

Media Release

30 October 2012

Choise Achiever withdrawn from NZ Cup

Choise Achiever won't get his shot at one of the toughest doubles in harness racing.

Trainer Tim Butt has withdrawn the gelding from the Christchurch Casino New Zealand Trotting Cup today after his poor run in yesterday's Kaikoura Cup. Butt says Choise Achiever was still troubled by a virus which hit him two weeks ago, which he had thought the pacer was over.

"We had his blood done last week and it was perfect so I thought he was fine," said Butt.

"But when we got his checked out this morning his lungs were full of gunk again so he is out of the Cup."

Choise Achiever downed Auckland Reactor in this year's Hunter Cup, the closest thing Australia has to the New Zealand Cup conditions-wise. But very few horses have managed the Hunter Cup-New Zealand Cup double, especially in recent years, although theoretically it should be easier now the New Zealand Cup is a free-for-all.

"It just goes to show how hard it is to keep them healthy and at their peak at this level," said Butt.

"Choise Achiever was always a little bit on the back foot with his Cup campaign anyway so he can have a let up now and head to Australia with me next month.

"He seems to thrive over there and he will have plenty of targets."

His withdrawal leaves Butt with two Cup contenders in Mah Sish and Stunin Cullen, with the latter being freshened up.

"He isn't racing as good as he was a couple of years ago but in the Flying Stakes, Fly Like An Eagle sat on his back and couldn't run past him.

"So he isn't too far away but I am taking him to the beach and keeping him fresh and happy."

Mah Sish has been kept fresh in the build-up to Addington on Friday night.

"He is really well and he is our best chance in the Cup.

"He is a great stayer and the 3200m will suit and he has the manners.

"He is a great place chance in the Cup but needs to improve two lengths to be a real winning chance against Terror To Love.

"But he is in that group just behind Terror To Love who can win."

The latest rankings released yesterday, coupled with Choise Achiever's scratching, see Major Mark, Jarcullembra and Ohoka Texas all in the field, with Pure Power sitting as first emergency.

By Michael Guerin