rip Van Winkle).

Richards is relaxed about the prospects for his team at the trials meeting, with most there to enjoy what he considers will be a nice day out.

"There won't be any pressure on any of the runners on the day, we just want to see them have a day out as part of the early proceedings in their current preparations," Richards said.

"They can have a run around and it will bring them on for the next round of trials at Te Rapa in a fortnight.

"It is a good opportunity for them to have a wee trip away, stretch their legs and get ready for what comes next."

Headline acts Melody Belle and Te Akau Shark will contest an open 900m heat with Richards looking forward to having them enjoy a quiet hit-out.

"Melody Belle and Te Akau Shark are coming along nicely and the trial will do them the world of good," he said.

"All going well, they will be back again in a fortnight and then we can reassess where each of them is at from there.

"It is likely they will clash first-up in the Foxbridge Plate (Gr.2, 1200m) at Te Rapa on August 17.

"The Foxbridge is an ideal stepping stone for where we want to go with them both.

"They are both class sprinters so you would expect them to perform well first-up before we get serious with their main targets.

"Melody Belle will be aimed at the Hawke's Bay triple crown while Te Akau Shark has Sydney aspirations. We are in no hurry to get him to Sydney so we will just take it one step at a time."

Richards also predicts big things for his trio of rising four-year-old mares in Savy Yong Blonk (NZ) (Savabeel), Shezathinka (So You Think) and Luminous (NZ) (Reliable Man).

"We are going to take it slowly with the three of them before we ask them to step up," he said.

"Shezathinka and Luminous are both stakes placed maidens who won't take long to get through the grades.

"Savy Yong Blonk ran creditably over ground in her last few starts but we think she could be best as a sprinter-miler so that's where we will be focussing with her."

Shezathinka and Luminous will contest maiden 900m trial heats while Savy Yong Blonk will join Te Akau Shark in his open 900m heat.

– NZ Racing Desk



Quality galloper Te Akau Shark will be one of the star attractions at Monday's Te Rapa trials meeting (Trish Dunell)





SALE OPTION LOOMS FOR IMPRESSIVE RUAKAKA WINNER

Offshore interest in promising galloper **Mac Attacka (NZ)** (Makfi) was piqued yet again on Saturday after the impressive three-year-old produced a powerful closing burst to take out the last race on the card at Ruakaka.

The Makfi gelding had impressed many when winning two of his first three starts which led to his potential sale to Hong Kong interests.

Despite passing the vetting requirements for the sale, the deal

fell through which led to Saturday's reappearance over 1600m and another eye-catching victory.

Settled near last by rider Matt Cameron, Mac Attacka was still well back approaching the home turn as Cameron eased him to the outside to make his challenge. Several huge bounds carried him to the front inside the last 200m as he drove clear to score by a widening three-quarter length margin.

"I think that was his best win to

date," co-trainer Chris Gibbs said.

"He beat a handy field and did it like a horse who had plenty up his sleeve.

"With all the activity going on with the sale and what not, we hadn't done too much with him, but when that fell through, we decided to run him and he did the job for us."

Despite believing the horse has the ability to compete at a higher level, Gibbs isn't looking too far ahead

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Mac Attacka cruises to the line at Ruakaka as he notches up another impressive victory (Trish Dunell)





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SALE OPTION LOOMS FOR IMPRESSIVE RUAKAKA WINNER

(Continued from page 5)

as further expressions of interest in purchasing him came in overnight.

"It's no secret he is for sale and the phone was ringing again last night," Gibbs said.

"A performance like that will certainly get people interested so we're not really in a position to plan out a campaign for him as he could be gone just as quickly.

"Obviously if he stays with us, we will be looking at some of the better spring and summer races but at this stage I can't really say what is going to happen."

The Gibbs/Bradley combination was in the thick of the action throughout the day on their home turf, taking out the opening event with two-year-old debutant Annie's Song (NZ) (Darci Brahma) as well as producing Poker Face (NZ) (Jimmy Choux) to win the day's feature race, the ITM/GIB Whangarei Gold Cup (2100m).

In between times they also narrowly missed making it four wins for the day when promising stayer Amazing Az (NZ) (Azamour) was beaten by a nose over 1600m.

"It was a really good day and we won with horses who have bright futures ahead of them," Gibbs said.

"Poker Face has really come into his own now he has stepped up over some ground.

"I actually thought he might be a little out-gunned at the weights but he ended up winning comfortably.

"He may have found his niche over ground so I think we will probably back off him a little and look to races like the Waikato Cup (Gr.3, 2400m) or

Counties Cup (Gr.3, 2100m) later this year.

"Those are the types of races that Amazing Az could contest as well so we may have a job on our hands trying to keep them apart.

"Annie's Song was very impressive and will only get better as she steps up in distance.

"I really like her and a race like the Northland Breeders' Stakes (Gr.3, 1200m) back here in September is one we will be keen to see her contest."

– NZ Racing Desk

Race	Whangarei RC United Security Northland H. 1600m.
Winner	Mac Attacka (NZ) 2015
Owners	C K R Dawson, G M Forbes, Mrs M Gallagher, Mrs D M Logan, A G Spence & R M Warwick
Trainer	Chris Gibbs & Michelle Bradley (Ruakaka)
Breeding	by Makfi (GB) out of Khagan by Viking Ruler (AUS)
Breeder	Qatar Bloodstock; Auckland; NZ
Sales	2017 National Yearling Sale - Premier V: Westbury Stud \$15000 P: Stirling Bloodstock



AUDIO: New Zealand Bloodstock Managing Director, Andrew Seabrook, on the new Karaka Hotel development



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NZ STALLION AWARDS

THE CENTAINE AWARD

STALLIONS	EARNINGS
SAVABEEL	\$17,199,907
O'REILLY	\$9,551,353
ROAD TO ROCK	\$9,426,622
DARCI BRAHMA	\$9,164,573
PINS	\$6,454,519
PER INCANTO	\$6,131,184
TAVISTOCK	\$5,860,542
OCEAN PARK	\$5,543,806
MASTERCRAFTSMAN	\$5,357,904
SWISS ACE	\$4,800,859

Criteria: Sire whose NZ-conceived progeny have accumulated the highest stakes earnings worldwide

THE DEWAR STALLION TROPHY

STALLIONS	EARNINGS
SAVABEEL	\$9,632,710
O'REILLY	\$5,864,633
PINS	\$4,309,873
OCEAN PARK	\$3,858,712
TAVISTOCK	\$3,565,522
ZED	\$2,916,840
DARCI BRAHMA	\$2,904,326
RELIABLE MAN	\$2,712,540
PER INCANTO	\$2,570,888
RIP VAN WINKLE	\$2,506,694

Criteria: Sire whose progeny have accumulated the highest combined stakes earnings in Australia & New Zealand

THE GROSVENOR AWARD

STALLIONS	EARNINGS
SAVABEEL	\$3,941,644
PER INCANTO	\$2,101,318
PINS	\$2,100,381
DARCI BRAHMA	\$1,570,192
SHOWCASING	\$1,392,382
IFFRAAJ	\$1,368,832
RIP VAN WINKLE	\$1,313,019
ZED	\$1,211,868
SWISS ACE	\$1,180,113
ALAMOSA	\$1,147,925

BEST PERFORMERS	EARNINGS
PROBABEL	\$581,000
SANTA MONICA	\$192,750
MADISON COUNTY	\$576,625
DEE AND GEE	\$147,500
XPRESSION	\$94,500
WYNDSPELLE	\$141,625
TE AKAU SHARK	\$196,875
PERRY MASON	\$114,875
MISS FEDERER	\$88,410
ON THE ROCKS	\$307,325

Criteria: Leading Sires by Earnings in New Zealand



Data Provided By
ARION PEDIGREES



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NZ BRED WINNERS IN HONG KONG JULY 10

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
LIGHTNING TREASURE (NZ) 2014 by Swiss Ace (AUS) out of Authentic Desire by Howbaddouwantit (USA)	Kamada Bloodstock; Central; NZ	HKJC Bulldozer H. 1200m.	2016 Ready to Run Sale V: Kamada Park \$70000 P: R Yiu
PLAY WISE (HK) Hessdalen (NZ) 2013 by Alamosa out of Grey Swan (IRE) by Daylami (IRE)	Anzac Breeding Partnership Joint Venture; Central; NZ	HKJC Maverick Star H. 1650m.	2015 National Yearling Sale - Select Sale V: Wellfield Lodge \$42000 P: Exempt B/stock 2015 Ready to Run Sale V: Wellfield Lodge \$50000 P: Michael Freedman/Waterford B/stock

NZ BRED WINNERS IN HONG KONG JULY 14

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
ABOVE (NZ) 2015 by Tavistock out of Once More by Thorn Park (AUS)	D F & Mrs M D Bodle; Waikato; NZ	HKJC Medic Kingdom H. 1800m.	
HAVE FUN TOGETHER (NZ) 2014 by Thewayyouare (USA) out of Black Beauty by Black Minnaloushe (USA)	Windsor Park Stud Ltd; Waikato; NZ	HKJC All You Wish H. 1400m.	2016 National Yearling Sale - Select Session V: Windsor Park Stud \$50000 P: NZB as agent
MONKEY JEWELLERY (NZ) 2014 by Exceed and Excel (Aus) out of Panama by Traditionally (USA)	R W E Moore; Auckland; NZ	HKJC Victory Marvel H. 1200m.	2016 National Yearling Sale - Premier Session V: Lyndhurst Farm \$300000 P: Hong Kong Jockey Club
CIRCUIT THREE (NZ) 2014 by Savabeel (AUS) out of Forty Two Below by O'Reilly	G R Turner & G D Wallace; Waikato; NZ	HKJC Big Profit H. 1400m.	2016 National Yearling Sale - Premier Session V: Mapperley Stud Ltd \$475000 P: Hong Kong Jockey Club
AEROHAPPINESS (NZ) 2014 by Zacinto (GB) out of In the Mood (IRE) by Hawk Wing (USA)	K J Hickman; Canterbury; NZ	HKJC Entrapment H. 1200m.	2016 National Yearling Sale - Select Session V: Valachi Downs \$36000 P: A Vasili

NZ BRED WINNERS IN SINGAPORE JULY 12

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
LEO (NZ) 2014 by Bullbars (AUS) out of Midnight Snippets by Danroad (AUS)	Gillovic Bloodstock Ltd; Waikato; NZ	Singapore TC Class 5 H. 1000m.	
AMAZING CHOICE (NZ) 2014 by Shocking (AUS) out of Choices Are (AUS) by Redoute's Choice (AUS)	Raffles Dancers (NZ) Pty Ltd; Waikato; NZ	Singapore TC Maiden S. 1400m.	
QUANTUM (SING) Sinjaree (NZ) 2014 by O'Reilly out of Hemem (AUS) by Redoute's Choice (AUS)	Sheikh Mohammed bin Khalifa Al Maktoum; Waikato; NZ	Singapore TC Class 4 H. 1200m.	
RAPIDASH (NZ) 2013 by Battle Paint (USA) out of Miss Pirouette by Woodman (USA)	Chequers N.Z. Ltd; Waikato; NZ	Singapore TC Novice P. 1200m.	



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NZ BRED WINNERS IN MACAU JULY 12

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
HOSTWIN MERAKEI (NZ) 2014 by Swiss Ace (AUS) out of Bacio del Vinto (AUS) by Encosta de Lago (AUS)	K T Nam & NZ Thoroughbred Holdings Ltd; Auckland; NZ	Macau Amritsar H. 1510m.	2016 National Yearling Sale V: Westbury Stud Ltd \$120000 P: Jason Tam/James Moore Racing
STILL SO CUTE (NZ) 2015 by Thewayouare (USA) out of Invermoray by Volksraad (GB)	Mrs S L Frost & Mrs R A Ramage; Canterbury; NZ	Macau Dharwad H. 1050m.	2017 National Yearling Sale - Select V: Curraghmore \$52500 P: Regal Farm 2017 Ready to Run Sale V: Regal Farm \$85000 P: AMCTam / Shum Wai Hing

NZ BRED WINNERS IN MACAU JULY 13

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
GEORGIAN EASE (NZ) 2014 by Super Easy out of Teasing Georgia (AUS) by Peintre Celebre (USA)	R C Y Hui; Waikato; NZ	Macau Salem H. 1500m.	

NZ BRED WINNERS IN MALAYSIA JULY 14

HORSE & BREEDING	BREEDER	RACE	SALES DETAILS
SATELLITE GENIUS (MLY) Rocket Navigator (NZ) 2012 by Red Giant (USA) out of Amiga Mia (AUS) by Conatus (AUS)	G Harvey	Selangor TC Class 5 H. 1200	2014 National Yearling Sale - Festival Session V: Westbury Stud \$10000 P: WS Team

