

Richardson has Tarzino Trophy favourite right where he wants her

Matamata trainer Graham Richardson was feeling good about his decision to bypass a start at Te Rapa on the weekend with Gr. 1 Tarzino Trophy favourite Volpe Veloce as he watched a host of the mare's potential rivals slog it out in the tough, rain-soaked conditions present on the day.

As the field for Saturday's Gr. 2 Lisa Chittick Foxbridge Plate went in to battle, Volpe Veloce was safely tucked up at home after enjoying a pleasing work-out earlier in the day on her home track.

"We decided at the start of her preparation to bypass the Foxbridge as we felt it was just too close to Hastings in case she struck a very heavy track and that's exactly what happened on Saturday," explained Richardson.

"I think a number of those who went around will be feeling a little weary today as the track looked pretty testing and a few of them had some tough runs.

"Our mare goes best on the fresh side and we just thought a possible gut-buster could be her undoing so I'm pretty happy we bypassed this one."

Richardson believes he has his charge on target for her Hastings assignment after the mare completed a comfortable track gallop under the stewardship of Michael Coleman on Saturday morning.

"Mickey rode her for me and he was very complimentary of how she went," he reported.

"We weren't looking to break any records but she did exactly what we wanted and was very keen to get on with the job.

"With just 13 days to go she will most likely have one or two more serious hit-outs and then it will be all on."

Despite feeling confident about how their campaign has unfolded to date, Richardson is acutely aware that there is plenty of water left to flow under the bridge before potentially claiming a Group One title.

"So many things have to go right to win a race like this so we aren't taking anything for granted at all," he said.

"We need the right build-up, the right track conditions, luck in the running and a great ride. That's not much to ask for, is it?"

"Seriously though we will need to be right at the top of our game judging by what I saw on Saturday. Kawi was simply enormous and I thought Coldplay was very unlucky as well.

"It is going to be a super race with a red-hot field so it is nice just to have one good enough to compete in it."

A comprehensive fresh-up victory on a firmer Te Rapa surface a fortnight ago has seen Volpe Veloce shoot to the top of TAB Fixed Odds market for the Tarzino Trophy at a \$3 quote with Saturday's third placegetter Kawi sitting at \$3.50, followed by Underthemoonlight who has firmed to \$10 after her convincing Foxbridge Plate victory. – **NZ Racing Desk**