

Herald Sun

Sport

No Winx chinks

RAY THOMAS

546 words

14 April 2018

Herald-Sun

HERSUN

HeraldSun

94

English

© 2018 News Limited. All rights reserved.

SYDNEY AUSTRALIA's wonder mare Winx bids for racing immortality at Randwick today. Trainer Chris Waller admitted yesterday the pressure of preparing for the long-awaited tilt at history was very real.

But Winx seems impervious to pressure. In fact, she thrives on it, according to Waller.

The champion is striving for her 25th consecutive win — which would equal champion mare Black Caviar's record — in the \$4 million Queen Elizabeth Stakes over 2000m.

If Winx continues her three-year streak, she will claim an 18th Group 1 win, improving her own world record.

With natural leaders such as Classic Uniform and Gailo Chop in the field, the Queen Elizabeth Stakes should be run at a genuine speed on what is likely to be a fast track.

"I've got no concerns over the firm track," Waller said.

"She can be a little bit vulnerable over a sprint distance on a quick, firm track because the speedier horses go so fast.

"It is like the 100m at the Commonwealth Games, you don't see a big margin to the winner. But when the races are over 800m or 1500m, it is completely different — and that is the same with Winx.

"The more pressure in a race, the better she becomes." Winx has only had two lead-up races this autumn, but Waller says the mare is in "great form".

"We had her fully prepared for her first-up run. It was a Group 1 mile race, so she was very fit," Waller said.

"Winx is a supreme athlete and we have learned how best to train her and what works for her. I couldn't be happier with her fitness. I've probably put a little bit more work into her, so she is prepared for a really tough 2000m race and ready for all scenarios." Waller expects the Queen Elizabeth Stake to be run at a solid tempo, but he has confidence in Winx's versatility.

"If it is not as strongly run as we expect, she has a great turn of foot anyway," Waller said.

"She has that air of arrogance on race day where she knows she can pick them up, and whatever she puts her body through to be able to do it, she seems to be able to.

"She certainly knows what she is here for, but is enjoying life. Her body language suggests she is very happy." Winx will be sent to the spelling paddock after today's race, with Waller yet to determine the mare's spring carnival campaign.

She made history with a third Cox Plate victory at Moonee Valley last October, and many are hoping she returns for a tilt at a fourth weight-for-age championship victory on October.

"How she goes (today) will depend where she starts off and how long she spells for," Waller said.

Stewards yesterday approved the addition of a small amount of synthetic hoof filler to the inside of Winx's near hind hoof.

Waller said the filler was applied to assist in the plating of the mare. ray.thomas@news.com.au NO MARE MORTALS, PAGES 78-79

CHASING HISTORY QUEEN ELIZABETH STAKES ROYAL RANDWICK TODAY, 3.05PM

NO MARE MORTALSPAGES 78-79

Document HERSUN0020180413ee4e0003t