



# The Carbiner

**"For sport and for good fellowship"**



(Pic courtesy NZHOF)

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CARBINE CLUB

**EDITION 3 of 2021- 18 March**

**In This Edition:**

**ACT Racing Luncheon – by Paul Walshe, Secretary, CCACT  
The Story of Carbine ~ courtesy Victoria Racing Club  
Hong Kong Events Calendar (30th Anniversary Year)**

**COMING EVENTS**



## ACT Racing Luncheon

On Friday 5 March The Carbine Club of the ACT in partnership with the Canberra Racing Club held their annual Racing Luncheon at the National Press Club of Australia. The luncheon coincided with the Canberra Racing Carnival that was held at Thoroughbred Park on Sunday 7 March featuring the Group 3 Black Opal Stakes and Monday 8 March where the feature race was the Listed Canberra Cup.

A full room of 180 people in attendance gave special guest Racing Hall of Famer and 3 time Melbourne Cup winning Jockey Glen Boss a very warm welcome.

Bossy had the full attention of the room as he spoke about his early days in Queensland, his move to the big smoke in Sydney, the horrific fall in Macau in 2002 that nearly ended his career and onto his wonderful association with Makybe Diva winning the 2003, 2004 and 2005 Melbourne Cups.



Bossy (pictured at left being interviewed by MC Paul Walshe) is a wonderful ambassador for racing and it would be fitting for him to win one more Melbourne Cup and join the great Bobby Lewis and Harry White.

We were also fortunate to have again TAB's one and only Glenn Munsie host the racing panel which included Carbine Clubs very own Michael Heath, local trainers Joe Cleary and Barbara Joseph and Racing and Sports Simon Dinopoulos. This expert panel gave out their tips for the racing carnival which included a couple of good priced winners.



Members John Smeeth' John Wells & Doug Edwards



Member John Metcalf with Glen Boss

Thanks to Canberra trainers Barbara Joseph, Paul and Matt Jones for providing the auction item at the luncheon, a 5% share in a two-year old filly by Shamus Award out of the mare Bendaree Hera. Auctioneer Joe Cleary had everyone on their toes with the winning bidder paying \$3,250 and all proceeds going towards the 2021 Carbine Club Scholarship.

A great afternoon was had by all with a number of members and their guests continuing on the festivities to well into the night.



Allan Williams \* & Mac Howell



Club President Cade Brown with Jaye Smith

Club member Allan Williams AM (pictured above) was recently honoured for significant service to business tourism and to the community; Allan is a long term member and committeeman of CCACT

## More Carbine History



Following the story in the last edition telling of the formation of the Carbine Club we sought and were given permission by the VRC to reproduce a story from the VRC's 2020 Melbourne Cup Magazine.- our thanks to the VRC for sharing this story with us.

Written by VRC Lexus Melbourne Cup Tour Manager and VRC Ambassador At Large, Joe McGrath, the story retraces arguably the most significant Cup victory, the 1890 Melbourne Cup won by CARBINE.

The cover page of the magazine (at left) featured Carbine detail from the History of Thoroughbred Mural by Harold Freeman. Source VRC

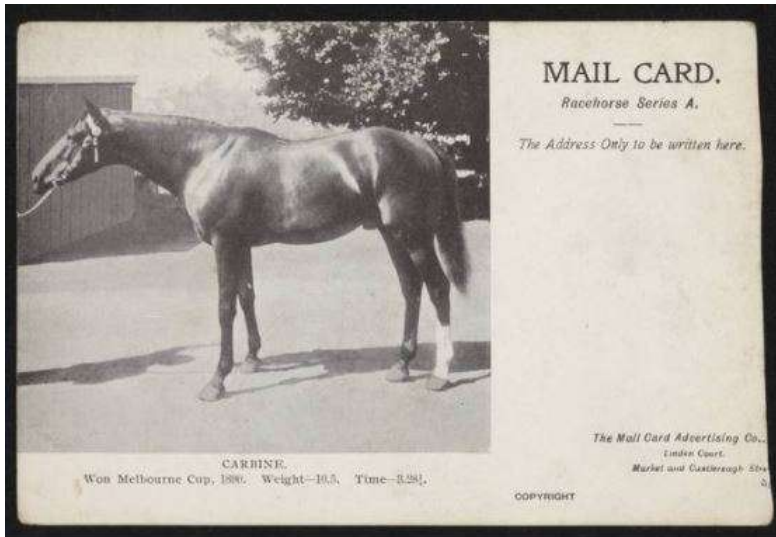
### Old Jack was the toast of the Town!

If horse racing was a popularity contest, Carbine would win most times. In fact, I think he did that regardless courtesy of a 76% (33 from 43 starts) win loss ratio? But 'Old Jack' – as he was known - was unique; a people's horse; a horse of enormous character who drove punters to the track and reached lofty heights as a result of his performances. None more spectacular than his win in the 1890 Melbourne Cup. Carrying the extraordinary impost of 10 stone 5 pounds (65.7kgs), Carbine would take on and beat, not only the greatest Melbourne Cup field size on record (39 runners), but a quality opposition. He would face-off against the outstanding Melos (a dual classic winner); 1890 Caulfield Cup winner in Vengeance; 1890 VRC Derby winner, The Admiral and subsequent 1893 Melbourne Cup winner, Tarcoola.

And, while not obvious to the casual observer, Carbine, arguably the greatest thoroughbred to race in Australia outside of Phar Lap, had to do it the hard way, such was his custom through life. And under different circumstances, he may never have existed at all!

His sire, Musket, was owned by the Earl of Glasgow who had the unfortunate tendency to 'do away' with any horse that didn't quite show early promise. Musket was categorised in the slow group and if not for the timely – or untimely, depending how you look at it – death of his owner, he was saved. Musket raced on to show modest ability winning 9 races including The Ascot Stakes (2½ miles).





He stood at stud in the UK but was sold to NZ after a couple of brief seasons after lack of support from breeders. As often is the case, as soon as he left for NZ on a mission to sire coach horses, he 'came good' siring the 1880 GB 2000 Guineas winner, Petronel.

*(Carbine Post Card)*

In New Zealand, he struck immediate success through the 1883 Melbourne Cup winner, Martini Henry (out of 1867 VRC Oaks winner, Sylvia); the 1885 AJC – VRC Derby winner, Nordenfelt and the highly talented, Trenton (3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 1885 and 1886 Melbourne Cups respectively), who would become a sire of influence in his own right. But it would be the Musket mating to the well-bred yet unraced, Mersey that would bring on his most noted son, Carbine. Born on the 18<sup>th</sup> September, 1885 at Sylvia Park Stud (Auckland), Carbine was described as the lightest bay of all Musket's stock. Not much to look at but well built in the right areas with a long back; good shoulders and long rein. Typical of the Musket breed, his head was anything but classical with some suggesting he threw more to Knowsley, the sire of Mersey and a son of the classic winner, Stockwell. Carbine was sold by his breeders at the 1887 Sylvia Park Sale to trainer Dan O'Brien for 620 Guineas.

While not a great walker, he could gallop winning his first five starts mainly around the Riccarton (Christchurch) area on the South Island of New Zealand where he was trained.

He didn't spend too much longer in New Zealand before heading to the 1888 Flemington spring meeting where he was beaten a head, first up, by Ensign in the Victoria Derby. Carbine was reported to be winning with ease when New Zealand jockey Bob Derrett dropped his hands in the concluding stages of the race only to be picked up in the last stride by Ensign, ridden by the champion Australian jockey, Tom Hales. Hales would win six of his seven VRC Derbies between 1880 and 1890. Derrett would cop more than a fair spray from O'Brien as well and the paying public who vehemently vented their displeasure.

As was always the plan, Dan O'Brien would sell after the Derby and, flush from victory in the 1888 Melbourne Cup with Mentor, Donald Wallace – a VRC Committeeman and prominent owner – would purchase the colt for 3000 guineas. A sizeable amount at the time, Wallace would be akin to a roulette player on a roll going all up on the next to find his luck had struck again. He was in a purple patch, but that wouldn't last forever.



After two more wins at the Flemington Spring Meeting and a transfer of ownership, Carbine changed trainers to the well regarded Walter Hickenbotham (*pictured at left – Australian Racing Museum*) who would land four Melbourne Cup winners in his illustrious career. Mentor (1888) being his first.

Carbine, showing his versatility, almost secured the time honoured VRC Newmarket Hcp (6 furlongs) first up for his new stable the following autumn. As was his way, he would soon break and hold track records at seven and ten furlongs and ultimately two and three miles. He was perfectly suited to what you might call 'tempo style'

racing and would win adeptly at two miles as he was at a mile. He had a unique turn of foot. But, that nearly all came to nothing courtesy of a cracked heel. This would be the challenge for Hickenbotham, least not Carbine, throughout his entire career.

Carbine (10 stone) would finish second to the lighter weighted Bravo (8st 7lbs) in the 1889 Melbourne Cup beaten a length. Not looking for excuses, it needs to be said Carbine conceded 19 lbs (9.5 kgs) to Bravo; suffered a split heel in running and was ridden by a jockey, Mick O'Brien who suffered an asthma attack half through the race! O'Brien openly admitted he rendered himself 'useless' over the concluding stages of the race. Just saying.

Carbine would win 12 of his next 14 starts including five within 7 days in the autumn including the Sydney Cup (two miles); the All Aged Stakes (one mile) and the Cumberland Stakes (two miles). The latter two were on the same day at Randwick on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1890.

By the time the 1890 Melbourne Cup came around Carbine's reputation was such that he would be allotted 10 stone five pounds (65.7kg) in the two mile handicap. And by this stage, his quirky and eccentric character was fully exposed.

A tendency to lash out at his rivals if in fact he was beaten was not unusual; as was his aversion to water falling on his head prompting connections to custom build a miniature umbrella that would sit on his head to protect him from the elements. But it would be his tendency to freeze when going onto the track that would become his ultimate party trick.



CARBINE'S FAREWELL

He would stop; prop and gaze into the distance waiting for the raucous applause of the crowd or, more commonly, a small umbrella open and shut near his feet. Like a lot of the great horses, he knew he was pretty good and he didn't mind playing up to it. And the crowd loved it.

When the 1890 Melbourne Cup came by, there was tension in the air built on high expectation following an effortless performance in the Melbourne Stakes the Saturday before. Despite his huge weight, Carbine, was sent out a hot favourite (4/1). He would give all of his rivals weight and still get home by 2½ lengths under the guidance of Bob Ramage. His time of 3:28.25 would be a race record and it was not lost on the analysts, that second placed Highborn would win the 1891 Sydney Cup carrying 9st 3lbs (58.5kgs) the following autumn. Carbine would give him 52.9lbs (24kgs) in the 1890 Melbourne Cup and still beat him by 2½ lengths!



*(1890 Melbourne Cup – courtesy VRC)*

On the day, the most seasoned of racegoer was seen to throw their hats into the air and others wept openly while an enterprising group looked to pluck hairs off the tail of a national favourite. His win was applauded far and wide and everyone wanted a piece of the champ. He landed some sizeable bets on the day none more so than that by a young nineteen year old Melburnian named John Wren, who became famous for ruffling the feathers of the Melbourne establishment in years to come.

It was Carbine's Cup win which gave him enough cash to chase his entrepreneurial pursuits extracting him from the impoverished life in Collingwood, a working class suburb of Melbourne. Wren would die in 1953, aged 83, leaving an estate in excess of £2million – an absolute fortune at the time reportedly the

richest man in Australia. It would be Wren who would be the original owner of the land which Sandown Racecourse (Springvale) is currently housed.

For Carbine, the cracked heel continued to cause havoc reducing him to only seven more race starts post his 1890 Cup win, winning six. But like most aspects of his life he showed enormous heart not allowing his imperfections to become an issue. Certainly not race-day.

Carbine was retired to Donald Wallace's Lerderderg Stud in Bacchus Marsh, Victoria standing at 200 guineas and on serving his first mare, Melodious the aptly named Wallace would be conceived. Wallace would win the 1895 Victoria Derby, VATC Caulfield Guineas - among other races - and become one of the leading Australian sires from the turn of the century for over a 15 year period. He would sire Melbourne Cup winners Kingsburgh (1914) and Patrobas (1915) – a rare prize that escaped his illustrious sire.

Sadly for his name sake, Donald Wallace would fall on hard times as the depression of the 1890s hit hard.

As a consequence, Carbine was sold to the Duke of Portland in the UK for 13,000 guineas to stand alongside the great St Simon at Welbeck Abbey. Over 7000 fans would farewell the champ on Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> April, 1895 as he loaded onto the RMS Orizaba at Port Melbourne bound for the motherland. And not before a final performance as he baulked the runaway and refused to take up his position.

Although not regarded as a huge success in the UK, Carbine did sire English Derby winner in Spearmint (1906 GB Derby); Ascot Gold Cup winner Bomba and Kings' Stand winner Camp Fire. He would also sire Greatorrex (Champion South African sire 10 times) and Ramrod (among leading French sires), Pistol (leading Australian sire) and of course, Wallace as well as Amberite (1897 Caulfield Cup) and La Carabine (1900 Sydney Cup) in Australia.

While the Duke of Portland may not have acknowledged it, time would record Carbine as one of the most influential sires of all time weaving his way into the pedigree of the great Nearco, the unbeaten Italian Derby winner who has had a profound influence on the modern day thoroughbred through the likes of Northern Dancer. Each year, upwards of ninety percent of the Melbourne Cup field will trace their way back to the 1890 Cup winner.



Carbine lumped the most weight to victory in a Melbourne Cup. He also did it courtesy of a chronic heel problem. He found his way on a boat to the UK and fought off a colic attack in Colombo, Sri Lanka. He lived a grand old life to the age of 29 but came to an untimely death courtesy of a brain haemorrhage.



'Old Jack' made the difficult look easy and uniquely did it his way. He was a true character of the turf. 130 years on and as each field assembles for the Melbourne Cup, we remember him as a galloper of enormous talent and unquestionably the most influential Cup winner in the history of the race. His expanded legacy is proof beyond doubt that he is one of the all-time greats.



**Our thanks to Joe and the VRC!**

### Coming Events

**VIC** -25 March – MO Lunch at Grossi Florentine

**QLD** – 23 April – AGM

**QLD** – 24 April – 40th Anniversary of CCQ, Gold Coast Turf Club

**SA** – Goodwood Day Lunch, 14 May

**VIC** -15 July – CC Delegates Meeting, RACV and 60th Anniversary Dinner, Australian Club

**VIC**- 21 Sep – AFL Grand Final Luncheon, Crown Palladium

**VIC** - 29 October – VRC Derby Day Luncheon, Crown Palladium

### Carbine Club of Hong Kong -2021 Events Calendar

Shaun Tibbatts, Secretary of CCHK, has sent thru the Club's schedule of events which follows – included in the schedule is a major event in that the Hong Kong Jockey Club has agreed to host a race in honour of CCHK's 30th Anniversary. The Carbine Club Cup will be run at Sha Tin on the 5th of December , 2021, a week ahead of the international races.

- Carbine Club Hong Kong AGM & Members Dinner - Friday 28th May 6pm, (HK Club, Victoria Suite). If Social distancing situation does not change by then this meeting will be via Zoom.
- New Members Reception - Thursday 24th June 6pm (Dot Cod)
- Members Wine Dinner – July/August Date TBD (CWC)
- Members Racing Night - Wednesday 22nd September 2021, Happy Valley (Box E414)
- Members Golf Day - Friday 8th October, Shek O
- Hong Kong Rugby Sevens Lunch - Friday 5th November 2021 (HKFC)
- 30th Anniversary Carbine Cup Race - Sunday 5th December, Sha Tin (Box D173)
- Hong Kong International Races Lunch - Friday 10th December (Grand Hyatt)