

WAYNE ROSS THE TRAINER

Over the past two seasons, Ross has gained a high rating on the UDR and average earnings list in New Zealand.

Over the past two terms, his two-year-olds have raced 69 times for 28 wins, eight seconds and six thirds, for \$529,918, and a massive 69 per cent placings.

In the 1998-99 season, Ross trained three individual winners - his only three horses to the races, to win 17 races, with nine placings in his homeland.

They were Tupelo Rose, Adios Dream and Surfing The Net.

He won another two races in Australia when Tupelo Rose won a heat and final of the Kay Seymour 2YO Nursery Pace Series at Albion Park.

In New Zealand, he won \$234,549 in stake-earnings and a further \$39,502 in Australia, totalling \$274,501.

Ross trained the winners of 14 two-year-old races which is a record by any trainer.

Then last season, he topped the average earnings per starter statistic of \$9477, which was twice as much as that of his closest rival, with 14 placings (including nine wins) from 27 starters.

WAYNE'S WORLD!

Wayne Ross is one of the most-successful trainers in New Zealand.

Recent star performers developed by the Ross stable include Courage Under Fire (3,

1:54.7; \$1million+, 6 Derbys, 24 straight wins from debut as 2YO), Tupelo Rose (3, 1:55.1, \$525,367, 4 Oaks), Adios Dream (2, 1:58.4; \$120,000, Group 2 New Zealand Welcome Stakes) and Hero (2,

1:58.8; \$130,235).

Other good Ross-made horses include Tupelo Miss (1:52.2), Not The Mama (13 wins, \$85,000), Versary (8 wins), Surfing The Net (6 wins) and Tupelo Khan (5 wins).



A: Courage Under Fire... Wayne Ross protege.

B: One with a future Hero.

C: Promising Gadgetman (3g, Jaguar Spur - Alicia Dundee)

D: Tupelo Rose winning the Seymour Nursery Pace for trainer Wayne Ross and driver Kevin Townley.

Preparing Young Horses

Ross keeps a band of 15 broodmares, some owned by stable clients, agisted at his property.

They are a well-bred gathering, and include Hollywood Rose, the dam of Tupelo Rose and Deborah Dundee (grand-dam of Courage Under Fire), the New Zealand Broodmare Excellence Award winner last year.

In this exclusive article, Ross profiles his training methods of young horses.

"I have 13 Australian-owned two-year-olds in work at the moment, and I expect several of them to measure up in the feature juvenile events on both sides of the Tasman.

"There's an art to campaigning young horses, especially when you're racing them in both New Zealand and Australia, as we did with Tupelo Rose, for example.

"I learned a lot about training during several years in the United States, where the emphasis is on keeping the horses sound, and equipping them to race and maintain the form for the whole season.

"You often see horses come-and-go during the season, but with all the big money that's about, there's an added bonus by keeping them up for as long as you can.

"There's a great case to be put for slow mile heat work, which

puts the 'legs' under the horse.

"This is tedious, but I feel that this is the reason that my stable horses try so hard and have very few leg problems.

"Following breaking-in, the yearlings are jogged for a month, building up to 40 minutes a day.

"My reasoning is that the legs of the young horses are better set to take the strain of gaiting-up with the rough steps and galloping which is associated with it.

"After a period of jogging, the yearlings are run up over 200m during the gaiting period. As soon as they run the furlong in 17s they are switched to a mile in 2:40.

"This stretches out to two one-mile heats in 2:40, three times for the week.

"After three weeks, this time should gradually be reduced to 2:20 in the second heat, at which time the horse should be turned

out for three weeks. During this time, they would still be hard fed, even during the 'down' time.

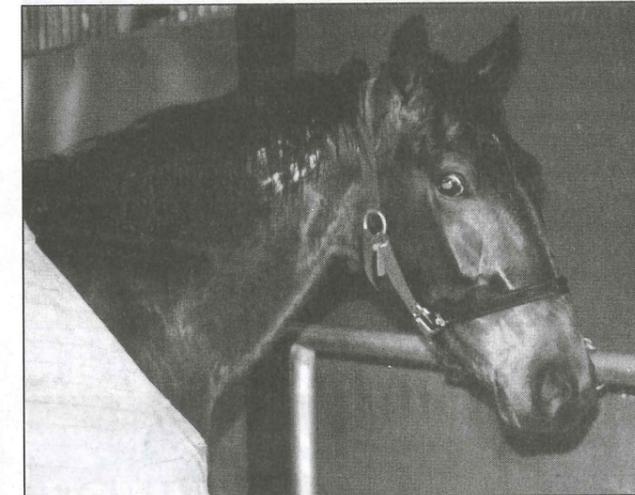
"When they come back into work, the horses would start at 2:20 and then down to 2:10 before another break, this time for a fortnight.

"At the time of the next resumption, they would switch

to a minimum until their third preparation when their legs are well-prepared to take the strain.

"I keep my track very slow with a lot of top on, which I believe is important in maintaining soundness.

"My yearlings are all kept shod very short in front to keep any pressure going straight up



Wayne Ross' best prospect, Hotrodlincoln (2g, Jaguar Spur - Deborah Lobel)

to 2400m in 3:30 and be taught to sprint in preparation for the trials.

"My tip is to keep speed work

the leg, and not on tendons and suspensories.

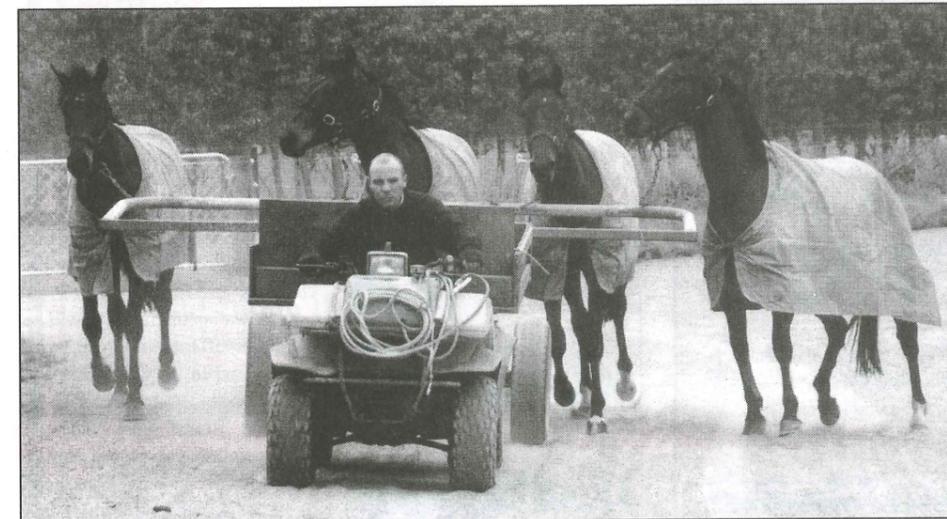
"I am fortunate to be situated on 63 acres of fully-irrigated top-grazing country pasture, well-sheltered by established trees, divided into 31 paddocks of similar size, and is fully electric-fenced.

"My property operates two training tracks, one a deep sand jogging track and the other a deep 800m track made to the latest American design.

"The total emphasis on the construction of the property is to create a safe, happy environment for young horses.

"Remember. If you look after your good young horse, your good young horse will look after you!

"Best of luck at the forthcoming yearling sales."



Worktime at North Canterbury

WAYNE ROSS' GUIDE TO YEARLING PREPARATION

When the yearling arrives at the farm or training establishment, give it a few days to become familiar with both its handlers and surroundings before breaking-in in commenced.

The horse is firstly introduced

to the girth and the bridle, and this is taken on-and-off during the course of the day.

When the horse is comfortable with the gear, sidereins and full blinds are added.

The horse is then let out into a small yard during the day with the

sidereins on and overcheck on.

After two days in the yard, upon acceptance of the gear, they are then let out into a small paddock, and continue to be put out every day until they learn to turn inside themselves.

That is when we start to begin the long-reining process. If they are mouthed properly in the paddock they come to the long-reining process very quickly.

We make every effort to have the horse turning and steering square with the absolute minimum pressure on the reins by using a lot of voice control.

Having reached this stage we then concentrate on spending time in teaching the horse manners in standing.

After three-four days of long-reining, the horse is then out in the cart and jogged for two-three laps. This is repeated over a period of three-four days until the horse displays perfect manners.

Once we have reached this stage, the horse will then be jogged on a jogging machine for the following four weeks building up to 10km per day.

On completion of the jogging stage, gaiting is then commenced.

I feel that one month's jogging builds a solid foundation in the legs in preparation for the gaiting process.

Due to the horse already having jogged previously we are able to commence training as soon as the horse is gaited.

During the course of gaiting, the horse is run over 200m to assess its' speed, and sort out its' shoeing.

Any horse that is going to come early and race young will quickly run 200m in 15s.

These methods along with very plain shoeing has meant that we will have virtually no leg problems with our young horses and that they wear the minimum of gear when they race.



Gadgetman (Inside) and Hero.

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SOLID MONTH AT NEWCASTLE

Newcastle races each Saturday night this month, with the feature event, the Stevedores Newcastle Cup set for December 16.

The C8+ event, run from the stand, is over 2550m, with the race record having been established by the American-bred Ultra Jet in 1994.

Trained and reined by David Aiken, 'The Jet' rated a slippery

1:57.6, which still stands as a world record.

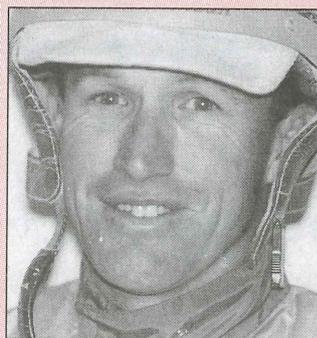
The Club has arranged for a disco open in the members bar area for patrons to stay and party after each meeting this month.

There's a lucky members draw which will take place on December 23, with a trip for two people to Surfers Paradise and a week's accommodation there for the taking. There's the same prize for the lucky racebook draw.

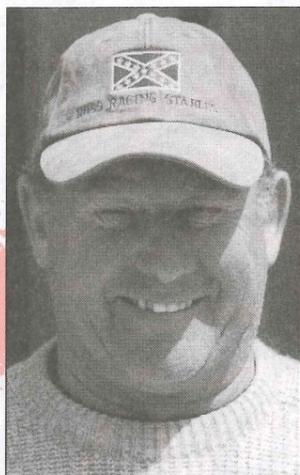
Santa Claus, of course, will be at the track with showbags for the children.

A Hawaiian theme party will be the order of December 30, with patrons asked to dress for the occasion.

While you're there visit the Hunter Valley harness museum at the Paceway, housing thousands of items, as well as a children's playroom.



David Aiken



YEARLING SELECTION

The Wayne Ross way...

New Zealander Wayne Ross has a second-to-none record when it comes to yearling purchase and selection. Ross is widely-regarded as an expert handler of young horses, as evidenced by his deeds with the likes of Courage Under Fire, Tupelo Rose, Hero, Adios Dream and many others.

Here, in part two of his guide to buying better yearlings, Ross shares his secrets:

“When looking to buy a yearling for a client I usually break the exercise down to five categories - pedigree, family performance, crosses, conformation and run-up.”

I have detailed each category as follows.

Pedigree

This is my first priority. In the breeding on the dam side I look for an unbroken line of top sires.

I am not so concerned with the performance of the first three dams as long as they are by the top sires of their day.

My reasoning on this is that I feel if there is a line with no weak links the dam of the yearling has a good chance to leave a top performer.

I would buy a yearling out of an unraced mare by a top sire over one whose dam was a good performer but by an obscure sire.

Family Performances

I like to buy from families where the stock have performed at two and three.

I would buy from families where progeny have been two-year-old triallists and three-year-old winners over families that have left older performers.

My feeling is that if the dams could run early then their progeny have a far better chance of doing the same.

Crosses

I like to buy yearlings that are bred on proven crosses that have worked in the United States, especially when I am looking at

the progeny of unproven stallions.

For example, if I am looking to buy progeny from a son of No Nukes I would prefer it to be out of a mare by a son of Albatross as the No Nukes-Albatross cross was one of the most prolific in the USA.



At rest - members of the Wayne Ross squad.

I have had a lot of success breeding and buying, by following close to what works in the States.

When the cross becomes proven Down Under then the price of the progeny bred on that cross becomes very expensive so

the trick is to work out what crosses gel before it is general knowledge.

Conformation

Once I have studied the pedigrees and crosses I go to look at the yearling itself; I

initially look at conformations.

I have no preference for big or small as long as they are well put-together. As I specialise in racing young horses, I like individuals that are not too open in the knees and that have neat feet.

I also like them to have a slightly thoroughbred look to the head.

If the pedigree and cross on a horse are first class then I will be a little more forgiving on the conformation than I would be on a yearling of lesser pedigree.

I steer clear of yearlings that look like they might curb, as they usually can't stand the pressure of early two-year-old racing.

In short, I like a horse with presence and personality that is on the fine side and as a rule of thumb, not too big framed.

Running Up

The next stage is to have the horses run up. This is where you look for horses that swing a leg and might have the potential to hit



All in a days work at the Wayne Ross property.

In my mind, this is where they show how athletic they are.

When I looked at Hero as a yearling he had several things that I didn't like. He was big, open-kneed with big feet, however his cross with In The Pocket was first class - he was arrogant and a little heavy.

However, when he was run up he was as light on his feet as a

ballet dancer, with a beautiful way of moving and he carried himself really well.

So in this case my decision was made by the pedigree and the run up.

Summary

If you are contemplating a yearling sale purchase it is advisable to enlist the help of a

trainer in your selection.

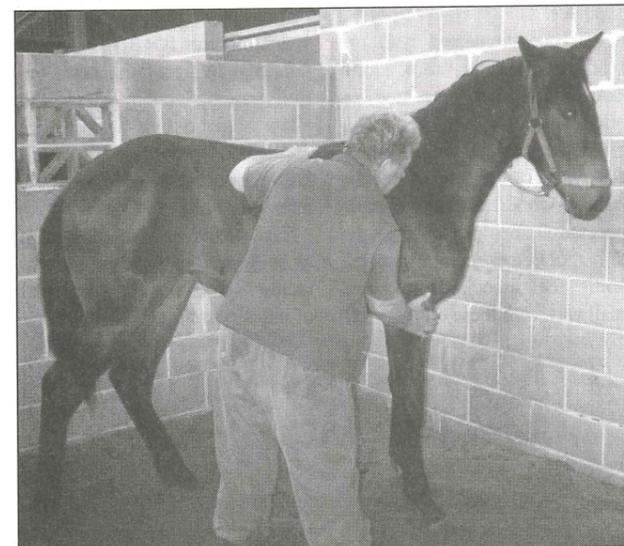
This would preferably be one with some breeding background to maximise the chance of your purchase being successful.

In addition, many trainers have a gut feeling on a horse, that over-rides all factors and is usually on or close to the mark.

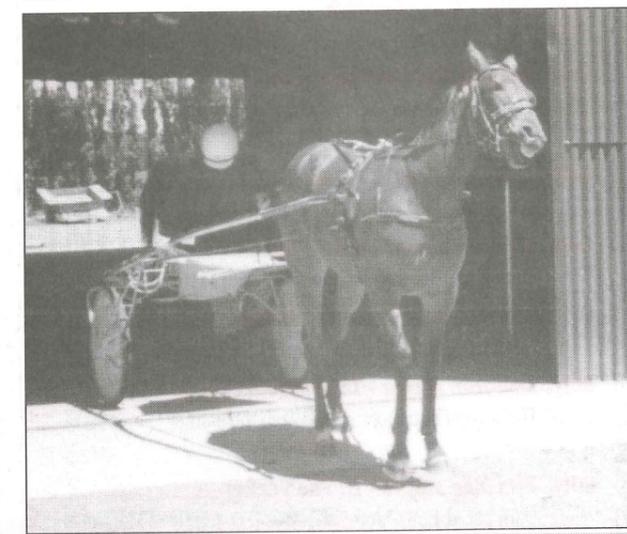
The next and most important task is to place your horse with a stable that is successful in

breaking in and developing young stock. Many purchases have been ruined by bad handling after their purchase.

All trainers have a different criteria for selecting their yearlings which is what makes the sales so interesting but the above is what I look for when I am trying to buy competitive two and three-year-old classic horses.



Wayne Ross with a yearling full-sister to Courage Under Fire, by In The Pocket from Advance Debra, named Erin Brockovich.



Time for trackwork - first day in the cart for an Albert Albert - Deborah Lobell yearling.



Hose down time as the gear comes off.

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