

Caroline Searcy  
Racing Broadcaster



Caroline Searcy is the host and producer of two programs on Australian Thoroughbred racing channel Sky Racing Australia: Bred to Win and Thoroughbreds are Go. Bred to Win promotes the Thoroughbred breeding industry, focusing on stallion profiles, yearling sale previews and feature stories on the great race mares and their foals. Thoroughbreds are Go aims to promote the great athleticism of the Thoroughbred away from racing, with education for the racing owner and the equestrian world about the best care for off-the-track Thoroughbreds.

Having worked for 30 years in broadcast media, Searcy traveled from Adelaide to Darwin to work as a radio newsreader, journalist and sports panelist. From there she worked in television and radio news rooms, with a particular focus on sports journalism.

Employed for a decade as the senior newsreader and producer at Fox Sports News, Searcy spent 10 years with national horse racing broadcaster TVN as host of Sydney's bi-weekly race-meetings as well as many carnival meetings in Melbourne, in particular the Melbourne Cup carnivals.

Searcy is the incoming chair of the Carbine Club of NSW and is on the committee of Thoroughbred Breeders' New South Wales as well as being a judge in the Australian Stud and Stable Staff Awards.

AIDAN BUTLER  
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, 1/ST RACING  
PRESIDENT, 1/ST CONTENT



An expert in technology, horse racing and gaming, Aidan Butler currently serves as both the Chief Operating Officer of 1/ST Racing and President of 1/ST Content.

In these roles, Mr. Butler is responsible for the further development of the company's world-class racing programs and national content offerings and aligning the company's North American and international content businesses. During a transformative time in horseracing, Butler was responsible for the implementation of industry-leading health and safety protocols for horses and riders at Santa Anita Park while overseeing track management and operations at the company's West Coast venues. In addition, Butler was responsible for the development of key stakeholder and strategic relationships and most recently for leading Santa Anita Park successfully through the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Originally from England, Mr. Butler followed in his grandfather and father's footsteps to become a licensed bookmaker in the U.K., before relocating to the United States. He currently resides in Florida.

Martin Burns  
General Manager, Welfare & Sustainability, New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing



Martin Burns works for New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR) in the role of general manager of Welfare & Sustainability, having previously held the role of general manager of Racing & Thoroughbred Welfare. Thoroughbred welfare issues have been a core focus, with the effort and the development of New Zealand's Thoroughbred welfare standards being a key foundation. These standards were used as a basis for the International Federation of Horseracing Authority's standards released in 2020.

Through his work in the racing industry, Burns is a founding trustee and the chairman of the New Zealand Horse Ambulance Trust, which was established in 2016 and is well on its way to a goal of operating a national fleet of 10 horse ambulances for attendance at racing and sport horse events. Burns is also a representative member of the New Zealand Equine Health Association, trustee of the New Zealand Equine Education Trust, and a past trustee of the New Zealand Equine Research Foundation.

Before starting with NZTR in 2014, Martin worked in strategy and stakeholder relations roles for the New Zealand Racing Board, which was at that time the peak racing authority and New Zealand's wagering operator through the TAB brand.

Burns has spoken previously on Thoroughbred issues at the 2018 IFAR conference in Seoul, South Korea, and online at the 2020 World Veterinary Association Congress.

Simon Cooper  
Director, Weatherbys, General Stud Book



Simon Cooper has worked in the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and New Zealand in administration, corporate governance and communication roles at a senior level, predominantly within horse racing-related businesses. He has worked for Weatherbys since 2016 in the role of director, the General Stud Book. He is also company secretary. His international roles include vice chairman, International Stud Book Committee; co-chairman, European and African Stud Book Committee; and member of Executive Council, International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA). He also sits on the tripartite EU Task Force for Brexit and the Animal Health Law established by the Fédération Equestre Internationale and IFHA.

Before joining Weatherbys, Cooper worked for New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing Inc. (2004 to 2016) in the role of company secretary and member of the Senior Management Team. Other roles in New Zealand included board member of the NZ Equine Health Association and Board member of the NZ Equine Research Foundation. Prior to New Zealand, he worked for Attheraces PLC in London (2001-2004) as its communications director. Before that, he served as corporate affairs secretary and head of the International Department and secretary-general, Asian Racing Federation, at the Hong Kong Jockey Club (1994-2001).

Cooper is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (FCIS) & has a diploma in business administration from Henley Business School.

Dr. Anna Smet  
Manager, Animal Welfare, Racing and Wagering Western Australia



Dr. Anna Smet is the manager of Animal Welfare at Racing and Wagering Western Australia (RWWA) and is responsible for developing and overseeing initiatives to ensure that the Western Australian racing industry works toward its mission of providing the current and best standards of care to racing animals during all stages of their lives.

Smet has a doctorate in animal social cognition from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and over a decade of experience in working with a range of different animal species in the animal care industry, research, and welfare and rehoming contexts. Smet undertook research in Zimbabwe where she studied wild and captive African elephants.

Before joining RWWA in 2019, Anna held previous roles at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia and the Western Australian Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

As part of her current role, Smet oversees the Off the Track WA Estate and Retraining Program.