



June 16, 2009

Scenic Blast the talk of Ascot

Word is spreading in the UK that Australia's newest international invader, Scenic Blast, might have the locals covered in the Group 1 King's Stand Stakes at Royal Ascot today (Tuesday).

The Perth-trained sprinter, winner of the Lightning Stakes and Newmarket Handicap Group 1 double in the Melbourne Autumn, has been the focus of huge support and plenty of attention from the experts over the past week. He has firmed on international exchanges and is expected to press boom three-year-old Armour Propre for favouritism by race time.

At The Races form expert Hugh Taylor has been strong in his support of Scenic Blast, telling viewers the four-year-old's superior Australian sprint form and his strong finish made him the horse to beat over the straight 1000m course.

"We've got a horse called Scenic Blast from Australia and he's my idea of the winner," Taylor said in his race preview. "This horse seems very well suited by a straight track and a strong pace. He travels really strongly during a race and he's got a real acceleration kick. This is a horse that's going to track the strong pace, he's going to love the straight track and he's a Group 1 winner and we know that we've got to respect these Australian horses."

Scenic Blast is a straight-track specialist who is out to continue the tradition set by Australians Choisir in 2003, Takeover Target in 2006 and Miss Andretti in 2007. His credentials stack up well alongside all of those champions, taking scintillating form overseas and a proven ability to run home hard at the end of a straight sprint.

Lee Freedman's Miss Andretti holds the King's Stand race record at 57.44, more than two seconds or 12 lengths faster than the average winning time.

The King's Stand will be shown live as part of Sky Racing's complete coverage of this year's Royal Ascot meeting. It is the second of three Group 1 races tonight and is set to run at 12.05am. NSW and Victoria TAB will wager on all races at this year's carnival.