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Jockey Chad Schofield:
“I’m looking forward to
making a name for myself
again in Sydney”

CHAD

*returns ready
to play ball*

**CHAD SCHOFIELD LEFT
SYDNEY AS A
FRESH-FACED TEENAGER
AND RETURNS A YOUNG,
MARRIED MAN READY TO
GET HIS TEETH INTO THE
LOCAL RACING SCENE**

WORDS: BRAD GRAY
PICTURES: BRADLEY PHOTOGRAPHERS



Chad Schofield takes out the 2014 Champagne Stakes aboard Go Indy Go at Royal Randwick

When Chad Schofield last rode in Sydney, The Everest concept hadn't even been dreamed up, Winx hadn't made her debut and Schofield was a featherweight teenage apprentice with the world at his feet.

Fast forward to now, with Schofield having spent the past seven seasons in Hong Kong, the 27-year-old has a wife, Hannah, who is due in February with a baby boy and Schofield has returned to where it all began for him.

Schofield began his apprenticeship more than a decade ago with Rosehill-based trainer David Payne. That was in 2010.

"I fully understand how competitive the jockey ranks are in Sydney at the moment but I'm confident I can do well, I'll always back my own ability and I'm just looking forward to getting back into it," said Schofield.

"I'm still young and feel like my best years are still head of me. I'm looking forward to making a name for myself again in Sydney.

"I started here but for the back half of my apprenticeship I moved to Melbourne so I haven't been based in Sydney since I was about 17 or 18 years old, so it's been a while but I'm really looking forward to it.

"I'll do my trackwork at all of the city tracks, pop my head into all of them as much as I can, find my way and just pick up what I can get.

"It's good to be home, it's funny, for the past six years, every time I have been home it's only been for a short couple of weeks but this time it's for good so it's a great feeling."

Limited opportunities in Hong Kong and various logistical and travel complications around COVID were part the reason why Schofield felt the timing was right.

"I've matured a lot, I've got no doubt that Hong Kong has improved my riding, I'm a completely different rider now than when I claimed two kilos riding in Sydney," he said.

"It'll definitely take adjustment; the racing styles are similar in some ways but also very different.

"Hong Kong is arguably one of the toughest places to succeed as a jockey and I was there for a long time, I learnt a lot and it definitely toughened me up mentally as well.

"I'll be working as hard as I can and I'm going back to my old manager Mark Vantriet.

"When I get back to trackwork I'll just ride for as many trainers as I can for whoever is happy to put me on, it's going to be hard I'm going to have to start from the bottom and work my way back up but hopefully I can do that."

Then there is also the small matter of racing against his old man Glyn, who only recently returned from a neck injury, once more.

"For sure, definitely, I have to get the bragging rights back," he laughed.

"When I was riding overseas, with Dad riding in Sydney, I'd more follow him than the main races, but I'd always be watching from afar.

"I am really lucky to have such a supportive family around me. I've been married two years and Hannah is so supportive, she is a great person of have alongside me."

Schofield, who won a Group 1 as an apprentice, is acutely aware of the prizemoney bonanza in Sydney and unsurprisingly, there is one particular race he is keen to be involved with.

"The Everest is a relatively new concept and one that only came about when I was in Hong Kong so I can't wait to hopefully ride in one." **RNSW**