

THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE'S LEADING STUD FARMS



Alabar Bloodstock

Tongala, Victoria
Australia
011-61-3-5859-2201
alabar@alabar.com.au

Alabar (NZ) Ltd.

Pukekohe
New Zealand
011-64-9-232-1800
alabar@alabar.co.nz

www.alabar.com.au

THE VIEW DOWNUNDER ~ NEALE DONNELLEY

Mach Three's Downunder Owner GARY LYONS

When Gary Lyons emigrated to Australia from the United Kingdom almost 30 years ago, what he knew about harness racing you could write on the back of a postage stamp.

Being from 'the old country,' he knew something of Thoroughbred racing and had an interest in it, but harness racing was an all together different proposition.

Lyons settled in Perth, Western Australia, quickly established himself in the business world, and after being in WA for about eight years, leased (to race) his first Thoroughbred.

Perth is a famous and strong harness racing city, and it wasn't long before he was at Gloucester Park, the inner-city harness racing track, sitting alongside the picturesque Swan River.

He then found himself leasing a Standardbred or two, and as is so often the case in this business, Gary Lyons got the bug.

"I've been racing horses now for 20 years I guess, but you could say we're a good deal more serious about it now," Lyons told me recently.

Outside Australia, Gary Lyons is relatively unknown. But he is known by people

like big spending and high profile owner, Joe Muscara of Pennsylvania.

In fact, they are good friends with a common interest – fast horses. And right now, their interest is firmly focused on a horse called Mach Three.

The former superstar racehorse and now budding champion sire is hot property on both sides of the world.

Muscara owns Mach Three, while Lyons owns the Southern Hemisphere breeding rights to this amazing son of Matts Scooter.

To get into the whole Mach Three story and to find out where it stands right now, we need to go back and find out a little more about Gary Lyons.

Along with an already established Swiss partner, Lyons has developed his company, Heiniger, into a worldwide success story.

Heiniger is a diverse company that is involved in world class shearing equipment, animal harvesting and husbandry, veterinary equipment and agricultural machinery.

From its European base, Heiniger services more than 50 countries worldwide, and it also has strong bases in New Zealand and Australia.



Neale Donnelley

It has been Lyons' success in the business world that has allowed him to foster his new love of harness racing.

Originally he started buying expensive horses from New Zealand and importing them to WA. While he had a good deal of success with some of them, it became obvious, fairly quickly, that he was never going to buy himself a champion.

"I figured that if I was going to get a champion, I had more chance breeding one than buying one, so I bought a few broodmares, which quickly turned into 50 broodmares.

"I just as quickly realized that I needed to be investing in quality, not quantity. The whole thing just seemed to get bigger and bigger," Lyons says now.

He explains how he purchased a stud farm called Caulfield Park, where he now resides, "lots and lots" of broodmares, but he still says he wasn't doing things right.

"It was very, very expensive. I think we bred 100 mares there one year and it

was costing a fortune. I started to think it might be better to buy our own stallions, so we bought a few stallions, and then we got the idea for The Stallion Station, and that's how it began," Lyons explains.

"I kept thinking about the best ways of doing things to offset costs, and we started farming our own crops to lessen the expenses, and we kept buying a few more stallions," he adds.

"I founded the whole concept of The Stallion Station, and this year we will be standing 15 stallions, including Mach Three. We've already closed his book at 200, his appeal is just phenomenal," he notes.

This breeding season in Australia and New Zealand, Mach Three will stand for \$12,500, that's a potential income of \$2.5 million in the Southern Hemisphere alone in one breeding season.

No wonder Mach Three has been the subject of some huge offers lately.

Lyons admits he has been involved in talks to buy the horse outright.

"We have a long term lease arrangement with Mach Three, to stand him for quite a few years, but we don't have him for life. We do have him for quite a few years to come, however," he says.

"Joe Muscara is a good friend of mine and we're working on a range of issues. He is such a siring sensation, Mach Three, and it is important to note we do have the last right of purchase on the horse, it's written into our lease," he says.



Photo by Trish Dunneill

Gary Lyons was a busy man at the New Zealand racing industry awards' banquet in August accepting three honours including overall Horse of the Year for Auckland Reactor. Lyons is a member of the syndicate which owns the colt.

"I'd always be interested in buying him outright. If the numbers came out right it still may happen, but at the moment we're just happy to have his breeding rights."

Along with Peter Heffering and Tara Hills Stud in Ontario, Lyons is involved in the ownership of another boom Mach Three colt, Auckland Reactor.

This column featured a story on Auckland Reactor, from Auckland in New Zealand, two months ago, and it's hardly news to most fans in the Northern Hemisphere how he was sold for a reported \$4 million.

"That horse is a superb animal. I saw that there was no Australasian (Australian or New Zealand) ownership in the horse so I figured I had to get involved. The majority of the horse is owned in North America but we have a share in him," Lyons says with a sense of pride in his voice.

Auckland Reactor has looked every inch a superstar during his racing career, although that career was quickly put on hold when he was diagnosed with a mysterious neurological disorder of the spine just after being sold to his new set of owners.

The good news in recent weeks is

Three Easy Steps. Four Healthy Hooves.

Farrier's Formula®
Hoof Supplement

Life Data
Hoof Disinfectant®

The Right Step®
Hoof Conditioner
and Dressing



Farrier's Formula®

The Original by
since 1983
Hoof Supplement



Life Data®
LABS, INC.

High County Horsehoes Ltd.
Langely, B.C. • 604-530-0761

Hoof & Nail Farrier Supplies
Calgary, AB • 403-252-1661

BWD Equine Services Ltd.
Mount Albert, ON, 905-751-4625

Doug Clark Farrier Services
London, ON • 519-451-9542

Produced by:
Life Data Labs, Inc.
Alabama, USA

800-624-1873
cservice@lifedatalabs.com
www.lifedatalabs.com

that after 10 weeks of confinement, the horse has been given the all clear, by the famous Massey University, to go back into work with trainer Mark Purdon.

His sudden loss of co-ordination at jogging speed is now a thing of the past, adding to the mystery of exactly what did go wrong.

Lyons says his latest information suggests the horse is back to 100 per cent health, and is being prepared to go back to the racetrack.

"And he's doing very, very well. I'm

sure his new owners would love to see him race in the Northern Hemisphere at some stage. You don't invest that much money in a horse unless you want to see them race, and I'm sure they would like to see him go there, set a mark, and then go to stud a proven champion in both hemispheres," Lyons notes.

Gary Lyons has a fabulous band of his own broodmares, including a mare called Child From The Sea (1:56), a half-sister by Astreos to sensation Somebeachsomewhere, the biggest Mach Three success story.

"I had her in foal to Mach Three but she lost the foal, so she'll go back to him again this year, and hopefully we can get a three-quarter brother to Somebeach-somewhere, that might be worth something," he says laughing.

Among the impressive line-up of sires based this year at The Stallion Station, are Mach Three, Royal Mattjesty, Armbro Invasion, Day In A Life, Rustler Hanover, Riverboat King, Cammibest, Pacific Fella and Town Champion.

The Stallion Station gives breeders the opportunity to go to stallions at all ends of the scale, and it is also this year standing Courage Under Fire (In The Pocket), the former champion juvenile pacer who won his first 24 starts. Courage Under Fire was unbeaten at two and three and is now carving out a highly successful breeding career in New Zealand and Australia.

He has been based at New Zealand's famous Nevele R Stud in Christchurch since retiring from the racetrack, but finds his way to The Stallion Station this year.

Lyons is rightfully proud of what he has achieved with The Stallion Station, and the prospect of Mach Three and perhaps down the track, Auckland Reactor, adding form and quality to the place.

He says his own investment in the harness industry has been huge. When I asked him how much, after a prolonged pause he simply said: "A lot."

What is it about modern harness racing? Here it is a sport we all thought gave everyone an opportunity to make a dollar, even the battler.

Yet in three of the last four The View Downunder columns we have featured stories by Aussie mine-rich billionaire Clive Palmer, mega-rich builder and developer Kevin Seymour, and now the very wealthy Gary Lyons. These are seriously successful men each with an unbridled passion for the harness racing game.

Maybe, just maybe, there's a message there. 🐾

Neale Donnelley is a long time racing journalist who covered the sport for 20 years for the Melbourne Sun. He now hosts a daily radio program dedicated to racing.

A World Champion Joins The Family



Lisa Photo

MISTERIZI

1:51-'08 (\$348,515)

B.h.5 Mr Lavec – Ramerizi – Face To Face

Winner of the \$300,000 Nat Ray at the Meadowlands in world record time of 1:51 – an incredible performance.

Selling this fall at the Lexington Selected Yearling Sale...

RADICAL TABBI b.f.

Cantab Hall – Celtic Contessa – King Conch

A Cantab Hall half-sister to **MAJESTIC SON** 2,1:55.4, 3,1:52.4 (\$1,992,157).

From a half-sister to **MISTERIZI** 1:51-'08 (\$348,515).

~ Consigned by ~



PENINSULA FARM
Carter Duer & Family, Owners
 Roger Birch, Manager
 P.O. Box 11786 • Lexington, KY 40578
 502-863-6742 • Fax: 502-868-9917