

Over The Jumps

April 2011



Prepare to be Hypnotized As Jump Racing Returns

Article by Dennis Ryan, NZ Jumps Inc Board Member



Hypnotize and Isaac Lupton at Ellerslie

Jumping enthusiasts will be unanimous in greeting the news that triple Great Northern Steeplechase winner Hypnotize is making good progress for an early winter return to the jumps racing scene.

Trainer and part-owner Raymond Connors has outlined plans for Hypnotize to make a career first attempt at the McGregor Grant Steeplechase over the Ellerslie hill on Queen's Birthday weekend. The ultimate outcome would be if he was to front up three months later for a history seeking shot at a fourth Great Northern Steeplechase victory.

"He's coming along well and if he comes up I'd like to see him have a go at the McGregor Grant," Connors told Over the Jumps. "As far as the Great Northern goes it would be good to give him the opportunity, but that will all depend on his form."

Hypnotize completed his third Pakuranga Hunt Cup-Great Northern Steeplechase double last September when he carried 70.5kg to victory over newcomer Karlos and 2009 Great Northern winner Fair King. He went into the great race on a rating of 111 and earned another three points to make him clearly the country's highest rated jumper on 114.

A McGregor Grant start would be a significant departure from previous programmes for the Yamanin Vital gelding. In the past three winters the Pakuranga and Great Northern have been his only steeplechase assignments, with his preparatory racing comprising a mixture of flat and hurdle.

The other proven jumper in the Connors team, 2009 Waikato Steeplechase winner Mikemendaad, is making encouraging progress in his bid for a comeback from a tendon injury. His 2010 campaign was cut short after just two autumn runs on the flat.

"We threw him out on the hill and he's been in for a while," his trainer said. "So far so good, and all going well he could be ready for the Waikato Steeples."



Hypnotize Fact File

Born: 1999

Sire: Yamanin Vital **Dam:** Auburn Rose

Trainer: Raymond Connors

Owners: MS & RM Connors

Breeders: BJ, HT & Mrs LE Anderton (White Robe Lodge)

38 Career Starts: 13 Wins 12 Steeplechase Starts: 9 Wins

New Mares Allowance for 2011

NZTR are proposing that mares will be awarded a 1kg allowance in all maiden jumping events. This rule should be in place for the new jumping season. Please note that 0-1 win races were run under handicap rules so the new rule will not take effect in these events.

Brand New Hurdles for the North Island

Garry Foskett, NZTR's National Venue Inspector has confirmed that two new sets of hurdles can be expected to arrive in time for the upcoming season.

The appearance of the new hurdles will look very much the same as the existing ones however one major difference is that the pad will be permanently fixed to the panels not strapped on as has been the case previously. This will eliminate the hazard of pads moving around mid-race.

One set will be placed at Ellerslie whilst the other will service certain venues in the Central region.

The pads and other elements of the existing hurdles will be made available for schooling purposes at a number of training tracks yet to be confirmed.

The new jumps have been funded by the Racing Industry Safety Development Fund and NZTR.

They were trialed successfully last season at Ellerslie and Te Aroha.

Be Entertained by British Pathe News

As the winter nights draw ever closer we tend to spend a few more hours either watching TV, reading books or surfing the internet.

If you are looking for something to entertain you for an evening or two I highly recommend a visit to the website: britishpathe.com

Most people would be familiar with the company's famous newsreels and the website is a free archive of all of them. There are literally hundreds of racing focused short films. Movies of the UK classic races, the Grand National and Cheltenham Festival, as well as many races and shorts from Australia and the USA - from the 1920s to the 1960s.

There are some absolutely hilarious light hearted moments including my personal favourite, which must be seen, called a "Novel Grand National" from La Chapelle Racecourse in France, where a motor car takes on a racehorse over steeplechase fences. The film was made in 1927.





Electronic Hoss Ridden by Daniel Stackhouse and Trained by Mark Oulaghan A pair to follow closely in 2011

Trans-Tasman Series a Real Possibility

NZ Jumps Inc and Racing Victoria are soon to embark on a planning mission to create a new Trans Tasman jumping Series. The 2012 jumping dates will be examined in conjunction with Australia in order to identify what opportunities exist within the current schedule of fixtures.

Australia has long staged (over 25 years) an international jockey's series with Ireland but a new jumping promotion with their neighbouring country is being identified as the way forward. A new series could incorporate a jockeys contest, a champion Australasian hurdler or steeplechaser event, it is simply a blank canvas at this stage.

If you have any ideas please email them to Andre Klein at ceo@gallopsouth.co.nz

In the meantime Victorian jumps racing has been provided with \$500,000 by the determined work of Racing Minister David Napthine. How this will spent is still to be confirmed but it is anticipated that some it will be utilised to lure foreign competitors to their key carnivals.

Victoria's Major Fixtures 2011

May 3, 4 & 5 Warrnambool

Includes: \$100,000 Brierly Steeplechase, \$151,000 Grand Annual Steeplechase
\$101,000 Galleywood Hurdle

June 4 Sandown

Includes: \$101,500 Australian Steeplechase
\$101,500 Australian Hurdle

July 31 Warrnambool

\$100,000 Thackeray Steeplechase
\$100,000 Kevin Lafferty Hurdle

August 14 Sandown

\$100,000 Crisp Steeplechase
\$200,000 Grand National Hurdle

August 28 Sandown

\$200,000 Grand National Steeplechase
\$100,000 JJ Houlahan Hurdle

Victoria Jump Season Commences: Monday, April 4 at Warrnambool

Concludes: Monday, September 19 at Pakenham

70 Races 44 Hurdles & 26 Steeplechases

The new look Australian jump racing scene has copied many of the restructure initiatives launched by New Zealand a few seasons ago. There are significantly fewer venues, with Sandown being the only City course. The feature races take place fortnightly throughout the season and it operates in a strict April to September window.

Our NZ Champion Could be Cheltenham Bound?

NZ Jumps Inc is in negotiation with Cheltenham Racecourse to try and secure what could be a fantastic prize for New Zealand's Champion Jumper of 2011.

Cheltenham Racecourse executives have expressed a distinct interest in being part of promotion that would cover the travel costs component of a horse's trip to the UK to compete at the famous March Festival.

Cheltenham were in discussions earlier this year in attempt to encourage Mark Oulaghan to visit their meeting with Grand National winner, Counter Punch however for several reasons the trip was not possible despite much planning taking place.

Andre Klein, NZ Jumps Inc Secretary will be visiting Cheltenham this March and plans to nail down the conditions of a competition that could make this dream trip a reality for the owners of one of our country's best jumpers.

Watch this space!

Handbook of Steeplechase Venues

NZTR under the guidance of Tony Severinsen have just completed work on a fine document called the Handbook of Steeplechase Venues.

The handbook contains the details of all the steeplechase race starts, numbers and locations of fences and very importantly reviews the "bail out" options for each race and fence.

It also contains an aerial photograph of each jumping venue with the fences clearly marked.

The document will be made available to all registered jumps jockeys, stipendiary stewards and on request to all other industry stakeholders.

Plans are now underway to compile a similar handbook for the hurdling courses around the country.

National Amateur Series Sponsor Required

NZ Jumps Inc are sourcing a sponsor for the National Amateur Rider Series that commences at Riverton on May 8.

The sponsor will be asked to provide a trophy to the winner of each of the Amateur races competed for during the season and an overall prize to champion amateur rider, which will be determined on a points basis - 10 for 1st down to 1 for 10th placing.

Series Dates:

Riverton (May 8), Paeroa (May 20)
Hawke's Bay (May 26), Otago (June 12),
Te Aroha (June 24), Wanganui (July 24)
Pakuranga Hunt (Aug 20), Oamaru (Aug 26)
Bay of Plenty Hunt (Sept 29) and
National Jumps Day at Ellerslie (Oct 16).

Please contact NZ Jumps Inc for details.