

# HORSE WELFARE QUARTERLY UPDATE

Horse welfare is at the heart of Harness Racing New Zealand. From rehoming programs to on-course emergency care, every initiative we invest in reflects our commitment to supporting owners and trainers in giving every Standardbred the best chance at a safe, supported, and meaningful life during racing and on retirement.

## HERO UPDATE

- 8 horses through the programme.
- 8 SOLD, every horse that entered the programme during this quarter has been rehomed.
- First Lesson Subsidy recipient was Margo Harris, she enjoyed a valuable lesson aboard Dangerous (Tommy), a SB sold through the HERO programme. The lesson was conducted by Julia of Flying Horse, Invercargill.



- The HERO Ridden Showing Award concluded on 31 April
  1. Michelangelo – ridden by Taylah Dolan
  2. Royal Runabout (raced as Swift And Smart) – ridden by Edie Van Der Vis
  3. Willow Bay — ridden by Sarah Kirk



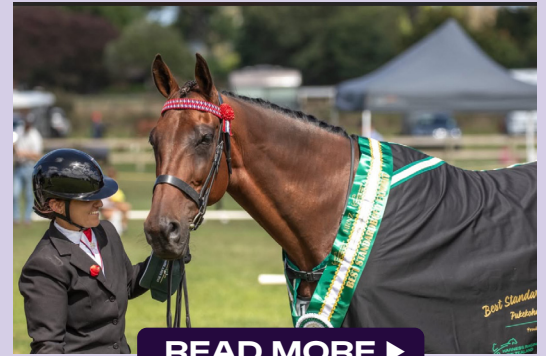
- The NZSBA Inhand Showing Award concluded on 31 April
  1. Macklemore (raced as King Chevron) – handler Davinia MacDonald
  2. Outstanding Lad (raced as Washington Whisper) – handler Angie Stringer
  3. Does It On His Ear – handler Chanelle Dickie



## LIFE AFTER RACING STORIES

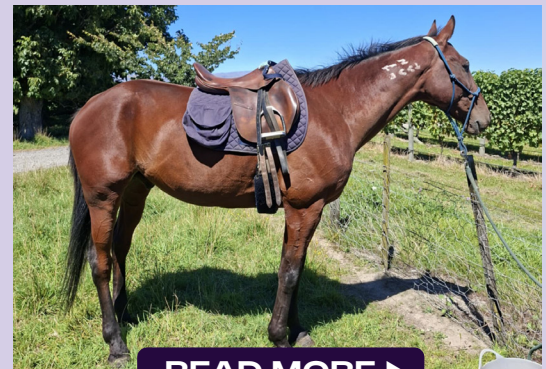
To read more about these standardbreds in their life after racing please follow the links.

### DARBYLEA AND BUSTER – “HE’S MY HEART HORSE”



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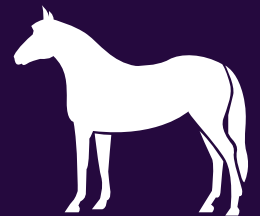
### ROCKY, WITH SARAH JANE HAUGHEY – “NEW ADVENTURES LOOM FOR ROCKY”



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## LIFE AFTER RACING GRANTS

**6**  
REHOMERS  
**\$6,328**



## REHOMING GRANTS

**70** HORSES  
REHOMED

**\$13,500**

given to our Routine Care Grant Rehomers



FEBRUARY – APRIL 2026

## EVENT SPONSORSHIP

Franklin A&P Show held a Best Standardbred Exhibit and this was sponsored by HRNZ and Woodlands Stud. This was won by Darbylea Allard and Buster (Sunny Pegasus)



HERO Sponsored the Best Performed Standardbred at the ESNZ Endurance and CTR National Championships. This award was won by Bridget Woodward and Jade (Huchi Baby)



HERO sponsored the Best Placed Standardbred at the Distance Riding Championships. This was won by Lynda Stevenson and Wendy's Shadow.



*thank you*



**Best Placed Standardbred**  
**Lynda Stevenson & Wendys Shadow**

Two years ago I reached out to some friends looking for an urgent loaner horse to ride at a low level endurance event, as my regular horse suffered a paddock injury. I was given the opportunity to take a look at five OTT Standardbreds sitting in a paddock looking for new homes. I chose Wendy's Shadow. I knew nothing about her other than she was a 4 year old had been backed at some stage and had a hack out in the forest at some point.

"I'll take that one" I said. She was tall at 17hh and very under developed. She had her first outing with me doing a 20km at Thornton Beach after getting to know her for a week. I fell in love and she ended up staying with me to become my regular Endurance mare.

Her attitude and work ethic is honest and brave. She will always give what she can and more if needed. Still young and green at times she has finally complete her first 40km RTT at the Lochinvar Champs.

I would like to say a big thank you and so much appreciation for the DRNZ organisers, volunteers and all others not mentioned running the DRNZ Championship. They go way above and beyond to make these events happen. And of course our fabulous Landowners that allow us the privilege of riding over some of the most amazing land in the country.

I would also like to say a very special thank you to Harness Racing NZ. They have allowed the greatest opportunity for my lovely big mare to be recognised for her brave and consistent effort in her new career as my Distance Riding Horse. Without those of us willing to give these wonderful Standardbreds a chance at something else in life, who knows what would have become of my Wendy's Shadow.

### HORSE AMBULANCE

The horse ambulance service attended 83 harness race meetings in this quarter with 100% attendance. There were five deployments on race day for an injured horse, and one was transported the next day to an equine hospital.

A driver training day was held in April at Breckon Farms.

It was an opportunity to discuss race-day incident response and working as a team with the Race-day Vet, RIB, Track Manager, and barrier or start crews. Trustee Dr Peter Gillespie has a special interest in technical large-animal rescue and demonstrated the techniques and equipment for safely rescuing a trapped horse. Preparedness is a key factor for an efficient, effective response on race day and there is a commitment to ongoing development in this area.

