

Charmer Lodge

75 MacPherson Road LONDONDERRY NSW

Phone: 02 4572 0096 Fax: 02 4574 0097 Mobile: 0418 687 553 or 0408 444 445



NEWS – APRIL 2006

CHARMER LODGE FEATURE NEWS - APRIL 2006 KON KOLA & CHARMER LODGE JOIN FORCES

2 April, 2006.

Kon Kola has taken another major step towards his vision of establishing a world-class stud operation with the announcement that he is joining forces with Steve and Marree Gyftos, the highly respected proprietors of leading NSW stud Charmer Lodge.

Hot on the heels of his purchase of Melbourne Cup hero Closing Argument, Kola revealed exclusively to The Recorder this week that he had reached an agreement that will see Steve and Marree Gyftos, along with a number of their powerful Charmer Lodge stud team, join forces with Kon Kola Racing Australia.

The commencement of Kola's partnership with the Gyftoses will coincide with the forthcoming opening of his new stud, to be known as Triple Crown Lodge, which will be situated at Londonderry, on the fully licensed property Kola recently purchased from legendary trainer Jim Coleman.

Steve and Marree Gyftos will replace John Carruthers, who has been stud manager for Kon Kola Racing Australia since June last year when Kola made the decision to relocate his stud dogs Hallucinate and Placard from Rocky Ridge Farm to Carruthers' Journey Park Stud.

Since then Kola has purchased brilliant Victorian speedster Closing Argument, which he intends to retire to stud following the fast-approaching Golden Easter Egg series, while he is also standing 2004 Australian Greyhound Of The Year Whisky Assassin for the champion sprinter's owner Terry Hines.

Kola expects Triple Crown Lodge to be operational within three months, at which time the Gyftoses will start their new duties, while a number of the Charmer Lodge stud team will also be transferred, ensuring Australia's newest stud will offer a sires' roster second to none

"Steve and Marree are as keen as mustard to come on board and we're absolutely delighted to have them join us," Kola told The Recorder.

"We've enjoyed a great relationship with John Carruthers and we offered him the job on a couple of occasions, however he chose not to take the position.

"John has done a great job in getting our stud operation off and running and we're grateful for the work he has put in. He came on board to kick us off and now that he's done that he is keen to do his own thing, including expanding his racing interests, while he'll still be standing Bond for Bruce Fletcher.

"The new stud will be as good as any in the world and this is the step we needed to take in order to get to where we want to be. It will be a facility the industry can be proud of.

"Marree will be doing the frozen semen and Steve will be serving the bitches, and they'll be able to

concentrate on the stud dogs because we'll be handling everything else, the administration, advertising, etc.

"With the impending addition of Closing Argument and a number of Charmer Lodge stud dogs there's no doubt we will have the best stud lineup in the country, if we haven't got that already.

"We already do far more services than any other stud and that figure will increase substantially when you add the Gyftos stud dogs into the equation, while we have also purchased County Willee and Placard is returning from Queensland.

"There is a misconception within the industry that we are out there trying to buy everything, but I've said many times before that our aim isn't to be the biggest, it's to be the best. We are about quality not quantity and the fact there are provisions for only ten stud dogs on the new property should underline that."

Steve and Marree Gyftos have welcomed the opportunity to work with Kola as his quest to establish greyhound racing's version of the famed Coolmore thoroughbred breeding operation continues.

"We are very pleased that this opportunity has come along and are very happy to be on board with Kon," Marree Gyftos said.

"Kon is eventually going to be the biggest player in the stud game, if he isn't already, and we are excited about being part of what he has planned.

"Kon needed to find a replacement for John Carruthers and we were happy with the way negotiations went. In 2005 we had a 96 percent strike rate at getting bitches in pup and I think that was attractive to Kon.

"Business at Charmer Lodge will carry on as normal until Kon's new place is up and running, and we will be offering exactly the same level of service and professionalism that breeders have been used to in the past.

"I can confirm that History Lesson, Most Awesome, Royal Assassin, and Addis Boy will be coming with us, but as yet I haven't had the opportunity to discuss the future in depth with the owners of the other Charmer Lodge stud dogs."