

# THE HAROLD PARK Immortals

By HARRY PEARCE and BILL ELLIS

Pre 1967

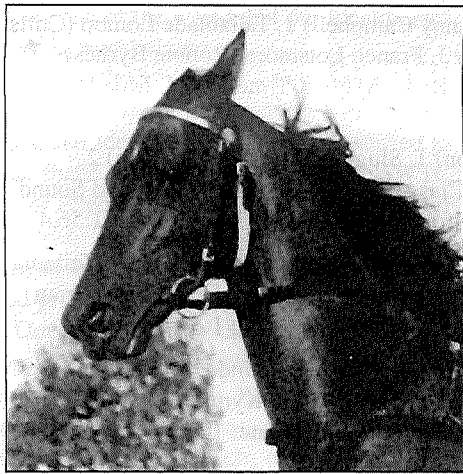
An expert panel of seven people with a long involvement in the harness racing industry has voted Ribands as the best pacer to have raced at Harold Park up to the year 1967.

The panel, appointed by the NSW Harness Racing Club when December 17, 2010 was announced as the closing date of the track as a racing venue, was asked to select the top 10 pacers to have raced there and Ribands topped the poll ahead of Caduceus with Cardigan Bay in third place.

The period from which the 10 were chosen, spans more than 70 years, so the panel of seven appointed to select them had plenty of candidates to consider. Indeed, more than 40 pacers were put under the microscope before the panel came up with the final 10 and a case for inclusion could have been made for just about all of them.

Following is a brief profile of the 10 Immortals from one to 10:

**RIBANDS** was one of Sydney night trotting's first superstars and amassed a huge following in the early 1950s despite a notoriously bad record of barrier behavior from the standing starts in operation at that time.



The most immortal - Ribands.

The first pacer to break two minutes for the mile on Australian soil -- he clocked 1:58.7 at Harold Park in 1954 -- Ribands won 41 races, 16 of them on the HP circuit where his most memorable victory was in the 1953 Spring Cup when he came from 36 yards behind on a bog track to beat Recovered in the very last stride.

Ribands won in every State he raced (NSW, Vic, SA and WA) and was also successful in New Zealand and America. One of his most remarkable wins outside Harold Park was in the 1954 Hunter Cup in Melbourne in which he overcame a 48 yards handicap and a slow start to score by 20 yards in record time.

**CADUCEUS** will forever be remembered for his starring role in attracting 50,346 people to Harold Park for the final of the 1960 InterDominion Championship, the largest crowd ever to attend a harness racing meeting in this country.

With the venue about to be vacated and put to another use, that record can never be beaten at Harold Park and, with declining crowds universally being a fact of life, it is a pretty fair bet it will never be beaten at any other track in Australia.

Popularly known as the "Mighty Atom" because of his diminutive stature, Caduceus at one stage held tracks records at Harold Park, Melbourne Showgrounds, Wayville (Adelaide), Gloucester Park (Perth) and Addington (Christchurch, NZ).

That InterDominion triumph was his swansong at Harold Park with his 21 starts there (all in the silk department) yielding eight wins, four runner-up finishes and five third places.

His wins at the famous Glebe amphitheatre included back-to-back Lord Mayors Cups (1956 and 1957) from a 36 yards handicap for J D Watts and the 1959 Summer Cup after starting from the same handicap with Frank Kersley (uncle of Fred Kersley) in charge.

**CARDIGAN BAY**, despite suffering a life-threatening injury after winning two Inter Dominion heats in Perth as a five-year-old in 1962, went on to race until the age of 12 and became the first pacer in the world to earn \$1m in prizemoney.

Revered in Australia and America as well as his homeland, New Zealand, Cardigan Bay had a total of 154 starts in the three countries for 80 wins and 47 minor placings and \$US1,000,837 in stakes. His major wins in Australia and NZ included the 1963 Inter Dominion in Adelaide, two Auckland Cups (1962-63) and the NZ Cup (1963).

He raced only seven times at Harold Park, but his performances there put him well and truly among the Immortals of the track. From those seven starts, 'Cardy' posted seven wins including the 1963 Summer Cup off 24 yards, and two minor placings, both from 48 yards behind in major Cup events that were run in track record time.

**LAWN DERBY**, a champion pacer of the 1930s, raced unhooded for most of his career and set records everywhere he went -- from NSW to Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and Queensland as well as New Zealand.

Race details of the time are incomplete but Lawn Derby is understood to have won about 31 races in total, many of them at Harold Park where he scored one of his most important victories in the 1934 NSW Pacers' Derby.

Declared by many as a horse before his time, Lawn Derby cemented his place in harness racing history when he paced a mile in 1:59.4 at Addington, NZ in 1938 becoming the first pacer outside America to break the two-minute time barrier.

**WALLA WALLA** is often remembered by people in everyday life uttering the phrase "I'm further back than Walla Walla" to indicate they are behind schedule.

That expression, emphasising the difficulty of a daunting assignment, originated in the days when Walla Walla used to frequently inflict defeats despite conceding huge starts to his rivals.

Because he was likely to be burdened with handicaps anywhere from 108 yards to 204 yards, he didn't race too often and his official racing record when he was a nine-year-old at the end of the 1930-31 season read 27 starts for 15 wins and four placings, some from back marks up to 216 yards.

In later years he raced from the stables of master Sydney trainer J D Watts before retiring with lifetime statistics of 52 starts for 22 wins and 11 placings in addition to 12 wins from 14 starts at shows and 10 time trials.

Watts, for many years, claimed Walla Walla was the best he had ever driven which is a big call considering he, at various times, drove the InterDominion champions Caduceus and Captain Sandy as well as such other high quality individuals as Ribands and Sibelia.

**APMAT**, like many of the stars of his era, was not the most reliable beginner from a standing start and would have revelled in these days when races are mostly launched from behind the mobile gate.

He showed that when he went to the US in 1961 to represent Australia in a three-race series for which US entrepreneur Martin Tananbaum invited the best pacers in the world to compete at his Yonkers Raceway in New York.

Lining up against the best the US could throw at him, he stamped himself superior to his rivals in the International Pace and the Good Time Pace (the first two legs of the series).

From 34 starts at the paceway, he won 14 including the Anniversary Cup in 1959, the Spring Cup in 1960 and the Summer Cup in 1961 was runner-up on eight occasions and minor placegetter three times.

Of course the most notable of those runner-up finishes was in that memorable 1960 InterDominion Championship where he failed by a nose on the track and again in the stewards' room to get the verdict from Caduceus in a protest hearing.

**UNCLE JOE** was a five-year-old before he won his first race (at Wyong) in 1951 and even then it was quite a while before he came good at Harold Park. But when he did hit his straps, he did so with a vengeance, winning a total of 17 races at the Glebe Paceway, many of them against the best pacers of the day.

The year 1954 was Uncle Joe's best and saw him take out both the Summer and Spring Cups at Harold Park. In the latter race, he came off 36 yards behind and started favourite over Ribands (48 yards) and beat that horse into second place by five lengths.

Uncle Joe was trained by the late Bert Alley who also prepared Apmat, rated one place above Uncle Joe in this list. But despite Apmat winning against the best in America and Uncle Joe never racing outside NSW, Alley always maintained Uncle Joe was the better of the two.

**FETTLE** belied a relatively unfashionable pedigree to become one of harness racing's stars in the late 1950s and changed the life of his trainer-driver who was hitherto unknown to enthusiasts much beyond the south coast dairying community of Bega.

Far from disgraced placing in a couple of appearances in high quality classic competition at Harold Park as a three-year-old, Fettle blossomed with a host of wins on country and Victorian provincial tracks before returning to Sydney in January 1957 to launch a then record winning spree.

He simply outclassed his rivals and

proceeded to offer repeat performances in each of his next nine starts at the paceway before his third to Diabolo Don and Sibelia after being held up for a clear passage from his a 12 yards handicap in the 1958 Spring Cup.

He avenged that defeat with an impressive all-the-way win over Diabolo Don and Sibelia when they clashed under free-for-all conditions three starts later and, after several placings in major events, overcame a 12 yards handicap to win the 1959 edition of the Lord Mayors Cup at the expense of Caduceus and Kiwi Dillon.

Following his close fourth to Caduceus in that memorable 1960 InterDominion Championship at Harold Park, he went to the US to represent Australia in the International series at Yonkers Raceway in New York but broke down before racing there and returned to stand at stud in Australia where he was unable to produce anything capable of emulating him.

**JAMES SCOTT** was typical of many pacers of his era graduating to top class after being nurtured and having their potential developed in rural competition before venturing to the city.

Bred and initially owned and trained at Temora in the Riverina district, he remained a "metropolitan Maiden" after five city appearances in quality three-year-old competition despite a string of wins in his local area and on the Victorian provincial circuit before posting what was described as "the easiest of wins" at Harold Park in May 1958.

It was two years before he next fronted up at the paceway, this time from the stables of multi-premier trainer-driver Perc Hall, and he proceeded to compile a single season record of 11 wins at the track graduating to the ranks of Cups winners trouncing his opposition in the 1961 Lord Mayors Cup and overcame a 24 yards handicap to snare a record-breaking Summer Cup in 1962 a few weeks before heading to Perth to become the first horse to go through an InterDominion Championship series undefeated.

**SIBELIA** was the only mare to make the top 10 which speaks volumes for her ability. During her reign in the late 1950s, she matched strides with the likes of Caduceus, False Step, Fettle, Sky High, Diabolo Don, Apmat, First Kiss, Maestro's Melody and First Variety and at one time or another, beat them all.

Overall, the mare notched 34 wins and 26 minor placings from 90 starts. Twenty of her wins were posted at Harold Park and this stood as a record for the track until bettered by Bay Foyle in 1973, 13 years after Sibelia's retirement.

In one season alone, while in the care of J D Watts, Sibelia won 10 races at HP (including the 1958 Lord Mayor's Cup) -- an outstanding effort considering there were only 40 meetings a season at the Paceway at the time.

Transferred later to Merv Adams (for whom she won six races) the mare scored the last win of her career in Melbourne in the 1960 Hunter Cup which she took out in track record time.

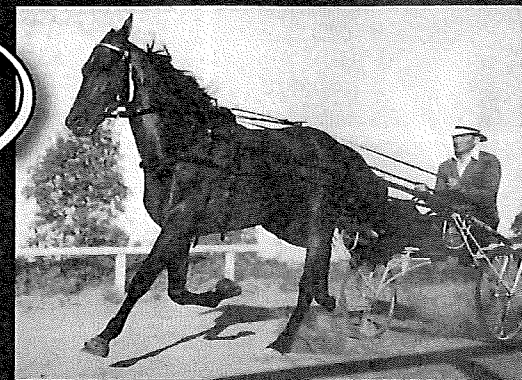




# The Immortals

Pre 1967

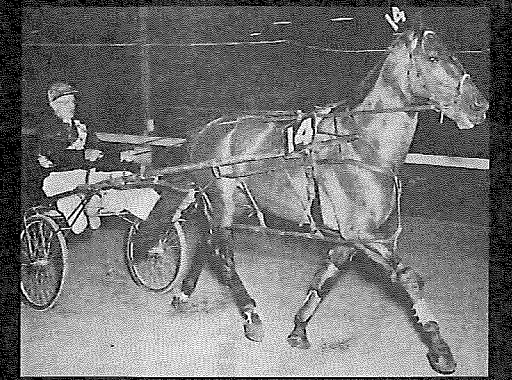
NEW SOUTH WALES HARNESS RACING CLUB - FAREWELL TO HAROLD PARK



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### Ribands

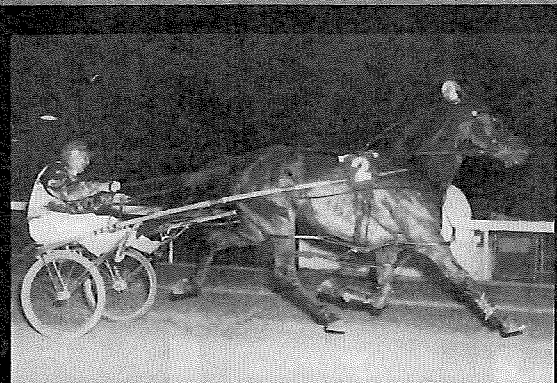
Mr F & Mrs A Killoway's bay horse  
Lawn Derby - Marie Walla  
Trainers: P J Hall, Driver: P J Hall



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### Caduceus

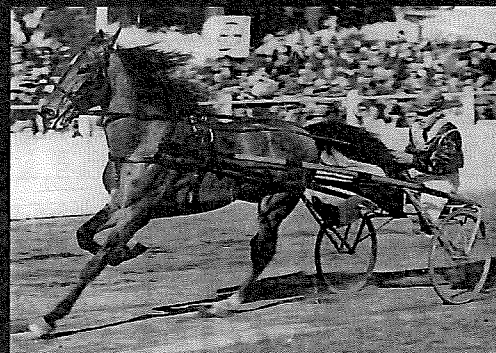
Messrs D D & D R Moore's bay horse.  
U Scott - Little Ada  
Trainers: J D Litten, Driver: J D Watts



3

### Cardigan Bay

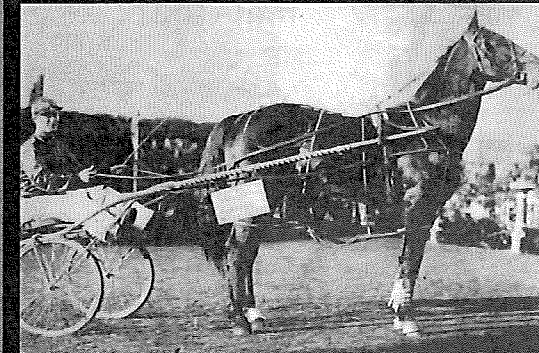
Mrs A Dean's bay gelding  
Hal Tracy - Calwyn Bay  
Trainer: P T Welfaden, Driver: F W Wilkins



4

### Lawn Derby

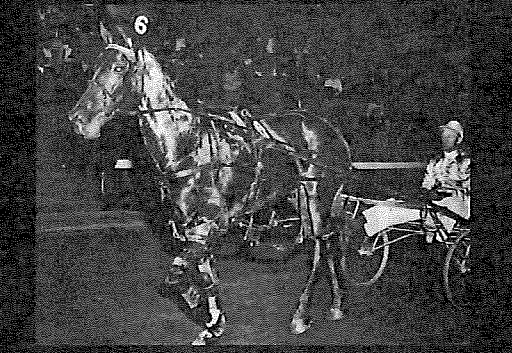
Mr J F Mackenney's bay horse  
Robert Derby - Rotalen  
Trainers: W J O'Shea, Driver: W J O'Shea



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### Walla Walla

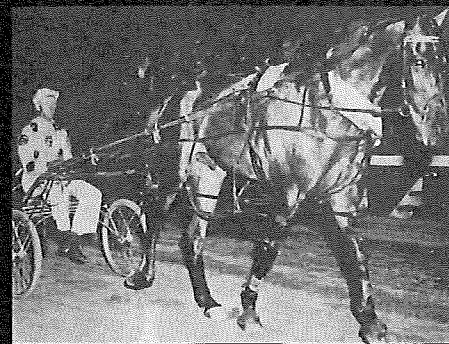
Mr L Martin's bay horse  
Clara Derby - Princess Winona  
Trainers: L Martin, Driver: L Martin



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### Apmat

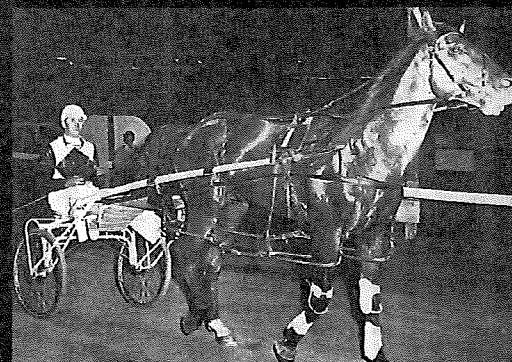
Mrs V Anderson's bay gelding  
Witman - Paak Girl  
Trainer: H R Alley, Driver: H R Alley



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### Uncle Joe

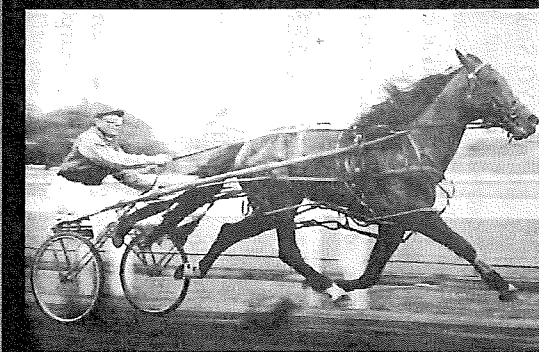
Mr J Clary's bay gelding  
Robert Derby - Zelfand Pick  
Trainers: H R Alley, Driver: H R Alley



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### Fettle

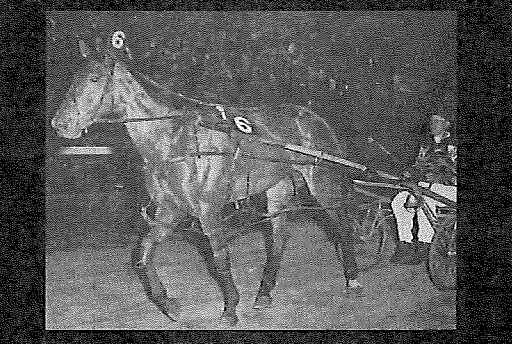
Mr F Hayes' bay horse  
Raglan - Red Doll  
Trainers: R F Hayes, Driver: R F Hayes



9

### James Scott

Mr R R Fitzpatrick's bay horse  
Noble Scott - Yain Peak  
Trainers: P J Hall, Driver: P J Hall



10

### Sibelia

Mrs J F Allott's bay mare  
Sky Raider - Centimetre  
Trainer: J D Watts, Driver: J D Watts

These immortals were elected to commemorate the last meeting at Harold Park Paceway on Friday 17th December 2010



# The Top

## TWO-YEAR-OLDS

By HARRY PEARCE

### PALEFACE ADIOS

There has never been a pacer in Australia quite like Paleface Adios, a champion by any yardstick. 'Jacko,' as he was called at home by trainer-driver Colin Pike, raced for 10 seasons (from the age of two to 11) and won races in every one of those seasons ending up with a record of 108 wins and 69 minor placings from 120 starts.

When our panel was asked to choose the top five two-year-olds and the top five three-year-olds to have raced at Harold Park, there was no question that Paleface would get a guernsey in both categories.

A striking chestnut with a white blaze down his face, Paleface Adios was a delight to watch in full flight with his daisy-cutting pacing action and he wasn't long into his two-year-old term when he began to show in public, the promise of what was to come.

After bad luck and a few mistakes brought about his downfall at his first three starts in the Riverina, he won at his fourth outing (at Temora) on April 1, 1972. He then won two more off 12 yards and 24 yards behind (at Wagga and Coolamon) before making his Harold Park debut on April 28, only to fall when in a seemingly winning position near the home turn.

Showing remarkable recuperative powers, Paleface bounced back at the Paceway just one week later and thrashed his rivals in a heat of the NSW Sapling Stakes, winning by 16 yards. He followed that by taking out the Sapling final, then added the Edgar Tatlow as well as heat and final of the NSW Challenge to his CV.

His only defeat at Harold Park that season (apart from his fall on debut there) was when he finished third to Chimeaway in a

2YO Stakes after having to contend with a difficult 36 yards over the mile course.

By season's end, Paleface Adios' record stood at eight wins and four minor placings from 13 starts, including five wins from seven Harold Park appearances.

### JAMES DARREN

In 1969 a two-year-old by the name of James Darren came to Sydney from the Riverina area and set the track alight at Harold Park with a series of brilliant wins.

A member of the then powerful Eric and Roy Harpley stable at Temora, James Darren, a son of 1962 Perth Inter Dominion winner James Scott, won his first six starts on the Glebe circuit before tasting defeat. And all six of those wins were in classic events.

He began by taking out his heat and final of the NSW Youthful Stakes in February '69, then repeated the wins in his heat and final of the NSW Sapling Stakes. His next assignment was in the Edgar Tatlow Stakes (mobile start) in which he accounted for Bonnie Frost and Never Say Die in 2:02.6, then an Australian record for a two-year-old pacer.

Victory in a heat of the NSW Challenge Stakes (also mobile start) gave James Darren his sixth successive win before he was beaten, but far from disgraced, when third to Bay Foyle and Alecane in the final in which the winner had to break James Darren's record set a few weeks earlier, to score. Bay Foyle put the mile behind in 2:01.8.

Overall, James Darren won 12 of his 17 starts as a two-year-old and was equally successful at three the following season. He was sold as an early four-year-old to the US where he went on to win many good races.



The charismatic Paleface Adios and Colin Pike.

### RIP VAN WINKLE

Unlike his fairytale namesake, the equine Rip Van Winkle was no sleepyhead, at least not when he was on the racetrack

Indeed, as a two-year-old in 1975-76, he rewrote the record books earning \$36,530 for the season, the highest ever for a pacer of that age in Australia to that time.

Trained and driven by Michael Vanderkemp, Rip Van Winkle followed the path of other top two-year-olds of that era by contesting the Youthful, Sapling and Edgar Tatlow Stakes at Harold Park as well as the Challenge Stakes. He won the lot, and ended the season with a Harold Park score-card of seven wins from eight starts.

His only defeat at the Paceway during his first term (he finished second) was at the hands of Rowan Garry in the Country 2YO Championship. In all, Rip started 14 times in his first season of racing for 10 wins and three minor placings.

Harness racing abounds with stories of bargain buys, but there have been few more profitable than the one involving Rip Van Winkle who cost a mere \$2200 as a yearling.

### ROCKET GLENFERN

There have been few more popular combinations in juvenile racing at Harold Park than Rocket Glenfern and his trainer-driver, the late Joe Ilsley.

"Gentleman Joe" was a wizard at training horses with leg problems and was one of the friendliest people in the game. So it wasn't surprising that he developed a huge following when he teamed up with Rocket Glenfern, a colt with chronic leg trouble, that he transformed into the star of the 1969-70 season.

The 'Rocket' posted his first Harold Park win when having his fourth start on the track in a 2YO Stakes on April 24 1970 and remained unbeaten there for the rest of the season, winning five more to make his tally six on end.

How the crowds loved to see this dashing son of Tarport Kid and Susie Brigade and his trainer-driver in action. They cheered the combination home as they successively took out heat and final of the Sapling, the Edgar Tatlow and heat and final of the Challenge Stakes beating the quality fields every time.

### VAN HALL

The time may seem pedestrian by today's standards, but back in February 1953 Van Hall set an Australian record for a two-year-old when he won a standing-start mile event at Harold Park in 2:10.6.

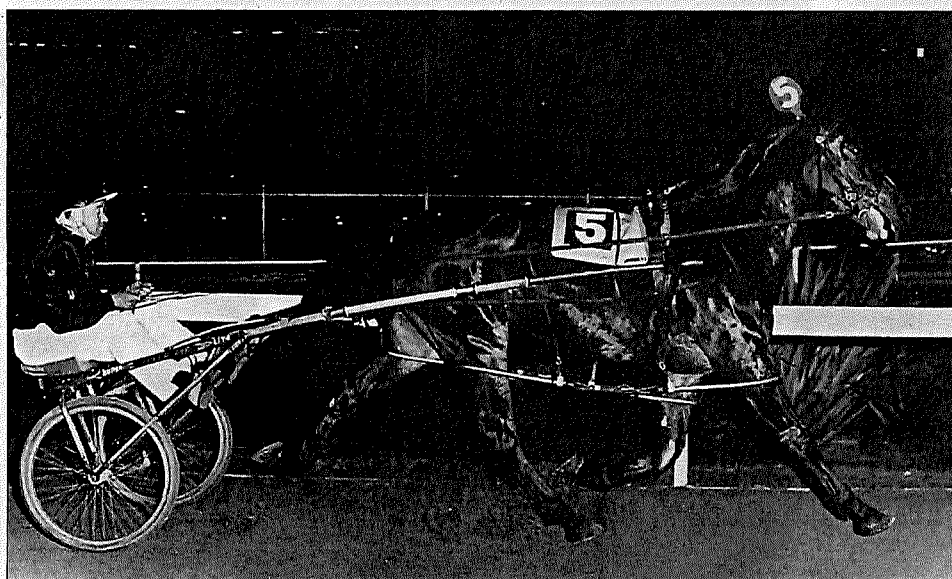
The son of Van Derby and Erinack was having his second start at the Paceway and came off the 12 yards mark to account for Dazzling Spring with Match Point third.

At a time when there were far fewer races for juveniles than there are today, Van Hall was unbeaten at his first 11 starts -- six as a two-year-old (four of them at HP) and his first five as a three-year-old. And the fact he was often a tardy beginner made his record even more impressive.

The NSW Sapling Stakes was virtually the only Harold Park classic for two-year-olds in Van Hall's time and the Perc Hall-trained colt won it in a breeze.

After winning his heat on March 18, 1953 beating Bandit Star and Blanche's Best, he repeated the performance in the final three nights later, this time at the expense of Match Point with Luscious in third place.

Van Hall went on to win 12 more races at Harold Park, adding to the four he scored there as a two-year-old.



Owner/trainer/driver Roy Harpley behind the champion two and three year old James Darren.



# The Top

# THREE-YEAR-OLDS

By HARRY PEARCE

## RIP VAN WINKLE

Unlike the sluggish story book character of the same name, the equine Rip Van Winkle showed he was far from lethargic fashioning an incredible record during an all-too-short racetrack career.

It was a career which saw him figure in the placings at more than 80% of his racetrack appearances, mostly against the highest quality opposition of his era, including an enviable strike rate of slightly better than two wins from every three outings during his four seasons of competition.

At Harold Park he had an even better strike, especially in his first two seasons of racing when he was runner-up there at his sole failure in each of those two terms.

The solitary Harold Park failure during his three-year-old term was behind Armadene in a heat of the NSW Sires Produce Stakes on December 30, 1976 a week before he made amends by capturing the final.

He then proceeded to dominate the remaining three-year-old classics for the term embracing the heat (at Harold Park, March 18) and final of the NSW Pacers Derby (March 25) either side of the Taree Derby (March 19), the R C Simpson Sprint (April 7) and a clean sweep of the Queensland Pacers Derby series at Albion Park in June.

Never one to lack confidence in the ability of himself or his horse, trainer-driver Michael Vanderkemp then threw the colt in at the deep end tackling the older, and obviously more seasoned, free-for-all campaigners in the Sunshine Sprint at Albion Park on June 25.

After handling that assignment with aplomb the curtain fell on a sophomore term which provided 18 wins from 22 starts with his only failures being runner-up finishes.

## JAMES DARREN

An often heard saying suggesting you can judge a horse by the company he keeps couldn't have had too many better examples than James Darren to demonstrate it.

Although owned and trained in the Riverina district, James Darren travelled to Sydney to take on the best and, more often than not, beat them at Harold Park in both his two-year-old and three-year-old seasons before being sold to the US where he continued to be a success.

Runner-up to Kiwi Lad at his first appearance there as a three-year-old, James Darren made amends at the expense of Bay Foyle at his next two starts at Harold Park.

Bay Foyle, was no slouch maintaining solid form from setting an Australian record as a two-year-old the previous season through to earning the NSW Harness Horse of the Year title in 1971 and taking the Miracle Mile in 1972.

After beating all but Monara in a heat of the NSW Pacers' Derby at his next start on April 17, 1970, James Darren returned a week later to take the final from Welcome Advice (winner of the InterDominion Pacing Championship in Brisbane two years later) and Royal Garrison.

Bay Foyle (second) and Welcome Advice (third) were again unable to match James Darren after he reeled off an Australian three-year-old record 2:00.4 for the mile (1609m) trip of the R C Simpson Sprint on May 1, 1970

James Darren's three-year-old season at Harold Park yielded five wins and two runner-up finishes from eight starts in a year of an exceptional herd.

## PALEFACE ADIOS

As a high quality performer through his nine seasons of competition it's not surprising Paleface Adios figures as one of the best five ever to grace the Harold Park circuit in both his two-year-old and three-year-old terms.

Although his statistics at Harold Park during those two seasons were admirable they would have been even better had it not been for a race fall in each.

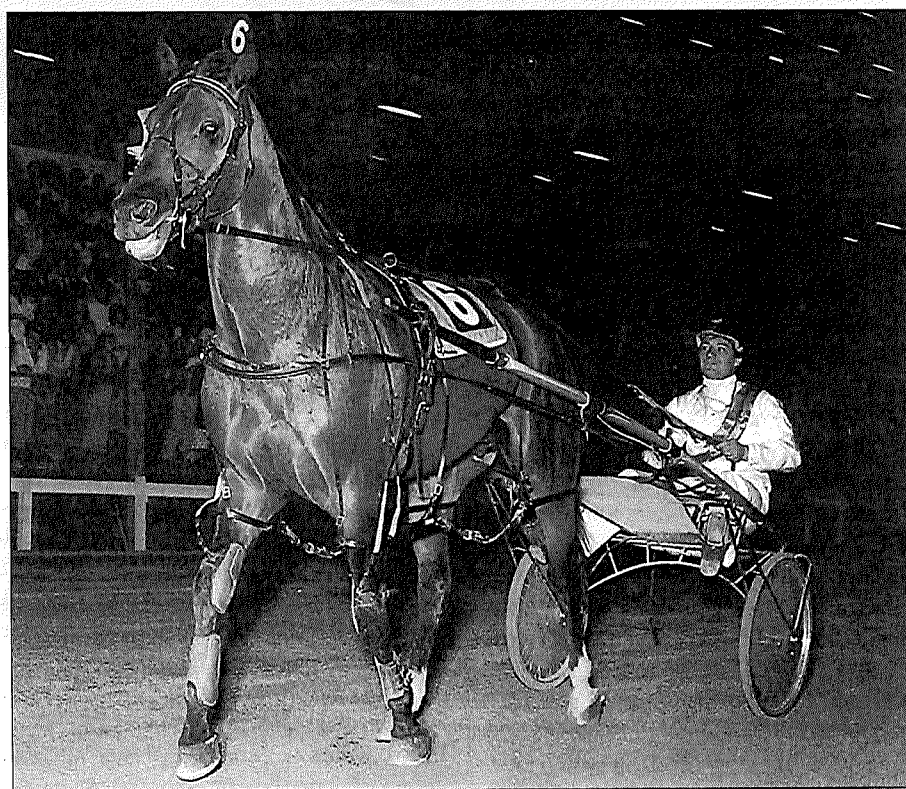
While he made an inauspicious debut there falling as a two-year-old it was at the other end of his three-year-old season when a fall blemished his record for that period.

As it was he closed out that season with four Harold Park wins (including the Group 1 NSW Pacers Derby and the R C Simpson Sprint) and a second from six starts at that track.

Apart from his fall in the Final of the Southern Cross won by roughie Adios Bower on May 25, 1973, his only other Harold Park failure that season was his second from 12 yards in Mitchell Victory's Superstars Four & Five-Year-Old Championship on May 4, 1973.

His comprehensive record as a three-year-old shows his exceptional talent was not confined to Harold Park as his 22 starts overall that season yielded 18 wins and a second.

Included in those wins was a heat and the final of the Victoria Pacers' Derby, a heat and the final of the Queensland Derby and the Sunshine Sprint in which he defeated more seasoned campaigners at Albion Park on July 21, 1973.



Rip Van Winkle and Michael Vanderkemp were almost unbeatable.

## RUN JOE RUN

It takes an exceptional animal to earn an Australian Harness Horse of the Year title.

A quick glance of the Honour Roll which started in 1976 shows it is dominated by InterDominion champions or other stars of the Grand Circuit through individual seasons.

So to earn the honour of being judged the best harness horse in Australia in a particular season as a three-year-old validates Run Joe Run's inclusion in this roster of the best five three-year-olds to race at Harold Park.

Sent out six times at Harold Park during his three-year-old term, Run Joe Run headed his rivals home on all but one occasion with the only blemish being a close second to subsequent Miracle Mile winner Friendly Footman in the final of the NSW Sires Stakes for three-year-old colts and geldings on December 29, 1978.

He followed that with wins at his only other five starts including the NSW Sires Produce Stakes, a heat and the final of the NSW Pacers' Derby and the Southern Cross Stakes.

It was a record sufficient to justify strong polling from NSW representatives on the Australian Harness Horse of the Year judging panel but nationally?

What clinched the national award for him were performances in a sole appearance in WA where he won the Group 1 Australian Derby at Gloucester Park on March 30, 1979 and his two Queensland outings delivering a heat and the final of the Group 1 Queensland Derby in June, 1979.

After 17 wins and two seconds from his 19 starts that season, he banked \$116,945 - the first of his age in Australian harness racing history to earn more than \$100,000.

## WESTBURN GRANT

Only three three-year-olds have ever been rated highly enough by a national judging panel to be declared Australian Harness Horse of the Year.

While Run Joe Run (who took the title at that age in 1979) and Rufus Young Blood (1987) literally ordered their titles via superior performances in at least three states, Westburn Grant only performed live in front of judges in two states.

An unblemished record after his six Harold Park appearances embracing the Harold Park Guineas (on January 20, 1989), the Globe Derby Stakes (February 11) and the NSW Pacers' Derby (February 24) virtually assured him full support of NSW representatives on the judging panel.

After a couple of rough strides at the start had him settling at the back of field before his second to Rockleigh Victory in the Victorian Harness Racing Club Cup at Moonee Valley on January 14, 1989, Victorian judges may have had their reservations.

But any doubts they may have had about the NSW star were dispelled when he returned to Victoria to trounce the locals in the Group 1 Victoria Derby at Moonee Valley on February 4.

Rockleigh Victory also inflicted Westburn Grant's only other defeat that season when he capitalised on a front row draw for an all-the-way win in the Group 1 Australian Derby at Bankstown on April 29 while Westburn Grant did well to get second from a back line draw.

In between those, Westburn Grant crossed the Tasman to add a rare New Zealand Derby to his Victorian and NSW blue ribands in March.

He returned from New Zealand with a three from three record and \$295,500 to add to the \$175,687 he banked from his eight wins (six from six at Harold Park) and two runner-up places from 10 starts during an incredible three-year-old season.



# The Top

# TROTTERS

By HARRY PEARCE

## GRAMEL

Although owned and trained in South Australia, Gramel was an idol of Harold Park punters after several successful Sydney campaigns in the 1960s.

They included wins from a 60 yards handicap in the 1964 Trotters Spring Cup at Harold Park and from 96 yards in the same race a year later.

Harold Park was also the location where she became the fastest trotter in Australia with her 2:01.2 time trial in 1964.

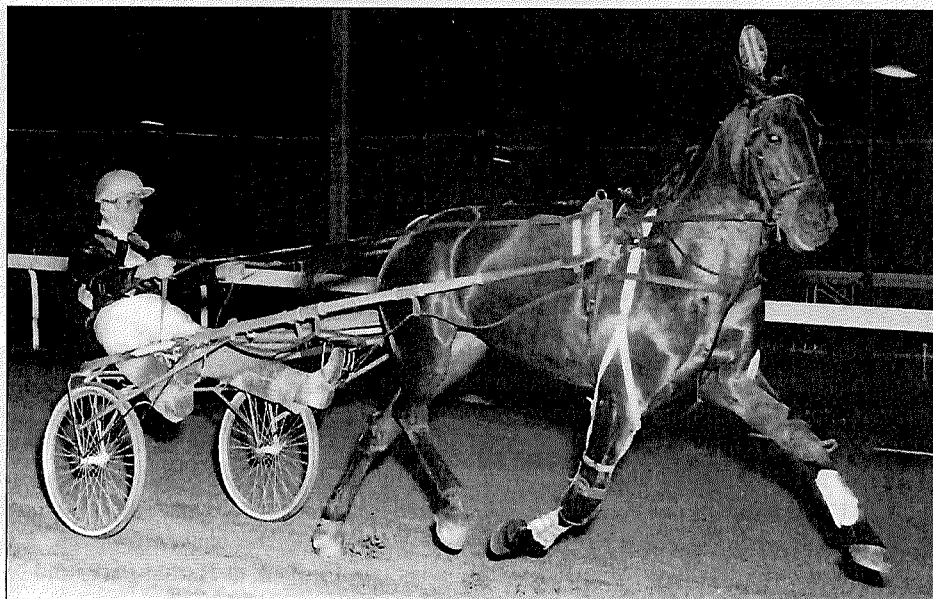
Although she began her career as a pacer, and actually won at that gait, Gramel competed at the top level and held track records at the principal track in the only three states catering for trotters in her day . . . Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales.

Her 51 wins (including three in the US and three in New Zealand) included most of the major races for trotters in those three states and she was unlucky not to have added another when a close (half-head) second to Yamamoto after starting from 72 yards in the 1966 InterDominion Trotters Championship at Harold Park.

## PARA RIP

It is perhaps ironic that of our five top trotters to have raced at Harold Park, arguably the best two of them, Para Rip and Gramel, hailed from South Australia, but they certainly proved to be stars on the Sydney track.

Para Rip won four major Trotters' Cups at Harold Park in the 1950s when races of the trotting gait were far stronger and carried more weight in NSW than they do today. A meeting at Harold Park in those days would never be run without a race for trotters on the program.



Gramel an idol to the Harold Park crowds.

Para Rip won the Trotters' Cup at the annual HP Summer Carnival for three years in succession from 1955 to 1957, coming from 36 yards behind the first time, 60 yards the second time and 96 yards, the third.

For good measure, the big long-striding gelding also won the Trotters' Cup at the 1956 Spring Carnival, overcoming a 72 yards handicap and trotting the 15½ furlongs (3100m) journey at a 2:10.2 rate, a track record at the time.

During his career, Para Rip won several races against pacers including one in the main event at Menangle. But his most noteworthy performance came at Richmond in late 1955 when he landed a unique double which has never been equalled, nor is it likely to be.

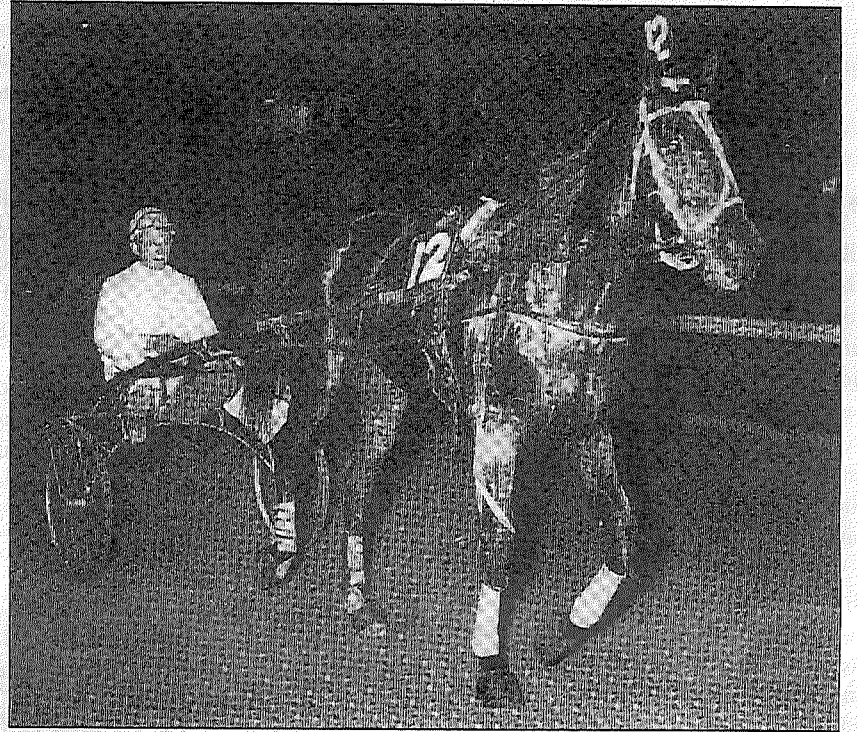
Sent out in the Trotters Handicap from the back mark of 168 yards behind, Para Rip made light of his impost, winning easily. Then two races later he came out against pacers in the main event (2:21 class) and led all the way from the scratch (front) mark to score again. It was some achievement, and I was fortunate enough to be on the course that day to see it.

## INTANGIBLE COMMAND

His name may not readily spring to mind when attempting to identify the best trotters in the history of Harold Park.

Delving through the records in order to compile a roster of the best of that gait to compete at the famous Glebe amphitheatre though, exposed Intangible Command's undeniable entitlement to automatic inclusion.

Sure, he may not have fashioned a glamorous profile such as some others on the list.



Para Rip winner of three successive Harold Park Summer Trotters Cups.

But the statistics don't lie. And the statistics show Intangible Command, with 17 wins there, was the most successful of his gait at the track.

His wins included the Easter Trotters' Cup in which he overcame a 12 yards handicap to account for General and stylish Victorian trotter Uncanny on April 11, 1968 and beating General and Corop McElwin after starting from 48 yards in the Summer Trotters' Cup on January 24, 1969.

## KRAKATOA

After a better than average record in his homeland, former New Zealand trotter Krakatoa stepped up a notch after crossing the Tasman late in 1952 to launch a new career in Australia.

Driven by Frank Culbert, whose stables were literally just outside Harold Park's back gate adjacent to what is now the Jubilee Park light rail station, Krakatoa stamped his mark on the local scene often winning after conceding huge starts from handicaps.

One of those occasions was in October, 1953 when he started from 120 yards behind before defeating Gizelle (front) and John Sydney (36 yards) over the marathon 15½ furlongs (3120m) in a 2:13.2 mile rate.

At the time that was the greatest handicap from which a horse had won since night racing began at Harold Park in 1949.

At Harold Park on March 12, 1954, he earned the distinction of being only the fifth trotter in Australia to better 2:10, with his 2:06 mile against time which was an incredible two seconds faster than the previous standard shared by White Globe (who set her record in 1941), Bingen Redmond (1949) and Father's Wish (1950).

The only other trotter to beat the 2:10 mark was Lord Daley with his 2:09 in 1941.

## QUEEN BEE

Gramel aside, one of the best trotting mares to race at Harold Park in the early night trotting era was Queen Bee, a daughter of the Italian sire Medoro, which was imported to Australia by the late Noel Simpson.

Queen Bee, first trained and driven by J D Watts and later by Perc Hall, was a late bloomer. She did many things wrong in her early races for Watts and in her first 11 starts could manage only once minor placing.

But when she finally hit form as a five-year-old, she did so with a vengeance winning four races in succession. First of these was at the old Menangle track on June 12, 1957, then she followed up by winning at Richmond and Menangle again before posting her first Harold Park victory at the expense of Merry Dance and Morning Mist on August 17, 1957.

Queen Bee's form tapered off after that, but she still managed to win another three Harold Park races for Watts before being sold, ostensibly for breeding purpose, to C S (Stuart) McCallum, a former NSW Trotting Club vice-president.

However instead of going straight to the breeding barn, it was decided to give the mare another chance on the racetrack, and McCallum sent her to Perc Hall to train and drive. Under Hall's guidance, she won another six races and set two Harold Park track records.

Her wins for Hall included the Trotters' Cup at the 1961 Easter carnival and the corresponding race at the Spring carnival the same year. In the latter event she overcame a 72 yards handicap to down Legal Raider and Prince Grande rating a track record 2:09 for the 15 furlongs 92 yards journey.

The mare's other HP track record was set a fortnight before her 1961 Spring Cup victory when she won over 11¼ furlongs at a 2:08.2 rate.



# The

# Unique Performers

By **ANDREW GEORGIU**

## KOALA KING

**KOALA KING will go down in history as the horse that won the most races of any other standardbred at Harold Park.**

He saluted the judge at the Glebe circuit on an incredible 40 occasions and won there from every year he raced, from a two-year-old right through to the age of nine.

Only pint-sized in stature, Koala King possessed brilliant sprinting ability which carried him to victory in most of Australia's feature events, including three consecutive Winfield Gold Cups (aka Victoria Cups).

Without doubt the most famous win by the Ray Wisbey-trained pacer at Harold Park was his emphatic 1980 Inter Dominion triumph.

It would go down as the first of six for reinsman Brian Hancock, who would later go on to win the series with Weona Warrior, Thorate and Our Sir Vancelot (three times).

Koala King was purchased for a modest \$1300 at the Sydney Yearling Sales and was by Koala Frost out of Tawain.

But to understand how Wisbey came to own and race Koala King, you have to go back one year earlier, when again at the Sales, he purchased a Scottish Brigade-Tawain filly which would go on to be named Tawanna Lass.

Impressed with Tawanna Lass' half-brother, which looked very striking, Wisbey parted with the money to purchase him also.

Wisbey convinced his younger brother Barry, who also attended the Sales with him, to become a part-owner in Koala King, which would go down as one of the bargain basement purchases of all-time.

Coincidentally, at the same Sale, a Toledo Hanover-Pure Band colt was secured for just \$2400 and would go on to be known as Pure Steel.

Wisbey, based on the South Coast of New South Wales at Shoalhaven Heads, entrusted

Koala King to renowned horseman Kevin Robinson.

At two, the pacer had five wins and four seconds from 11 starts in the 1974/75 season for stakes of \$6184. Only one of those wins was at Harold Park, on May 27 1975 in the 2YO Championship over 1609 metres.

As a three-year-old he would win five races at the famous circuit including the RC Simpson Sprint over a mile with Terry Robinson, Kevin's son, aboard.

The 1976/77 season saw another six wins added to his Harold Park record which included a victory in the 4YO Futurity over 2350 metres.

Ten further wins at Harold Park would come as a five and six-year-old, with the highlight of them being the Members Cup and ABC Pace Finals. Robinson trained Koala King until his five-year-old term before, due to a long-running inquiry with stewards which eventually led to his suspension, Brian Hancock filled in.

Thriving on the opportunity to partner Koala King, Hancock drove the pacer at his next 12 starts for seven wins, four seconds and a third.

Kevin Robinson would drive the champion again, to two wins at Harold Park in 1979, however, Hancock was now permanently entrenched as his trainer-driver.

His seven-year-old season saw him capture eight wins at Harold Park, including a heat and final of the 1980 Inter Dominion.

Victory in the final heat of the Inter series on March 21, 1980 saw him equal the great Paleface Adios' record of 27 wins at Harold Park. He needed to win the race in order to qualify for the Final.

Success in the \$130,000 BP Inter Dominion Championship Final (2700 metres), after coming from 10 metres, saw him set a new benchmark of 28 wins at the track.

Hancock, 32 at the time, waved his whip in jubilation down the home straight as the

pair, having been stuck on the pegs before coming one-off and then following up Locarno into the race, streeeted their rivals to score by 10 metres.

Locarno and Pure Steel filled the minors.

At the end of the 1980 season, the stallion had won 30 races at the historic circuit and a further 10 were still to come during his eight and nine-year-old terms.

Terry Robinson would partner Koala King, at nine, to his last victory at Harold Park on March 12, 1982, in a Free-For-All over a mile at Harold Park worth \$5000.

He was retired almost 12 months later after finishing last behind Disco Adios in the \$20,000 Lord Mayor's Cup at Harold Park on April 16, 1982.

## BRIAN HANCOCK

**IT SHOULDN'T come as a surprise to anyone that Brian Hancock takes his place in the 'Unique' category when it comes to Harold Park.**

The South Coast-based trainer-driver steered a record 888 winners at the Glebe circuit between 1968 and 2003 a feat that now will never be matched.

Hancock scored his first metropolitan success at Harold Park on February 16, 1968 with Teeny Rena. The mare also gave him his first winning drive, at Nowra in early 1966.

Little did he know at the time but she would have a lasting effect on Hancock's career, not only on the track, but in breeding some of the future champions of the sport that would put him in the spotlight.

Teeny Rena contested an Inter Dominion in Adelaide in 1969 when Hancock was just 21-years-old, and although not making the final, she won the Consolation.

His love affair with the Inter Dominion and Harold Park would come to the fore

## KOALA KING'S 40 HAROLD PARK WINS

27/3/1975	\$2,970 2YO Championship	K Robinson	1609m
6/2/1976	\$2,570 3YO Pace	K Robinson	2350m
9/4/1976	\$3,000 Derby Consol	T Robinson	2350m
23/4/1976	\$2,970 RC Simpson Sprint	T Robinson	1 mile
30/4/1976	\$2,740 3YO MSP	K Robinson	1960m
14/5/1976	\$3,000 3YO+4YO	K Robinson	2350m
8/10/1976	\$2,970 4YO MSP	K Robinson	2350m
19/11/1976	\$4,900 Championship	K Robinson (25m)	2350m
14/1/1977	\$4,000 Cup	K Robinson	2350m
18/2/1977	\$2,970 3+4YO Pace	K Robinson (20m)	2350m
6/5/1977	\$4,900 FFA Pace	K Robinson	2350m
13/5/1977	\$15,000 Futurity Pace	K Robinson	2350m
28/10/1977	\$4,000 20DP	K Robinson	2700m
6/1/1978	\$4,000 Cup	K Robinson	2700m
8/9/1978	\$4,850 19P	B Hancock (10m)	2350m
22/9/1978	\$4,850 19P	B Hancock (10m)	2700m
27/10/1978	\$5,000 Cup	B Hancock (10m)	2700m
3/11/1978	\$4,900 Cup	B Hancock	2350m
17/11/1978	\$9,900 Ansett Cup	B Hancock	2350m
8/12/1978	\$9,800 ABC Pace Final	B Hancock	2350m
30/3/1979	\$10,000 Members Cup	K Robinson	2350m
6/7/1979	\$4,850 FFA Pace	K Robinson	2700m
14/9/1979	\$10,000 Media Guild Cup	B Hancock	2350m
9/11/1979	\$4,900 FFA Pace	B Hancock	2350m
7/12/1979	\$7,350 NSW Sprint FFA	B Hancock	1 mile
21/12/1979	\$7,200 FFA Pace	B Hancock	2350m
21/3/1980	\$10,000 Inter Dominion Qual	B Hancock (10m)	3090m
28/3/1980	\$135,000 Inter Dominion GF	B Hancock (10m)	2700m
27/5/1980	\$1,970 FFA Pace	B Hancock	2700m
11/7/1980	\$4,950 FFA Pace	B Hancock	2700m
12/9/1980	\$7,500 FFA Pace	B Hancock	2350m
16/9/1980	\$2,985 FFA Pace	B Hancock	2350m
19/9/1980	\$10,000 Media Cup	B Hancock	2700m
23/11/1980	\$9,900 FFA Pace	B Hancock	1960m
31/3/1981	\$2,940 FFA Pace	B Hancock	2700m
29/5/1981	\$4,900 FFA Pace	B Hancock	1960m
17/7/1981	\$5,000 FFA Pace	B Hancock	1960m
18/9/1981	\$4,950 FFA Pace	B Hancock	1 mile
16/10/1981	\$10,000 Media Guild Cup	B Hancock	2350m
12/3/1982	\$5,000 FFA Pace	T Robinson	1 mile



Ray Wisbey the mentor behind the mighty Koala King.





**Brian Hancock**

in 1980, when in front of a massive crowd of 33,000 plus, he guided the Ray Wisbey-trained Koala King to a runaway success.

It would be the first of two Inter Dominions Hancock would capture in Sydney, with the other being Weona Warrior in 1994.

His first and only Miracle Mile victory, as a trainer, came in 1997 thanks to undoubtedly his best ever pacer, Our Sir Vancelot. Unfortunately he never got to drive a winner in the race despite 13 attempts.

Overall, Hancock won seven Harold Park Drivers premierships, seven Trainers premierships and topped the century mark of winners four times, with 133 victories in the 1990/91 season being his best.

"Harold Park holds a lot of good memories for me and one of them would have to be winning the Inter Dominion on Koala King," he told me recently.

"That night was memorable because it was the second largest crowd ever seen at Harold Park, over 33,000 people.

In a fitting finale, Hancock had his last drive at Harold Park on August 29, 2003 and saluted aboard a pacer called Dick Swiveller.

While he did make a brief comeback to race driving some years later, it is Dick Swiveller's victory which is recognised as Hancock's official retirement from the sulky.

## MARGARET FROST

**AS THE curtain draws on Harold Park Margaret Frost's name will forever be remembered and respected as one of the most influential seen at the historic track.**

In her years as a driver, Frost achieved many milestones and some of those rare feats have shaped the sport to what it is today.

Frost's first drive at the track, on June 2 1978, was a historic moment as she became the first woman licensed to drive on a metropolitan track.

Only two months after this, on August 11 1978, Frost became the first reinswoman to win at Harold Park.

Piloting her pacer Pretty Tough, Frost beat the likes of Brian Hancock and his pacer Koala King in the process. She also beat her husband at the time, Vic Frost, who was driving the public elect, Lochinvar Girl.

A few years later Frost completed yet another history-making moment at Harold Park.

On October 30 1981, Frost drove All Humour to victory in a mile rate of 1:59.5.

What made this win special was that Frost became the first reinswoman in Australia to win a race in under two minutes.

## FRAN DONOHUE

**Fran Donohue also holds a unique piece of not only Harold Park history but Australasian history.**

In the 1983/84 racing season Donohue won the metropolitan trainers premiership the only woman more than likely world wide to achieve such a feat.

With 31 winners for the season the best of these being Lehigh Lad which competed and won at Grand Circuit level. Other stars included Alphabeat, Born To Be, Karame Bella Bella, Kirlian, Sanctum and Overlite.

## KYOGLE WIRRA

**KYOGLE WIRRA isn't a household name when it comes to harness racing.**

In fact, most so-called experts would struggle to even remember the horse, let alone try and find a reason why he would be included in the 'Unique' category of Harold Park performers.

Kyogle Wirra (Wirrason-Lady Kyogle) has claims to being the oldest horse to have competed at the track, with his last start coming at the ripe old age of 20!

He was a late starter to the races and owners the Tuck family originally purchased him from George Aiken for 16 pounds. The horse was being used by Aiken to round up cattle.

Despite showing ability, he refused to pace and was eventually tried as a trotter. He won eight gymkhanas as a squaregaiter in succession during his education period.

Kyogle Wirra didn't start racing until he was an 11-year-old in 1957 and won at his fifth start at Richmond on January 25, 1958.

Overall, he had 192 starts for 15 wins with four of them at Harold Park.

His wins at the Glebe circuit were: September 12, 1958 (12YO), February 20, 1959 (12YO), December 20, 1960 (14YO) and March 17, 1961 (14YO).

He placed at Harold Park twice as an 18-year-old and once as a 19-year-old, the latter when third to Heroic Lad and Anstey's Cove on January 7, 1966 at the odds of 100/1.

Kyogle Wirra, or Toby as he was known by trainer-driver Ron Tuck and his family, had his final start at Harold Park on September 2, 1966 as a 20-year-old.

It was shortly afterwards, on November 10, that stewards barred the pacer from racing again because he was too old.

Denis DeClauzel, current Registrations Officer for HRNSW, relayed the story to me regarding this unfortunate chain of events that led to his barring.

"When I first started working for the Trotting Club and took over compiling the racebooks for HP and Menangle, we used to show the horses age," he explained.

"Sometime later it was decided that once a horse turned seven, instead of showing its actual age the book would show 'A' for aged.

"So for years Kyogle Wirra raced as a B G A. (bay gelding aged)

"Now, the rule changed sometime in 1966 from what I recall, and when the horse's age popped up as a 20-year-old, it drew the attention of the stewards immediately.

"Ron (Tuck) told stewards that enquired about the horse that he was waiting until the horse's birthday (August 1 back then, same as the thoroughbreds) to retire him on his 21st birthday.

"Stewards didn't fly with that scenario and retired him themselves."

In a newspaper article which explained the news of the barring, Tuck said he was proud to have achieved what he did with the horse.

Kyogle Wirra was retired to the Tucks property at Castlereagh and died on June 4, 1983 at the ripe old age of 36.

## AKRABAH

**WHILE he won't be remembered as one of the Immortals, Akrabah certainly earned his place in history when it comes to Harold Park.**

Akrabah, by Grade One out of Our Cherie, boasted 213 starts at the Glebe circuit between 1996 and 2004 - arguably the most ever by a horse in the pre and post-night trotting era!

Trained by Greg Lewis, Akrabah won on eight occasions, placed 49 times and was in the money (fourth and fifth place) on another 52 of his appearances.

In all he earned prizemoney in more than 50 percent of his starts at the metropolitan venue.

Akrabah's first win at the paceway was on February 13, 1996 as a three-year-old with Lewis in the cart.

He was again in the drivers seat when the horse broke his M0 status on November 6, 1998, while young reinsman Michael Towers drove the horse to his last victory at Harold Park on October 11, 2002.

Overall, Akrabah had 292 career starts for 15 wins and 72 placings for earnings of \$164,753 before being retired as a rising 12-year-old.

Others that have got close to his number of starts at Harold Park are horses of similar stature, with names such as Merrywood Prince, Classic Pastime and Bundaburg coming to mind.

## GYPSY PRONTO

**IT'S been well documented over the years how horses back in the 'good old days' would be forced to overcome massive handicaps to win races.**

Walla Walla was just one horse that springs to mind because of the huge starts he would concede his rivals and still round them up to score.

Gypsy Pronto gets a mention in the 'Unique' category for overcoming a massive 204 yard handicap to win on September 4, 1933 at Harold Park.

Owned and driven by the legendary Jack 'JD' Watts, Gypsy Pronto strung together a number of wins in 1933 including that remarkable achievement in September.

With the race being over two miles (3200 metres), the mare rated 4.27 to capture the event and write her name in the history books.

While there is no definitive record of the biggest handicap ever to be imposed on a horse, reliable sources inform that 204 yards was the furthest a horse could start from.

## ROWLEYALLA

**WHAT Rowleyalla did on the 22nd May, 1987 at Harold Park really had to be seen to be believed.**

The two-year-old time-trialled at the Glebe circuit, which was 743 metres in circumference at the time, in a remarkable 1:55.0 rate.

A large crowd stood amazed as the Keven Rivett-trained and driven youngster, assisted by pacemakers provided by two of Australia's best horsemen (Brian Hancock and Kevin Newman) carved out quarters of 28.5, 28.5, 27.9 and 30.1.

The time smashed nine records including the fastest time recorded at Harold Park, which previously belonged to Popular Alm of 1:55.9.

No one can doubt his inclusion into the 'Unique' category, for if anything, he was the epitome of the word.

Rowleyalla would go on to be one of the most sensational juveniles ever produced in Australia.

He continually met and beat the best of his generation at two and three and among his greatest triumphs at Harold Park, he won a NSW Derby and a NSW Sires' Stakes Final while also contesting a Miracle Mile.

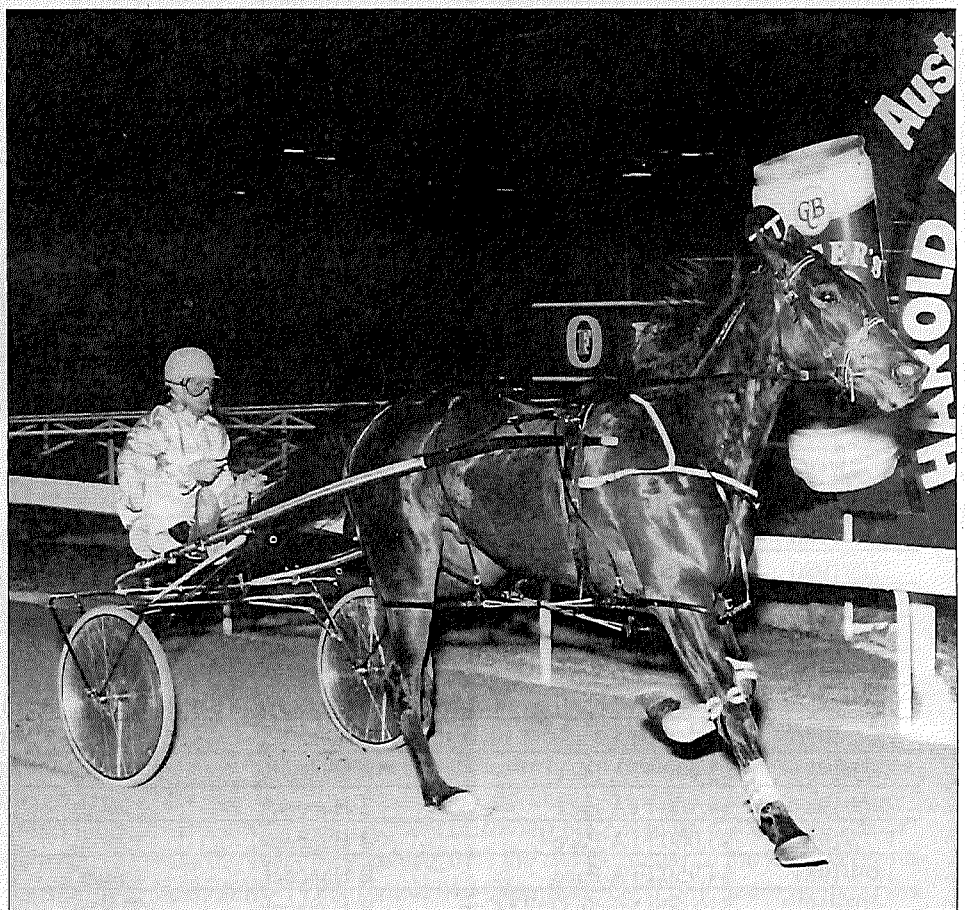
Generally, he was known for his speed, and he lowered his personal best time to a staggering 1:52.6 during a time-trial at Albion Park in 1988 when a three-year-old.

That particular effort was an all-time Australian record for pacers over a mile which shattered Popular Alm's 1:53.2 effort that stood for five years.

In fact, while tracks and the general breed of pacers have improved markedly over the last two decades, he still retains some records today.

Rowleyalla is still the fastest three-year-old in Australia thanks to his 1:52.6 effort, while his Harold Park personal best of 1:55.0 is still a record for a two-year-old gelding in Australia.

Considering the inception of the 'supertrack' at Tabcorp Park Menangle has revolutionized times in Australia, Rowleyalla's efforts over 20 years ago show just how brilliant he was.



**Rowleyalla as a two year old was the fastest horse ever at Harold Park.**



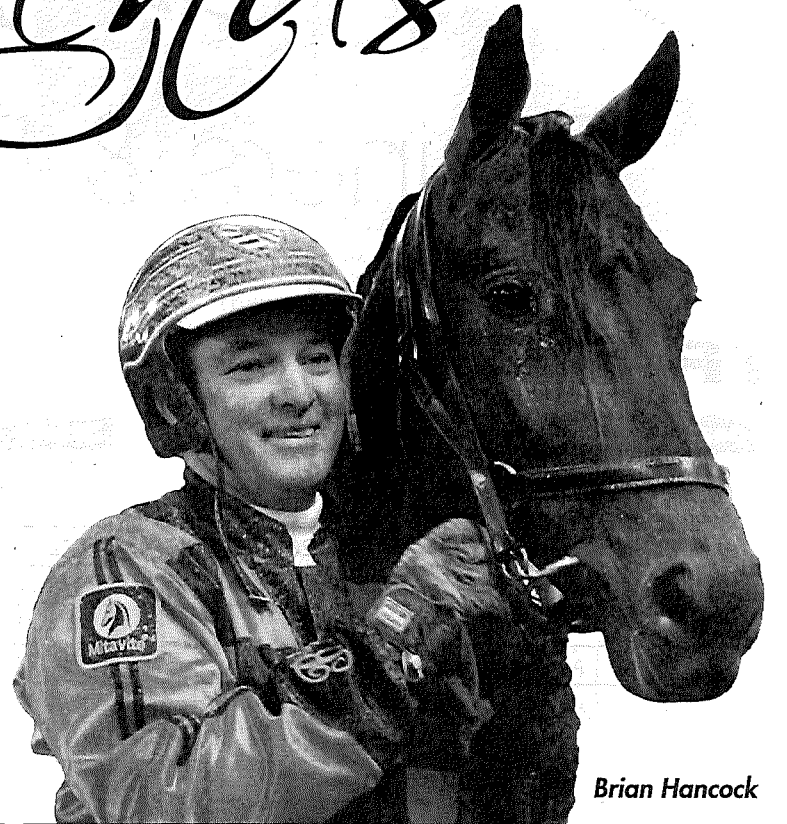
# The Legends

FOR the turn of the millennium the New South Wales Harness Racing Club Directors elected to induct horsemen as Living Legends. These horsemen must have attained the highest goals in the industry and the upmost respect of their peers. KB (Kevin) Newman, AD (Tony) Turnbull, BP (Brian) Hancock and VW (Vic) Frost were the first inductees.

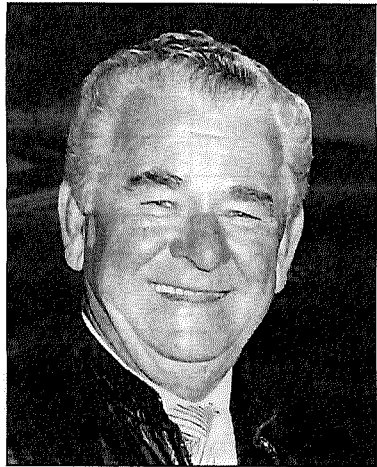
These superb trainer/drivers were later joined by LC (Les) Chant and KJ (Kevin) Robinson. As the curtain began to be drawn on Harold Park the final inductee this year became PRJ (Paul) Fitzpatrick.

Had this honour been commenced in the previous century no doubt the title would have been bestowed upon others. The likes of HR (Bert) Alley, JC (Jim) Caffyn, HB (Herb) Chant, HJ (Harry) Cohen, FJ (Frank) Culbert, J (Jack) Eddie, PJ (Perc) Hall, the Mazoudier Bros HS (Orrie) & WS (Bubs), EL (Jerry) McDonald, SA (Sutton) McMillan, Percy Miller, A (Gus) Millsom, CH (Charlie) O'Brien, WA (Colonel) Picken, the O'Sheas' WJ (Jack) and WA (Peter), CJ (Charlie) Parsons, A (Alf) Phillis, Peter and Dave Riddle, JD (Jack) Watts and FW (Bill) Wilkins would have been amongst the candidates.

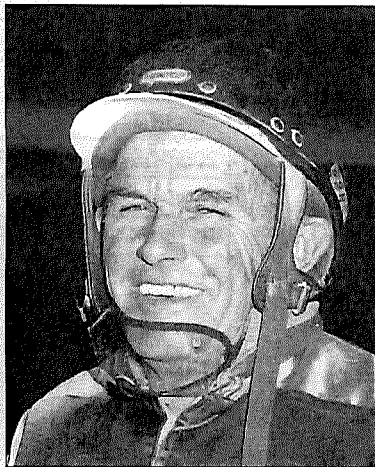
Undoubtedly however the name of Mrs Constance Moulds would have been included as an inductee as she championed the cause for the fairer sex in the early to mid 1900's. Mrs Moulds prepared Machine Wood a horse twice retired to the knackery to win the main event on the first meeting under lights at Harold Park in 1949. Her son, Lawrie, won the Harold Park trainer and driver premierships in the 1962-63 season.



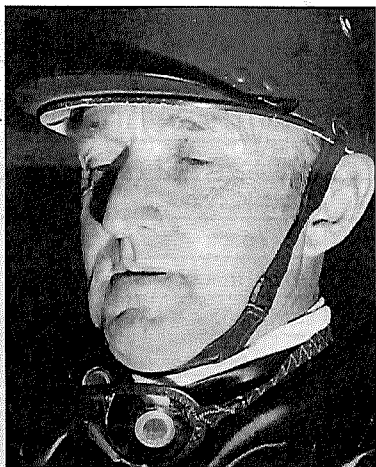
Brian Hancock



Kevin Newman



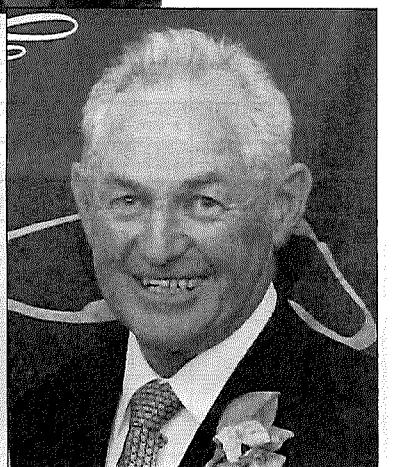
Tony Turnbull



Les Chant



The late Kevin Robinson



Paul Fitzpatrick



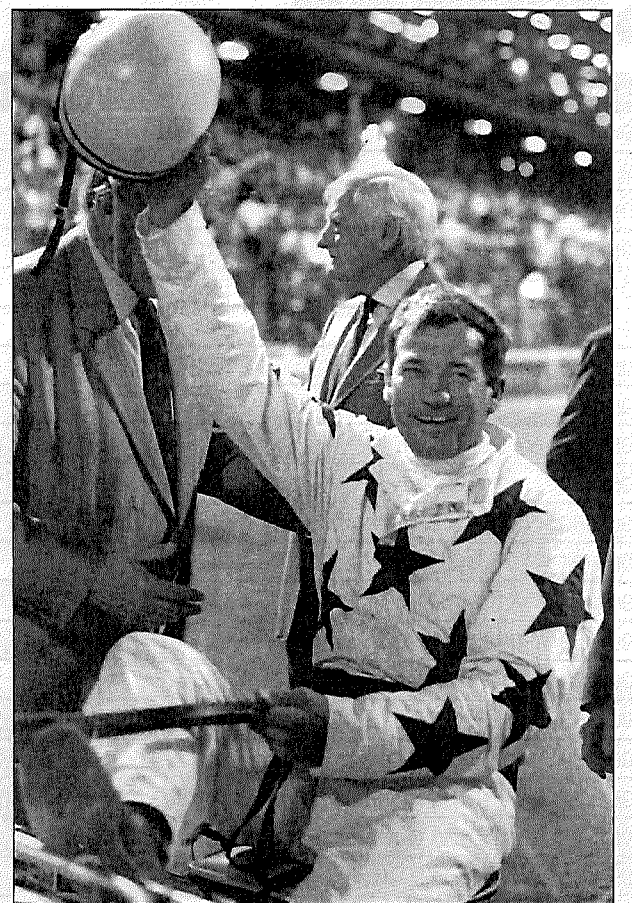
Two legends Kevin Newman and Tony Turnbull prepare a horse for trackwork.



Constance Moulds a trail blazer.



Jerry McDonald the youngest leading driver of his time.



A jubilant Vic Frost after another win behind the brilliant Westburn Grant.



# Harold Park Premiership

## Trainers & Drivers

### TRAINERS

Season	Winner	Wins
1949-50	Jim Caffyn	26
1950-51	Perc Hall	17
1951-52	Perc Hall	20
1952-53	Jim Caffyn	18
1953-54	Alf Phillis	22 1/2
1954-55	Alf Phillis	40
1955-56	Alf Phillis	32
1956-57	Alf Phillis	25
1957-58	Jack Watts	23
1958-59	Jim Caffyn	35
1959-60	Jim Caffyn	41
1960-61	Jim Caffyn	24
1961-62	Perc Hall	15
1962-63	Lawrie Moulds	21
1963-64	Perc Hall	24
1964-65	Alf Phillis	23
1965-66	Alf Phillis	31
1966-67	Kevin Newman	21
1967-68	Kevin Newman	19
1968-69	Kevin Newman	27
1969-70	Kevin Newman	31

Season	Winner	Wins
1970-71	Vic Frost	27
1971-72	Kevin Newman	37
1972-73	Kevin Newman	31
1973-74	Kevin Newman	43
1974-75	Kevin Newman	36 1/2
1975-76	Kevin Robinson	24
1976-77	Kevin Newman	42
1977-78	Vic Frost	57
1978-79	Kevin Newman	24
1979-80	Vic Frost	29
1980-81	John Binskin	30
1981-82	Brian Hancock	36
1982-83	Brian Hancock	41
1983-84	Fran Donohue	31
1984-85	Brian Hancock	44
1985-86	Vic Frost	45
1986-87	Brian Hancock	55
1987-88	David Aiken	66
1988-89	David Aiken	125 1/2
1989-90	Chris Gleeson	104
1990-91	Brian Hancock	55

Season	Winner	Wins
1991-92	Andrew Peace	67
1992-93	David Aiken	58
1993-94	Chris Gleeson	80
1994-95	Glenn Frost	66
1995-96	Darren Binskin	42
1996-97	Brian Hancock	56
1997-98	Glenn Frost	56
1998-99	Darren Hancock	99
1999-2000	Darren Hancock	63
2000-01	Dennis Wilson	59
2001-02	Dennis Wilson	49
2002-03	Brian Hancock	39
2003-04	Paul Fitzpatrick	69
2004-05	Paul Fitzpatrick	105
2005-06	Paul Fitzpatrick	111 1/2
2006-07	Paul Fitzpatrick	120
2007-08	Paul Fitzpatrick	66
2008-09	Paul Fitzpatrick	76
2009-10	Paul Fitzpatrick	37
2009-10	Ian Wilson	37

*Kevin Newman secured a record ten Harold Park Trainers Premierships.*

### DRIVERS

Season	Winner	Wins
1949-50	Jim Caffyn	21
1950-51	Perc Hall	24
1951-52	Perc Hall	24
1952-53	Jim Caffyn	19
1953-54	Sutton McMillan	24
1954-55	Alf Phillis	41
1955-56	Alf Phillis	30
1956-57	Alf Phillis	25
1957-58	Jim Caffyn	22
1958-59	Jim Caffyn	44
1959-60	Jim Caffyn	36
1960-61	Jim Caffyn	28
1961-62	Perc Hall	15
1962-63	Lawrie Moulds	21
1963-64	Perc Hall	35
1964-65	Perc Hall	29
1965-66	Alf Phillis	26
1966-67	Kevin Newman	21
1967-68	Kevin Newman	29
1968-69	Kevin Newman	31
1969-70	Vic Frost	33

Season	Winner	Wins
1970-71	Vic Frost	29
1971-72	Kevin Newman	39
1972-73	Kevin Newman	39
1973-74	Kevin Newman	52
1974-75	Kevin Newman	43 1/2
1975-76	Kevin Robinson	23
1976-77	Kevin Newman	37
1977-78	Vic Frost	52
1978-79	John Binskin	36
1979-80	Vic Frost	34
1980-81	Brian Hancock	35
1981-82	Brian Hancock	39
1982-83	Brian Hancock	38
1983-84	Brian Forrester	40
1984-85	Brian Hancock	45
1985-86	Vic Frost	45
1986-87	Brian Hancock	55
1987-88	David Aiken	67
1988-89	David Aiken	113 1/2
1989-90	Chris Gleeson	89
1990-91	Brian Hancock	63

Season	Winner	Wins
1991-92	Andrew Peace	91
1992-93	David Aiken	54
1993-94	Darren Hancock	52
1994-95	Glenn Frost	54
1995-96	Darren Hancock	42
1996-97	Brian Hancock	46
1997-98	Glenn Frost	49
1998-99	Darren Hancock	108
1999-2000	Darren Hancock	63
2000-01	Darren Hancock	55
2001-02	Josh Willick	70
2002-03	Greg Bennett	54 1/2
2003-04	Blake Fitzpatrick	64
2004-05	Gavin Fitzpatrick	69
2005-06	Blake Fitzpatrick	70
2006-07	Blake Fitzpatrick	77
2007-08	Gavin Fitzpatrick	41
2008-09	Cameron Fitzpatrick	45
2009-10	Greg Bennett	48

*Kevin Newman secured a record eight Harold Park Drivers Premierships.*



# Men AT THE HELM

New South Wales Trotting Club 1902-2010

## PRESIDENTS & CHAIRMEN

### JOHN MORIARTY (1902 - 1914)

Founding president of the New South Wales Trotting Club when the club was formed in 1902, Scottish-born John Moriarty held office until his death in 1914.

A popular and respected member of Tattersalls and City Tatts Club, he was also a member of the Australian Jockey Club and the NSW Royal Agricultural Society.

Moriarty was at the helm as the young club survived some momentous crises in the first decade. Australian trotting lost a loyal servant when he died in 1914 after a long illness.

### JAMES BARNES (1914 - 1940)

James Barnes was elected NSWTC president following the death of inaugural president, John Moriarty, in 1914.

Barnes held the reins for 26 years before his death at the age of 83 in May 1940. Barnes had been a foundation member and committeeman since the 1902-03 season.

Like many early trotting men, his love of the sport grew out of his daily association with the horse.

An apprentice blacksmith from the age of 13, it was a hobby he enjoyed throughout his life; despite the fact he became a successful businessman.

He acted as judge for the NSWTC for many years, and, like his predecessors, and some of his successors, he was very interested in gallopers and owned more of them than he did trotters.

In fact, he frowned upon any of his committee owning trotters.

Barnes was chairman of Tattersalls Club for 14 years and carried on the tradition of close liaison with the Royal Agricultural Society where he was vice-president for a period.

### JOE DAVIS (1940 - 1940)

A member of the New South Wales Trotting Club for 30 years, Davis was a committeeman for many years, serving as treasurer for a period, and was elected president of the NSWTC on the death of James Barnes in May 1940.

He served as president for less than two months, however, and died on July 2, 1940.

### ERNIE IRELAND (1940-1950)

Ernie Ireland was the third president of the NSWTC in 1940. He succeeded Joe Davis, who served less than two months following the death of long term president James Barnes in May 1940.

A member of a family famous in Sydney for its pastry and pies, Ireland was president when night trotting started at Harold Park in October 1949.

He died suddenly in Sydney in October 1950.

### BILL DUNLOP (1950 - 1954)

Bill Dunlop was one of the most popular figures in sport in New South Wales. Widely known as a prominent and successful businessman, he was held in high esteem by people from all walks of life.

Like his predecessors, John Moriarty and James Barnes, Dunlop raced both trotters and gallopers with success, but when he became NSWTC president, he refrained from racing pacers and trotters.

A committeeman of the Sydney Turf Club, Dunlop also owned the West Point Stud at Molong where he stood the successful sire, Persia, but spared no effort in improving and publicising the sport he administered.

The best galloper he owned was Silver Link, a winner of several handicaps and also successful at weight-for-age, which finished second to Rainbird in the 1945 Melbourne Cup.

He also raced standardbreds, with the brilliant Winsome Bobbie, a winner of 21 races, handled by Chris Rokkjer probably the best of them.

Dunlop steered the club through some stormy phases in the early years of night trotting at Harold Park, but following a 'bust-up' between chairman of stewards, Bert Creagh, and the NSWTC committee, which saw Creagh resign, the committee was deeply divided, even towards its own president.

Feeling he did not have the support of his fellow committee members, Dunlop did not seek re-election at the 1954 Annual General Meeting of the NSWTC and was replaced by affable vice-president, Alton Cusick.

### ALTON CUSICK (1954 - 1960)

Alton Cusick, a one-time Gosford publican, was a well known owner for 20 years, during which time he retained Goran Kelly as his trainer and driver, until Kelly retired as a driver.

He owned many champions, perhaps the most outstanding being Linda Steel, with whom he won 17 races at Harold Park. Linda Steel was one of the best pacers of her day and raced unhooded.

Another good unhooded pacer to race in Cusick's colours was Minton's Choice, which won 18 races at Harold Park and Victoria Park.

Minton's Choice had the distinction of winning at Harold Park from 156 yards behind. On another occasion, he beat the famous Lawn Derby when both pacers were off the same mark, 132 yards behind.

He was instrumental in the purchase of Menangle Park Paceway which would prove to be an astute purchase after the turn of the century.

The 1960 Inter-Dominion series at Harold Park, which drew a world record crowd for the final, was a tribute to Alton Cusick, who unfortunately died a few months later.

### JIM REEVES (1960 - 1973)

Jim Reeves, vice-president since 1954, and acting president since the death of Alton Cusick earlier in the year, was elected NSWTC president in one of the most keenly contested elections for years in September 1960.

In addition to his duties as treasurer, vice-president and then president, Reeves also represented the NSW Trotting Club as a delegate to the Inter-Dominion Trotting Conference, and later served as president of that body for six years following the death of J. P. Stratton in 1966.

NSWTC president from 1960, Reeves did not stand for re-election at the club's Annual General Meeting in September 1973. In ill-health for some time, he stood down on medical advice.

A member of the committee when night trotting started at Harold Park in October 1949, Reeves was later made Life Patron of the club. He was awarded an OBE in the 1974 Queen's Birthday Honour List for his services to the sport.

### F.W. (BILL) RYNAN (1973 - 1978)

Bill Rynan, vice-president of the NSWTC for four years, replaced Jim Reeves as president at the club's Annual General Meeting in September 1973.

A delegate to the Inter-Dominion Trotting Council, he was also president of the Central Trotting Association for several years.

Rynan served the maximum term of five years as NSWTC president before standing down at the 1978 Annual General Meeting.

He served as a member of the inaugural NSW Trotting Authority and was one of trotting's representatives on the NSW TAB.

Bill Rynan died in January 1980, following a short illness.

### BILL TREUER (1978 - 1983)

Bill Treuer replaced Bill Rynan as NSWTC president at the club's Annual General Meeting in September 1978.

A successful owner and breeder, Bill was the son of Bankstown stalwart Max Treuer, who prepared Chamfer's Star to win the 1966 Inter-Dominion Final at Harold Park.

Bill Treuer served as NSWTC president for five years, but under the club's Articles of Association, he was required to stand down as president at the 1983 Annual General Meeting.

He served as a director until resigning from the committee in March 1984.

### STAN HEDGES (1983 - 1988)

Stan Hedges replaced Bill Treuer as NSWTC president in 1983.

After serving the club for 15 years as a director, including five years as president, under the club's Articles of Association, he had to stand down at the Annual General Meeting of the club in October 1988.

He also played a major role in the planning of the Miracle Mile Restaurant development.

### LINDSAY NICHOLL (1988 - 1993)

After seven years as a director, Lindsay Nicholl was elected NSWTC President at the 86th Annual General Meeting on October 19, 1988, replacing Stan Hedges.

Mr Nicholl served as president for five years, but had to stand down at the 1993 Annual General Meeting.

He served as a director of the club until retiring in October 1994 and was instrumental in the foundation of Australian Pacing Gold on behalf of the Club.

As recognition of his duties to the Club Mr Nicholl was made a Life Member in 1990 whilst still serving as a Director.

### KEITH ADAMS (1993 - 1999)

Keith Adams replaced Lindsay Nicholl as NSWTC president following the club's Annual General Meeting in October 1993, and went on to celebrate an unbroken 26-year involvement with the State's principal club.

He became a NSWTC director in 1974 and served the club well with five years as treasurer, five years as vice-president and six years as president.

Under the club's articles of association, he will stand down as president at the Annual General Meeting in October 1999.

NSWTC directors honoured Keith Adams in 1996 by naming the public stand after him in recognition of his 21 years continuous service as a director of the club, and for his contribution to the re-development of the track.



## PRESIDENTS & CHAIRMEN

### TONY MCGRATH AM (1999 – 2001)

Tony McGrath was elected Chairman and was instrumental in the planning of the innovative 2002 Inter Dominion Championship which was acclaimed to be the best in modern history of the event.

As the harness racing's representative he negotiated along with the other codes of racing, thoroughbred and greyhounds, the terms of the Privatisation of the TAB with the State Government.

Representing the Club at national and state level Tony was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia for his contribution to harness racing in 2008. He was also inducted as a Life Member of the Club. And received the JP Stratton Award from Harness Racing Australia

### JOHN BAKER (2001 – 2007)

After a shift in the balance of power on the Board John Baker became Chairman after the 2001 elections.

Mr Baker admirably represented the Club on the Board of the inaugural 'new' controlling body Harness Racing NSW. During his tenure on that Board there was growing distrust between the Club and the Controlling Body which eventuated in to legal disputes between the Club and the controlling board.

John Baker was awarded Life Membership of the Club in 2008 after retiring as a Director after providing 18 years of diligent service to the Club.

John also received the JP Stratton Award for his service to the national industry.

### REX HORNE (2007 – continuing)

Having replaced John Baker after the 2007 Annual General Meeting Rex Horne set out to complete the transformation of the Club's secondary track at Menangle Park into a world class complex.

This was achieved in 2008 and continues however during the past two years this accomplishment has reinvigorated harness racing in the State. Further infrastructure developments will compliment what has been described as the best track of its size in the world.

Mr Horne with the support of his fellow Directors has managed the proposed rezoning and ultimate sale of Harold Park which when it eventuates will assure the future of harness racing in New South Wales.

## SECRETARIES & CHIEF EXECUTIVES

### RICHARD HUNGERFORD (1902 - 1923)

R. C. Hungerford replaced early acting secretary, Thomas Bryan, as the first secretary of the New South Wales Trotting when the club was formed in 1902, and held that position until 1923. His slogan was: 'Favours to all, privileges to none'.

He was also handicapper, starter and time-keeper, not only for the NSWTC, but also for many country clubs and Agricultural Societies. He was also judge at pony race meetings at Kensington and Rosebery.

Hungerford came from New Zealand, where he had been secretary of the Greymouth Trotting Club.

In 1904, the NSWTC published an annual 'Trotting Register', which provided the results and times of all trotting races in New South Wales, as well as a short pedigree of all performers, with Hungerford as editor.

He also assisted in the compilation of Volume 1 of the Australian Stud Book for Trotters in 1910.

Hungerford had the unenviable task of administrating a sport whose reputation fluctuated embarrassingly. He did not please everyone, however.

Although only a smallish man, it was said many a strapping horseman quaked in his presence, such was his overbearing demeanour.

When he resigned in 1923, a great man passed out of trotting. It was said at the time that had it not been for his hard approach, the NSWTC, and trotting generally, could have gone the same way as its earlier counterparts - oblivion.

Hungerford rocked the Sydney trotting scene when he resigned as secretary on October 29, 1923, after 21 years of service. His resignation, on health reasons, took effect on November 24, 1923.

A report in the 'Australian Trotting Record' following his resignation said a motion was passed sympathising with him in his illness and thanking him for his long and faithful attention to his duties and his untiring interest in the welfare of the club generally.

### FRANK HOWELL (1923 - 1941)

Frank Howell was appointed NSWTC secretary following the resignation of Richard Hungerford in 1923.

A popular man, Howell remained secretary until March 1941 when ill-health necessitated retirement.

He served 18 years as secretary of the NSWTC.

His role did not need the fire of Hungerford, but rather the art of a diplomat, a part he played with distinction.

### NORM HOLLIER (1941 - 1956)

Norm Hollier was associated with the New South Wales Trotting Club for most of his working life after joining the NSWTC as an office boy at the princely sum of one pound and five shillings (\$2.50) per week in 1918.

He remained with the club for 38 years, retiring after the 1956 Sydney Inter-Dominion carnival to become secretary of the Inter-Dominion Trotting Conference and Central Registrar.

In addition to his secretarial duties, Hollier also did the handicapping for trotting meetings from 1923, when Richard Hungerford resigned, until the advent of night trotting in 1949 when Bert Creagh was appointed chief steward and handicapper.

Mr Hollier took over in a period which saw the sport in NSW make many changes, the NSWTC eventually rising to become the leading trotting body in Australia. He died in Sydney on November 11, 1963.

### GEOFF STANGER (1956 - 1966)

Geoff Stanger joined the NSWTC in 1933 and was the longest serving official in the history of the club.

He started as an office boy with the club in Castlereagh Street and rose to be club secretary from 1956 until June 1966 when he asked to be relieved of his position as secretary on medical advice.

Stanger continued with the club as an accountant until retiring in 1974 - forty one years of sterling service.

Apart from war service, Stanger knew no other employer in his 41 years of working life although in later years he was plagued by ill health which many attributed to his enlistment years.



### LEN SMITH (1966 - 1982)

Len Smith, a dual international in Rugby Union and Rugby League, and a journalist with the 'Sydney Sun', joined the NSWTC in December 1952, initially serving as assistant chief steward and deputy handicapper.\*

The industry had plenty of potential at the time, but needed someone to steer it in the right direction. Len Smith was the ideal person for the job.

Smith established a News and Information Bureau and initiated the collection of statistics and records from his Harold Park office.

In 1953, Smith recommended to the NSWTC committee that it was a matter of necessity for the club publish a register of New South Wales results.

The club started to publish a monthly journal named 'Trotting Life' with Smith as editor. The journal contained all NSW results, official news and promotion stories. Trotting Life continued until 1960 when the Inter-Dominion Trotting Council decided to publish a National Register of all Australian results.

Smith's appointment as NSWTC Chief Executive Officer after the 1966 Inter-Dominion carnival at Harold Park, following stints as chairman of stewards and chief handicapper, allowed him to spend more time planning programs and promotions.

One of his first assignments was to introduce feature races that would put Harold Park on the Harness Racing map.

The Miracle Mile - Australasia's premier sprint event - is testimony to his vision and dedication.

An official with the NSWTC for nearly 30 years, Len Smith retired as Chief Executive Officer in July 1982, but was retained by the club as a consultant. The Club now conducts the Group One Len Smith Mile in honour of his contribution to the harness racing industry.



### TED BONE (1966 - 1981)

Ted Bone was appointed acting secretary of the NSWTC in 1966 following the resignation on medical advice of Geoff Stanger after the 1966 Harold Park Inter-Dominion carnival.

Bone served the club for 15 years as secretary working alongside Chief Executive Officer, Len Smith, before resigning his position in December 1981.

### GREG SCOTT (1982 - 1985)

Several months after Ted Bone resigned as secretary in December 1981, the NSWTC announced the appointment of Greg Scott as the club's General Administration Officer.

Scott was appointed to the club's administrative staff in December 1981, for a trial period and officially took up his appointment when the club's Chief Executive Officer, Len Smith, retired on July 9, 1982.

### RAY POWER (1985 - 1989)

In a reshuffle of staff in 1985, Greg Scott was appointed Racing and Promotions Manager with Ray Power taking the position of Secretary.

The reshuffle proved unsuccessful and divisive as Scott resigned soon after the 1988 Harold Park Inter-Dominion Carnival, while Power, who had been replaced by the board, resigned in January 1989.

### PETER V'LANDYS (1988 - 2004)

Peter V'Landys was appointed NSWHRRC Secretary/General Manager on July 4, 1988 and thus became the youngest Chief Executive to head a major harness racing Club in Australasia.

Joining the Club at a time of almost financial ruin V'Landys made the necessary savage cuts across the board and took the unprecedented step of moving the club into other fields in order to obtain new revenue, including publishing, with the club now owning and publishing National Trotguide and catering.

He successfully attracted a Sports Betting operator to the track and introduced gaming machines with the establishment of a Registered Club both firsts on any racetrack in Australia.

V'Landys was an integral part of the Racing Industry, negotiations with State Government of Privatisation of the NSW TAB and Harness Racing representative in agreement between the three racing codes in distribution of TAB funds. Such was his dominant role in the favourable negotiations for harness racing the thoroughbred code lured him from the Club to the position of Chief executive of Racing NSW in 2004.

### JOHN DUMESNY (2004 - continuing)

After the departure of Peter V'Landys in early 2004 John Dumesny who had been the Racing Administrator since 1988 was elevated to the position of Chief Executive without the Club Directors seeking other applicants.

He was considered to be the most innovative and intuitive racing minded employee since Len Smith during his tenure as the Racing Administrator.

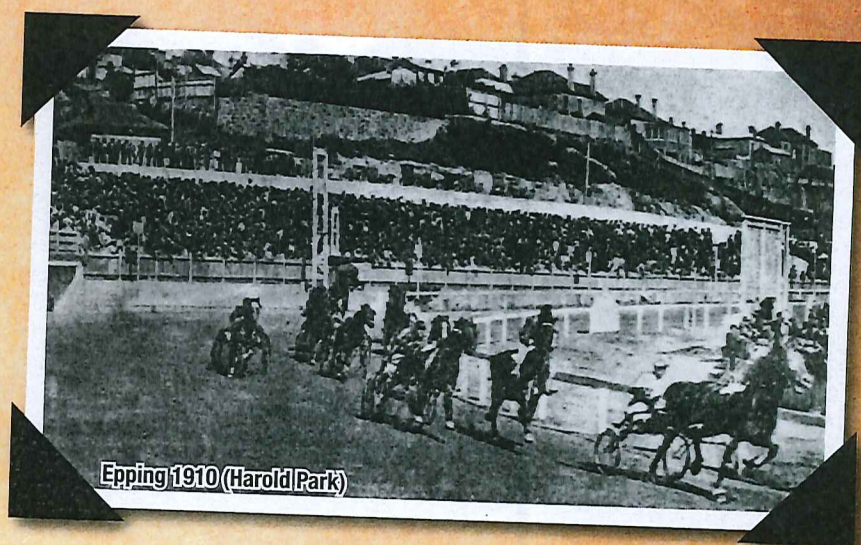
John is from a family with a long history in trotting dating back to the 1920s when his grandfather WH (Bill) Dumesny raced horses at Epping. His father Stan and uncle Joe continued to successfully race horses at Harold Park and established a breeding nursery "Ruby Vale Stud" in the Western Districts which produced many champions of the track during the past six decades.

As the Chief Executive Dumesny has been integral in the establishment of Tabcorp Park Menangle and the rezoning processes of the Club's Glebe property.

The development of a permanent training centre and infrastructure improvements to the Menangle Park property remain to be completed during his tenure with the Club.



# The New South Wales Harness Racing Club...



*over a century of tradition  
and continuing.*

*Trotting has been conducted on the Glebe property since 1890. Originally as Lilee Bridge, then Forest Lodge, followed by Epping and finally as Harold Park. This association now ends however a bright new era of harness racing is about to begin.*

*The New South Wales Harness Racing Club being the longest established organisation conducting the sport in Australia has proud traditions, which will continue at the new home of racing Tabcorp Park Menangle.*

*Visit [www.tabcorpparkmenangle.com.au](http://www.tabcorpparkmenangle.com.au) for further information.*







**Lillee Bridge 1890**  
**Forest Lodge 1902**  
**Epping 1904**  
**Harold Park 1929**

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on Friday 17th December 2010