



Annual Report 2019

The Timeless Story
of the **Horse** and
Human Connection





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Chairman's Message



Michael Taranto

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There will always be challenges for a vibrant industry such as harness racing, but I firmly believe that with a positive outlook, unity of purpose and confidence, HRA and its Members will continue to rise to meet them.

It has been a positive year for harness racing in Australia and for Harness Racing Australia.

Of course, there are some issues of great concern, especially the industry revenue model, but it is important that we do not allow negatives such as this to colour our thinking to the point where we forget about celebrating the positives.

We have such a great product with which to work and celebrate. At the top of the list has been another year of outstanding and exciting racing showcased at some wonderful venues.

Following three terrific Inter Dominions held at Gloucester Park, the baton was passed to Harness Racing Victoria to host the prestigious event on 15 December 2018, which was branded Tabcorp ID18. Returning to Victoria for the first time since 2009, the Series was boosted when the Inter Dominion Event Committee (IDEC) approved the reinstatement of the Inter Dominion Trotting Championship, for the first time in since 2012.

Trotting and pacing Heats were held at Tabcorp Park Melton, and successfully showcased regionally at Ballarat and Cranbourne before returning to Melton for the Grand Finals where both Champions were crowned after dominant displays.

Tiger Tara NZ (Bettors Delight), steered by reining Australian Driving Champion, Todd McCarthy, collected the trophy as part of what was to become a stunning year on the track and remarkable training performance by Kevin Pizzuto with victory in the Inter Dominion Pacing Championship for connections Mikey Hawli, Courtney, Kevin and Tanya Pizzuto.

The Trotting Championship was dominated by another New Zealand bred, in Tornado Valley NZ (Skyvalley NZ), who was clinical throughout the series in a faultless display for driver, Kate Gath, and trainer, Andy Gath, before stamping his greatness in the Final and deliver the famous Inter Dominion Trotting Championship trophy to owner, Norm Jenkin.

Harness Racing Victoria are to be congratulated on the success of ID18 both on and off the track. While, as always, the Championships provided outstanding racing, the Ballarat & District Trotting Club require special mention for their innovative broadcast presentation from inside the track when hosting the second round of Heats. From a promotional perspective, a lasting reminder is the stunning advertisement and memory of Standardbreds trotting along the Yarra River during commuter rush hour. This has set the bar by which future hosts can continue to build profile and momentum into Auckland, ID19.

In the days preceding the Inter Dominion, Harness Racing Australia held our inaugural National Conference at Flemington with great success.

The Conference was extremely well attended by people from across all industry sectors, who heard from a range of experts in the areas of breeding, wagering, broadcast and welfare. Highlights included the candid and honest observations and panel discussion among wagering providers, a deeper understanding of the importance of international cooperation, as well as an insightful youth session during which some of our sports best talent spoke passionately about the future.

A significant outcome from the Conference was the establishment of a formal Young Leaders Group. This new Group is Chaired by Todd McCarthy and includes a member from each State who participate in the industry in many and varies capacities: Brittany Graham, Kima Frenning, Ashlea Brennan, Brodie Webster and Mark Yole. As a group, they have already been active in the lead up to the AGM in Hobart where issues such as industry training and the introduction of drivers colours have been identified as key topics for debate.

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It is clear that the industry is blessed with great talent, and it has been another outstanding season on our racetracks with a changing of the guard as new champions have emerged in the open class pacing and trotting ranks.

Perhaps the Inter Dominion was a way of rewarding persistency, dedication and commitment for Victorian based trainer Andy Gath for whom it took thirty years of training Standardbreds to win an Inter Dominion with the brilliant trotter Tornado Valley NZ (Skyvalley NZ). If Andy somehow needed any reminder of the difficulty of winning an Inter Dominion, the brilliant Dance Craze was victorious on the undercard, of course of daughter of La Coocaracha who he trained to an agonisingly unlucky second in the 'Inters' some seventeen years earlier.

After a year in which Tornado Valley NZ tasted defeat just once from 12 starts, the Skyvalley gelding was crowned Australia's Aged Trotter of the Year and Trotter of the Year.

With champion Lazarus leaving Australasian shores, questions were asked as to who would take his 'pacing champion' mantle. It didn't take long to find the answer. Entering the Inter Dominion Pacing Championship following a dominant Victoria Cup win, Tiger Tara found his best form of the Series at the right time for trainer Kevin Pizzuto and driver Todd McCarthy. Memories of Tiger Tara free-wheeling out in front for McCarthy, and leaving star rivals breathless in his wake will be a lasting memory of ID18.

Later in the year, Tiger Tara added the Hunter Cup to his ID18 and Victoria Cup wins, making him far away the most dominant free for all pacer and the deserving winner of Australian Pacer of

the Year and Australian Horse of the Year titles in addition to the APG Grand Circuit Champion title.

Whilst Todd McCarthy's Inter Dominion win may have been his most memorable win, it may not have been his most memorable experience in season 18/19. Following his victory in the 2018 Australian Drivers Championship (ADC), Todd was selected to represent Australia in the 2019 World Driving Championship in Sweden in May. Whilst not tasting much success in Sweden, Todd should be congratulated and proud for the way in which he represented Australia, himself and his family on the world stage.

Whilst the full list of National Award winners are listed elsewhere in this document, special mention must be made to the nations leading driver, Chris Alford. It was a special year for Chris for winning his hundredth Group One, the first person to do so, as well as taking out the HRA J.D. Watts Award, for the nation's most winningest driver, for the 13th time - with an astonishing 422 wins!

After finishing runner up last year, Grant Dixon regained the title of Australia's leading trainer with an incredible 340 wins for the season. Grant's title makes it 7 wins from the last 8 years and amazingly 11 titles in the last twelve years for the Dixon family - a terrific achievement.

As highlighted, there was a great deal of excellent racing during the past season, but with continued pressure on industry funding and revenue's, it must be asked

whether the racing product is meeting market needs. Many people believed the handicapping system is in need of an overhaul, others feel the answer lies in improved programming, while others again the have a view that the broadcast presentation requires revamping.

After lengthy consideration of these and other philosophies/challenges facing the industry, HRA was tasked with the design of a new handicapping system which could provide competitive racing, full and balanced fields, wider prizemoney distribution, attractive wagering propositions, improved yield and providing racing opportunities for horses of all ages, abilities and gaits for a longer period of time.

The culmination of industry submissions, workshops, analysis of historical data and predictive modelling all pointed to a “ratings points” based solution. And so it was that a National Ratings System was developed.



The resultant National Ratings System was implemented on 1 July 2019 with immediate effect. In the in two months since transition, the system is already showing some terrific results from a horse number, competitive racing and wagering viewpoint. I look forward to the evolution of this system over time, as the Ratings Review Team and state programmers consult with industry and continue the work towards positive wagering outcomes. A major review is to take place in February 2020, by which time a comprehensive 6-month analysis will be possible.

Earlier in the year, RWWA's new Business Model was also rolled out across Western Australia. I also look forward to the successful progression of this model in WA, which provides the opportunity for other States to benchmark themselves and learn from each other.

The introduction of the National Ratings System and RWWA Business Model comes at a critical time for the sport with national wagering statistics showing a 1.8% decrease in total wagering in FY19, which is on the back of an 8% increase the year prior, being the first overall wagering decrease since FY08.

Whilst the turnover from the Corporate Bookmakers continues to grow (up by 13.6% in FY19), turnover from the TAB's continues to decline (9.3% decrease in FY19). With the majority of industry funding being received from the TAB, it is vital that the sport work with all wagering service providers, but particularly the TAB's to drive revenue forward.

The negative impacts of the new Point of Consumption Tax (POCT) are also being felt by many States, with many corporate

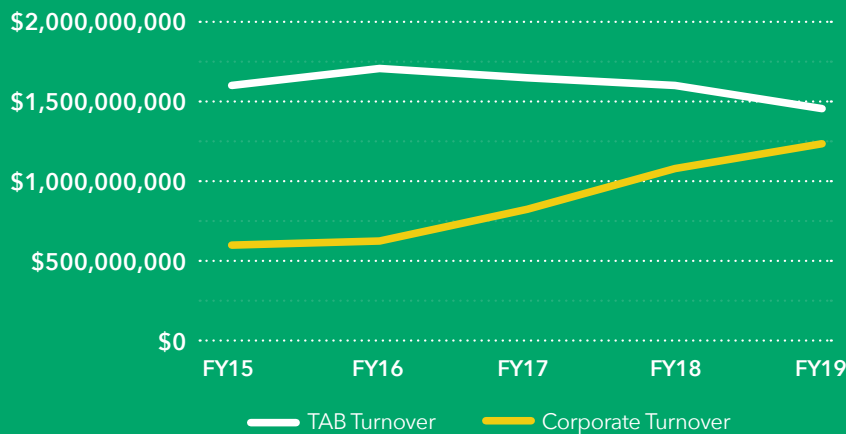
bookmakers passing on this 'cost' to the customer. Returns to racing and covering shortfalls is a priority that many States are working hard with governments to secure adequate compensation for, and HRA is assisting wherever it can.

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During the year, the 26th World Trotting Conference (WTC) was held in Stockholm, Sweden, where Australia was well represented with 10 delegates attending the plenary sessions and Committee meetings.

The 5-day Conference had an extensive agenda covering the major issues confronting our industry globally. There were many fascinating presentations and robust debate in committee sessions on subjects such as integrity, marketing, wagering, animal welfare, breeding and ownership. Despite the obvious differences brought about by different cultures or the size of the industry in the various International Trotting Association (ITA) jurisdictions, we all have similar problems.

HRA was ably represented by Deputy Chair, Rod Smith, and Chief Executive, Andrew Kelly, the latter performing leadership roles including as Chair of the

TAB V Corporate Bookmaker Turnover



Equine Health & Welfare Committee (for a fourth Conference) and expert speaker on the Wagering Panel discussions alongside the PMU and ATG.

Andrew's leadership and contributions to world trotting were also recognised during the Conference where he was honoured with Life Membership of the International Trotting Association.

Improved collaboration, a willingness to exchange of ideas and a uniform approach to major issues were identified at the Conference as an important way forward for our sport. This is accurate, but not isolated to ITA Member countries or our global sport - it is the same for our sport domestically.

To this end, a two-day workshop of HRA Members has been set down for September to identify opportunities and rejuvenate the operations of HRA. I am both excited at the prospect and confident that the outcomes will provide opportunities for HRA to not only build on the excellent reputation and work it already does in so many areas, but to identify and lead changes within the industry which will reduce costs and or drive efficiencies across all sectors.

Critical to this will be the acquisition of Racing Information Services Enterprise Pty Ltd (RISE) by the HRA Members from Harness Racing Victoria (HRV) - which all parties are committed to. When complete, this will be quite a historic event which should not be underestimated.

This reform ensures a national focus for RISE, and therefore industry's information and data offering, from a strategic perspective. As part of the acquisition, all parties have also committed to a large investment in a 'technology fund', which is designed to immediately modernise the company and deliver operational efficiencies, improved responsiveness and customer service.

Other advantages of this national collaboration will include Customer Relationship Management strategies, data commercialisation and the strategic prioritisation of projects.

There will always be challenges for a vibrant industry such as harness racing, but I firmly believe that with a positive outlook, unity of purpose and confidence, HRA and its Members will continue to rise to meet them.

While we are always striving for change and looking for opportunities to improve, one of the great underlying strengths of HRA remains the governance structure, and I wish to record a special thanks to the many people who serve our industry on

these committees and working parties.

I'd also like to record my gratitude to the Members of the HRA Executive Committee - Deputy Chair Rod Smith, Treasurer Dale Monteith, Gary Crocker, Bob Fowler, Joel Wallace and Margaret Reynolds - for their support and valuable contribution.

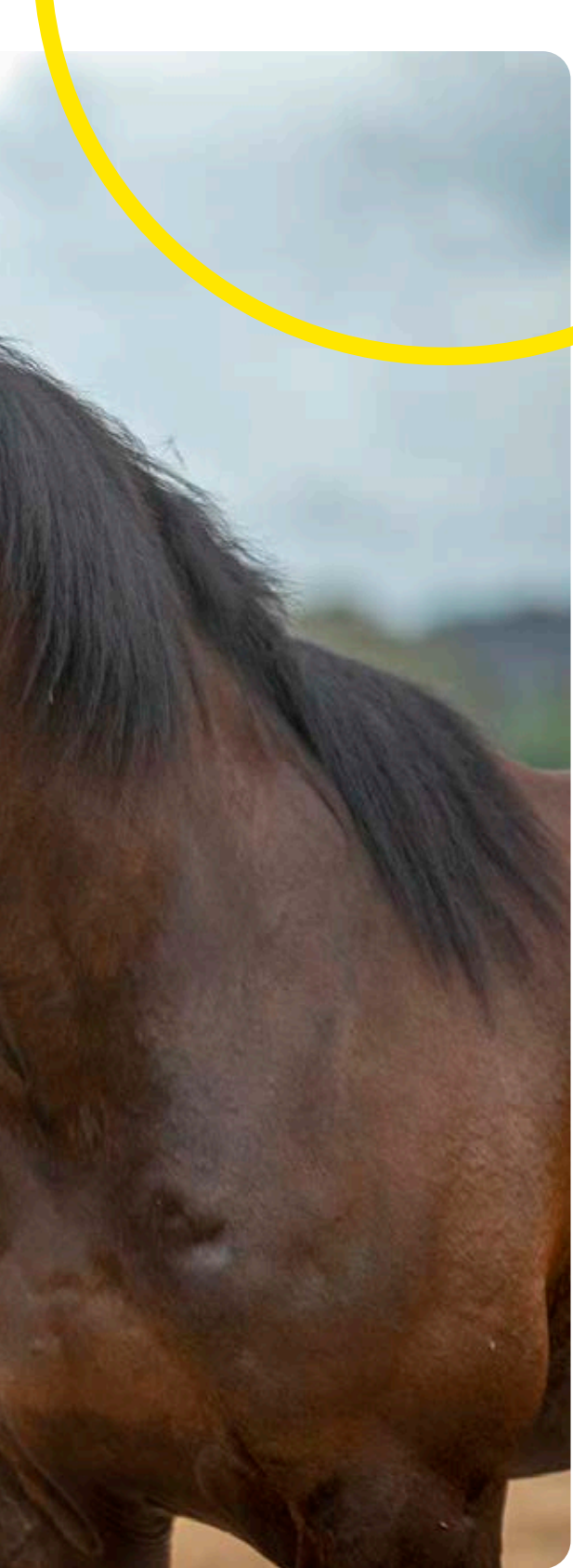
We have an excellent, dedicated Chief Executive in Andrew Kelly, and his small team in the HRA Melbourne office do a fabulous job - your efforts are much appreciated.

HRA works closely with HRNZ on many issues and our thanks go to Chairman Ken Spicer and Chief Executive Peter Jensen and their colleagues for maintaining such a positive relationship.

Many thanks also to HRA's legal counsel, Dean Cooper for his endeavours during the past year - we are fortunate to have him as part of the team.

Michael Taranto
Chairman





CEO's Message



Andrew Kelly

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I firmly believe that international partnerships are the key to the long-term sustainability of our sport globally.

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**If you have Integrity,
nothing else matters.
If you don't have
Integrity, nothing else
matters.**

– Alan K. Simpson

This is a simple, yet powerful quote which I've been using in various forums throughout the year. The message serves as both a reminder for us, and a beacon to others, of what underpins our industry values, approach and aspirations.

Integrity is a costly and time consuming, but very necessary, task for HRA and our Members. Ensuring a level playing field is essential for the well-being of our participants and the image of our racing among both punters and the broader community.

Unfortunately, "integrity" can be hard to define as it often means different things to different people, but too often those who question the meaning, or criticise efforts in this area have self-interest as their primary motivation.

One definition of integrity is "adherence to moral and ethical principles" while "honesty" and "accountability" are often mentioned, along with "doing the right thing". The infographic below lists more...

Regardless of one's view, we are heavily focused on integrity and our Members are committed to identifying and penalising anyone breaching the Australian Rules of Harness Racing, to ensure the safety of our people and to manage a world class equine health and welfare program for our horses.

Harness racing is a dynamic 7-day a week, 24/7 sport, which more than 48,400 Australian's rely upon for all or part of their income each week¹. As a result, the national rules of harness racing, which are consistently enforced across borders, are formally reviewed twice a year and amended wherever necessary to assist integrity officers to constantly meet the challenges presented by people prepared to engage in illegal activities.

HRA has for years been focussed on improving the health and welfare of all Standardbreds, and whilst succeeding in a number of areas, we remain focussed on continuous improvement.

¹ Size & Scope of the Harness Racing Industry in Australia, IER Pty Ltd, May 2013.



We believe “there is no finish line” to this continuum, and this belief is enshrined in a recently updated HRA Horse Welfare Statement which was first published in 2010:

EQUINE HEALTH & WELFARE STATEMENT

Harness Racing Australia is committed to the humane treatment and welfare of horses. The cruel, abusive, inhumane or neglectful treatment of a horse by any owner, trainer, driver, stablehand or other person must not be tolerated anywhere, anytime and under any circumstances.

- Cruelty can be defined as intentionally causing pain or unnecessary discomfort to a horse. The standard by which such conduct or treatment will be measured, is that which a reasonable person, informed and experienced in generally accepted training and racing procedures, would determine to be cruel, excessive or inhumane.
- Cruelty to a racehorse either in competition or outside of competition must not be tolerated. State Controlling Bodies and Clubs may consider further action and sanctions within the Australian Harness Racing Rules (AHRR), various Racing Acts and local

regulations.

- Neglect is defined as the failure to provide the basic necessities of life: adequate levels of food, water, shelter, security, hoof care, veterinary care, grooming, or sanitation resulting in poor physical conditions.

Harness Racing Australia is committed to:

- Upholding the welfare of horses as a primary consideration in all activities.
- Requiring that horses be treated with kindness, respect and the compassion they deserve, and that they never be subjected to mistreatment or neglect.
- Ensuring that owners, trainers, drivers and their agents use responsible care in the handling, treatment and transportation of their horses, as well as horses placed in their care for any purpose.
- Providing for the continuous well-being of horses by encouraging routine inspection and consultation with health care professionals and competition/ industry officials to achieve the highest

possible standards of nutrition, health, comfort, sanitation and safety as a matter of standard operating procedure.

- Continuing to support scientific studies on equine health and welfare.
- Being at the forefront of change and evolution of industry best practice.
- Increasing education in training, horsemanship and breeding practices.
- Requiring owners, trainers, drivers and stablehands to know and follow their State Controlling Body's rules and regulations in all equine activities and businesses.
- Tracking the Standardbred at each stage of its journey through the industry.
- Providing pathways and resources for life after racing to facilitate an increasing uptake of retired Standardbred horses into alternative equine pursuits.
- Continuously reviewing, revising and developing rules and regulations that protect the welfare of horses.

“The culture change is evident. The industry no longer adopts a default position of resisting change to regulations promoting better welfare outcomes.”

Strong progress in equine health and welfare has also been made in other areas in recent years, including:

- The establishment of a highly skilled and experienced welfare committee, the Standardbred Welfare Advisory Group (SWAG);
- Continuous rule restriction and moderation on using the whip;
- New rules controlling the use of tongue ties;
- The introduction of a new handicapping system which provides more racing opportunities to horses of all abilities, while encouraging them to remain in the racing pool for longer;
- World leading drug control regulation, enforcement and penalties;
- The introduction of microchipping and traceability (2017);
- The enforcement of formal deregistration of a horse, or notification of a horse's death Rules - including time restrictions; and,
- The ongoing analysis of raceday injury and incidents statistics measured across 2,763,953 starters across 37,191 race meetings, which have been reduced to:
 - injuries to 0.27% - equivalent to less than 3 injuries in 1,000 starts
 - euthanasia rate of 0.002% - equivalent to 2 deaths out of 100,000 starters.

These changes strongly indicate that, unlike the not so distant past, the industry no longer adopts a default position of resisting change to regulations promoting better welfare outcomes.

This includes overwhelming industry support for State based rehoming programs and life after racing activities, where at the end of their racing life, almost 80% of Standardbreds are rehomed.

All of this provides the confidence to produce figures we can verify and stand behind, with the infographic below illustrating some important industry facts - facts that we are proud to promote.

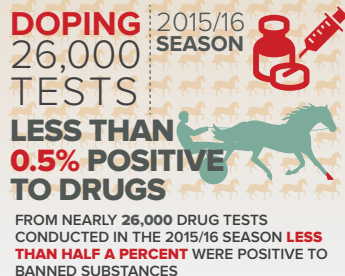
HARNESS RACING IN AUSTRALIA - THE STATS

FIRST RACE START



A 2011 STUDY HAS SHOWN THAT STANDARDBREDS WHICH HAVE THEIR FIRST RACE START AT TWO YEARS OF AGE END UP HAVING SIGNIFICANTLY LONGER AND MORE SUCCESSFUL RACING CAREERS THAN THOSE THAT BEGIN RACING LATER.

BANNED SUBSTANCES



LIFE AFTER RACING



66.5%

REHOMED

66.5% OF RETIRED STANDARDBREDS ARE REHOMED TO EQUESTRIAN, PLEASURE RIDING HOMES OR A RETIREMENT PROGRAM

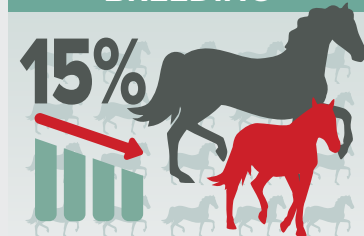
13%

13% OF RETIRED STANDARDBREDS GO ON TO A BREEDING CAREER



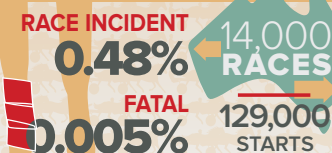
www.thereisnofinishline.com.au

BREEDING



4524 STANDARDBRED FOALS WERE BORN IN THE 2012/13 BREEDING SEASON, **THIS IS A 15% DECREASE SINCE 2010**

INJURIES



OVER 14,000 HARNESS RACES ARE CONDUCTED ACROSS AUSTRALIA EACH YEAR WITH AN INCIDENT/INJURY RATE OF 0.48% AND FATAL ACCIDENTS AT 0.005%

During the year I was fortunate to represent HRA at the 26th World Trotting Conference in Stockholm, Sweden, where, I was nominated as Chair of the International Trotting Associations (ITA) Equine Health & Welfare and Integrity Committee for the fourth time.

Aside from the excellent presentations, discussions and networking opportunities, these Conferences provide across all areas of the industry, it is also a great learning opportunity and chance to benchmark yourself in relation to other countries.

Unfortunately, what has become apparent when making these assessments, is that there are some clear differences in the focus of individual ITA member country welfare priorities. While we have to accept that some of these are due to cultural differences and others are resource (people, skills and dollar) driven - to be

blunt, it is disappointing that it appears in reality that some well-resourced countries who champion themselves as leaders in the welfare and or integrity space (and happy to point fingers at other countries) are far more style than substance when it comes to tackling the major issues. This has been illustrated where rules might be in place, but the disciplinary systems are so broken or ill-conceived that no penalties are applicable in even the most basic cases.

To be respected you have to do what you say and so while we can take comfort from Australia's equine health, welfare and integrity performance, which by any measure is world class, the disparities between countries is a concern that requires urgent attention. As a global industry it's my belief that we need to take our equine health, welfare and integrity responsibilities more seriously

and apply minimum welfare and integrity benchmarks that everyone can aspire to. This is an issue Australia will be carrying forward in all future international forums.

For example, the variation in swabbing numbers between countries shown in the Integrity & Drug Control table below is astounding. It is embarrassing for a professional sport to think that testing only 5% of its athletes for drugs in a particular season (Australia = 22.6%) is acceptable to the public, let alone punters who demand the confidence of a level playing field. A starting point could be setting a minimum number of swabs per '000 starters (eg. 200 or 20% of population) or a minimum number of samples taken per race (eg. 2), combined with out of competition and foal testing. Anything less is not taking the issue seriously.

Global Stats 2018 - Integrity & Drug Control

Integrity & Drug Control	Australia	Canada	France	Germany	Great Britain	New Zealand	Norway	Sweden	USA
Urine samples tested each year	13,088	15,980	17,564	361	2	2,360	927	2,930	78,000
Plasma samples tested each year	15,689	3,502	17,564	397	50	2,108	888	1,700	0
Total Samples tested each year	28,777	19,482	35,128	758	52	4,468	1,815	4,630	78,000
Average number of samples taken per race	2.04	1.68	3.14	0.54	0.08	1.80	0.48	0.55	1.50
% of racing population swabbed	22.60%	22.13%	23.22%	5.97%	1.03%	16.67%	5.12%	5.04%	18.92%
Swabs per '000 starters	226	221	232	60	10	167	51	50	189
No. +ve tests to prohibited substances each year	81	39	39	10	7	12	2	1	N/A

Source: 2019 WTC

In the end, our sports social licence to operate will be determined by the public. Animal activism is global, and spillover campaigns will affect all countries. Preparedness is critical, so in addition to drug control benchmarks, Australia will also be advocating for the annual collection of data and transparent reporting by all ITA Members on the following items:

- racing relating injury and incident data;
- racing related deaths;
- life after racing (inclusive of program information, re-homing numbers and budget allocation);
- retirement age;
- Benchmarking withdrawal times and or screening limits;
- Slaughter numbers;
- numbers of horses who suffer bleeding attacks while racing.
- numbers of horses who suffer cardiac arrhythmia while racing.

Continuing with the international comparisons, Australia's wagering

performance continues to be impressive as can be seen from the table below regarding global comparisons of racing and wagering statistics in 2018.

Internationalisation, in all its forms, continues to be a focus for HRA, including wagering. This has been particularly important in recent years, so it was disappointing when the PMU (France) made the decision to cease importing Australian trotting product in January 2019.

Whilst HRA continues to work with the French on alternatives, added pressures have been felt with a sharp decline in turnover from New Zealand. Therefore it was pleasing to break into the US market with two meetings a week (Monday and Tuesday afternoons) as well as an increased footprint into Sweden, who are now taking an average of 4 meetings per week from Australia.

The year finished in positive territory with Clubs sharing in almost \$3.4m in additional revenue.

CLUB REVENUE SHARE

FY19	FY18	Change
\$3,390,428	\$3,371,615	+1%

Regional Analysis - Imported Racing Product

- Integration along with customer acquisition has seen strong growth continue from our PGI business
- New Zealand turnover continues to decline. Increased FO markets offered on other sports creating competition on for racing.
- Sweden steady however they are planning an increase to races exported.
- France decline as a result in PMU operational hours change and less Australian races fitting into the new hours.
- Commencement into North American market on Monday & Tuesday day meetings. Small revenue returns at the moment, however, expected to build. Further days expected by mid 2020.

Global racing and wagering statistics in 2018

Racing	Australia	Canada	France	Germany	Great Britain	New Zealand	Norway	Sweden	USA
Number of races	14,087	11,581	11,183	1,411	630	2,482	3,815	8,448	52,044
Average number of horses per race	9.04	7.6	13.53	9	8	10.8	9.29	10.88	7.92
Staters per year	127,346	88,016	151,306	12,699	5,040	26,806	35,441	91,914	412,188
Estimated number of active individuals (licence holders)	10,162	2,865	18,000	1,647	N/A	1,310	4,564	3,300	17,500
Number of tracks	91	25	217	9	30	33	17	33	245
Wagering Turnover (AUD)	2,905,982,335	440,496,693	6,155,627,922	26,166,033	N/A	279,790,530	597,877,884	2,240,925,039	1,376,360,696
Average Wagering Turnover per race	206,288	38,036	550,445	18,544	N/A	112,728	156,718	265,261	26,446

Source: 2019 WTC

Sky Racing and Tabcorp have been marvellous partners on the import and export side of wagering and the new year looks exciting with investments in comingling pools set to become a reality along with increased imported harness racing product for local punters.

In closing, I am proud to have been able to serve the HRA Membership and wider industry on these and other important activities throughout the year.

But I cannot finish this report without paying tribute to the many people who work so hard to ensure that HRA continues to function in an effective manner.

Sponsorship wise I thank Peter Bourke and David Boydell from Australian Pacing Gold (APG) and Chris Burke from International Racehorse Transport (IRT) for their wonderful support of industry activities. The support of Rob Veale from V-Insurance, our insurance brokers, and Tony Pointon from Pointon Partners for their legal services has also been outstanding.

HRA is fortunate to have such a strong committee structure, ably led by their respective Chairmen in Dean Cooper (Chairmen of Stewards & National Rules) and Dr Patricia Ellis (Standardbred Welfare Advisory Group), along with Dale Monteith (Finance), and I think them for their participation, significant contributions and patience.

The relationship with our Members is extremely vital, and I thank their Boards, Chief Executives and senior management for their continued support, guidance and confidence given the day-to-day challenges of their own organisations.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the business of harness racing rarely stops, making the dedication and continued commitment of the HRA Executive even more remarkable. My thanks to you all, and in particular a heartfelt thanks to HRA Chairman, Michael Taranto who remains available day and night for discussion and wise counsel.

And finally, a massive thank you to Cameron, Kathleen, Julie, Kathy, Laraine and Kerry for your enthusiasm and effort. So many roles within our organisation require commitment over and above what is possible to define in a job description. Your dedication can never be questioned, and it is greatly appreciated.

Andrew Kelly

Chief Executive

Keeper of the Australian Trotting Stud Book



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HRA has for years been focussed on improving the health and welfare of all Standardbreds, and whilst succeeding in a number of areas, we remain focussed on continuous improvement.

APG Grand Circuit Review



By Chris Barsby

The heart of a champion can never be measured.

But what can be measured is effort.

And millionaire pacer Tiger Tara gave everything during the 2018/19 Australian Pacing Gold Grand Circuit season which paved the way for the fierce, relentless and hard-running pacer to land the title of Grand Circuit champion.

His heart on the sleeve and never say die attitude makes him very popular amongst fans.

Tiger Tara amassed 375 points throughout the season.

The eight leg series which commenced back in 1977 is now worth more than \$3.95 million and starts in October with the Victoria Cup followed by the New Zealand Cup, Inter Dominion, Auckland Cup, WA

Pacing Cup, Hunter Cup and Miracle Mile before concluding with the Blacks A Fake Queensland Championship.

From the stables of Sydney horseman Kevin Pizzuto, the eight-year-old entire competed in six of the eight races and proved triumphant in the Victoria and Hunter Cups plus the Inter Dominion Grand Final.

His trio of feature race victories all came at TABCORP Park, Melton and the winning formula was identical, leading and dominating his rivals.

Tiger Tara finished a nose second behind Thefixer in the New Zealand Cup.

His unplaced efforts came via the Miracle Mile (5th behind Spankem) and the Blacks A Fake Queensland Championship (6th behind Colt Thirty One).

Overall, he won 8 of his 17 starts while amassing more than \$845,000 in prizemoney during the season.

Tiger Tara becomes the first Australian trained Grand Circuit champion since Lennytheshark shared spoils with Smolda during the 2016 term.

The recently retired dual hemisphere champion Lazarus won the two previous titles prior to Tiger Tara this season.

Tiger Tara set the tone early for the Grand Circuit season with his romp in the Victoria Cup when he thrashed star West Australian pacer Chicago Bull in the 2240m feature.

His all the way victory resulted in a winning time of 1:53.4.

Heading across the ditch next for the New Zealand Cup, Tiger Tara went agonisingly close to snatching victory but came up a nose short behind Thefixer in the 3200m stand start feature.



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His heart on the sleeve and never say die attitude makes him very popular amongst fans.

Prepared by the All Stars operation of Mark Purdon and Natalie Rasmussen, the powerful stable finished 1st, 3rd, 4th and 5th in the Christchurch feature.

The Inter Dominion Grand Final was another outstanding front-running display from Tiger Tara easily defeating Our Uncle Sam and Cruz Bromac in the 2760m feature.

The winning mile rate of 1:53.9 established a new track record after eclipsing the mark previously held by Lazarus at 1:54.1.

The battle between Tiger Tara and the All Stars continued throughout the season.

Emerging star Turn It Up showcased his star qualities with his stylish victory in the Auckland Cup at Alexandra Park.

Handled by Mark Purdon, the Australian bred four-year-old rated 2:02.1 for the 3200m stand start feature.

Across the Nullarbor, the Justin Prentice/Gary Hall Jnr combination proved triumphant in the WA Pacing Cup when scoring with Rocknroll Lincoln in a new race record time of 1:56.8 for the 2936m mobile start feature.

Tiger Tara again stood tall with another scorching victory in the Hunter Cup when leading throughout in the 2760m mobile start feature defeating Our Uncle Sam and San Carlo.

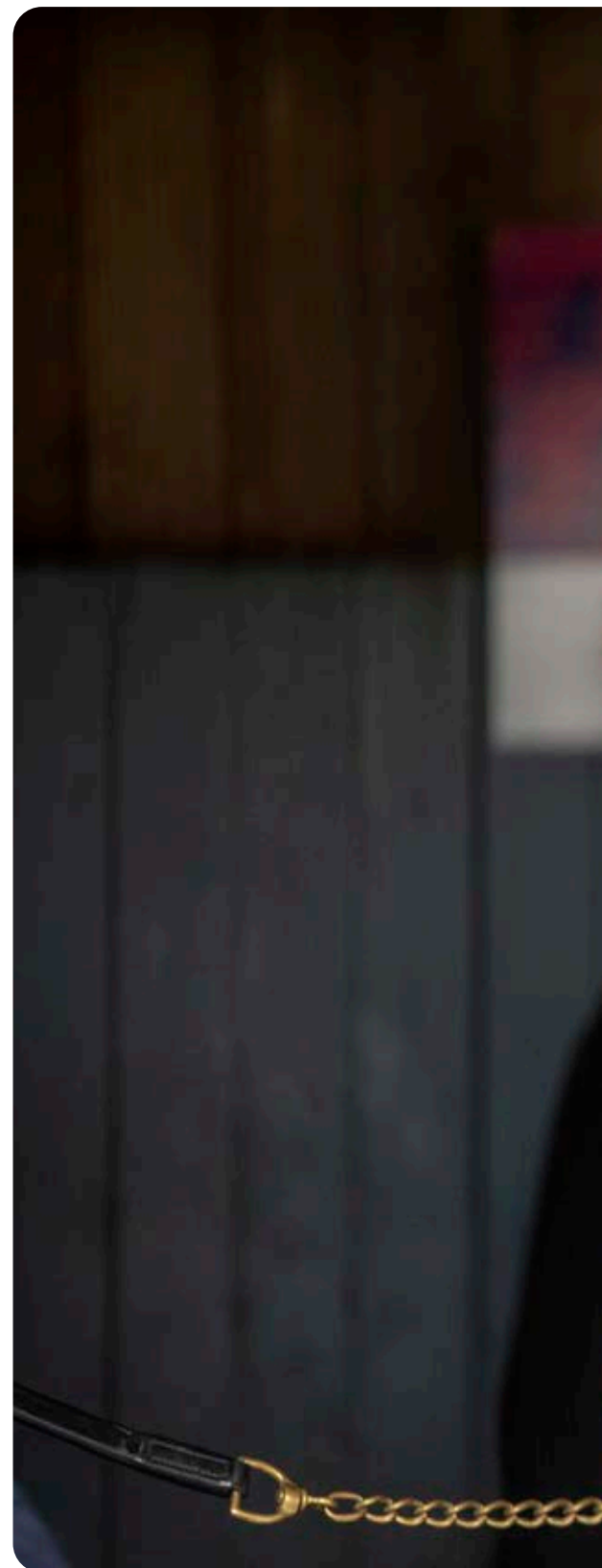
The Miracle Mile went the way of another exciting four-year-old in Spankem from the All Stars stables who led throughout in a time of 1:47.7 defeating his stablemate Thefixer and Poster Boy in the sprint classic.

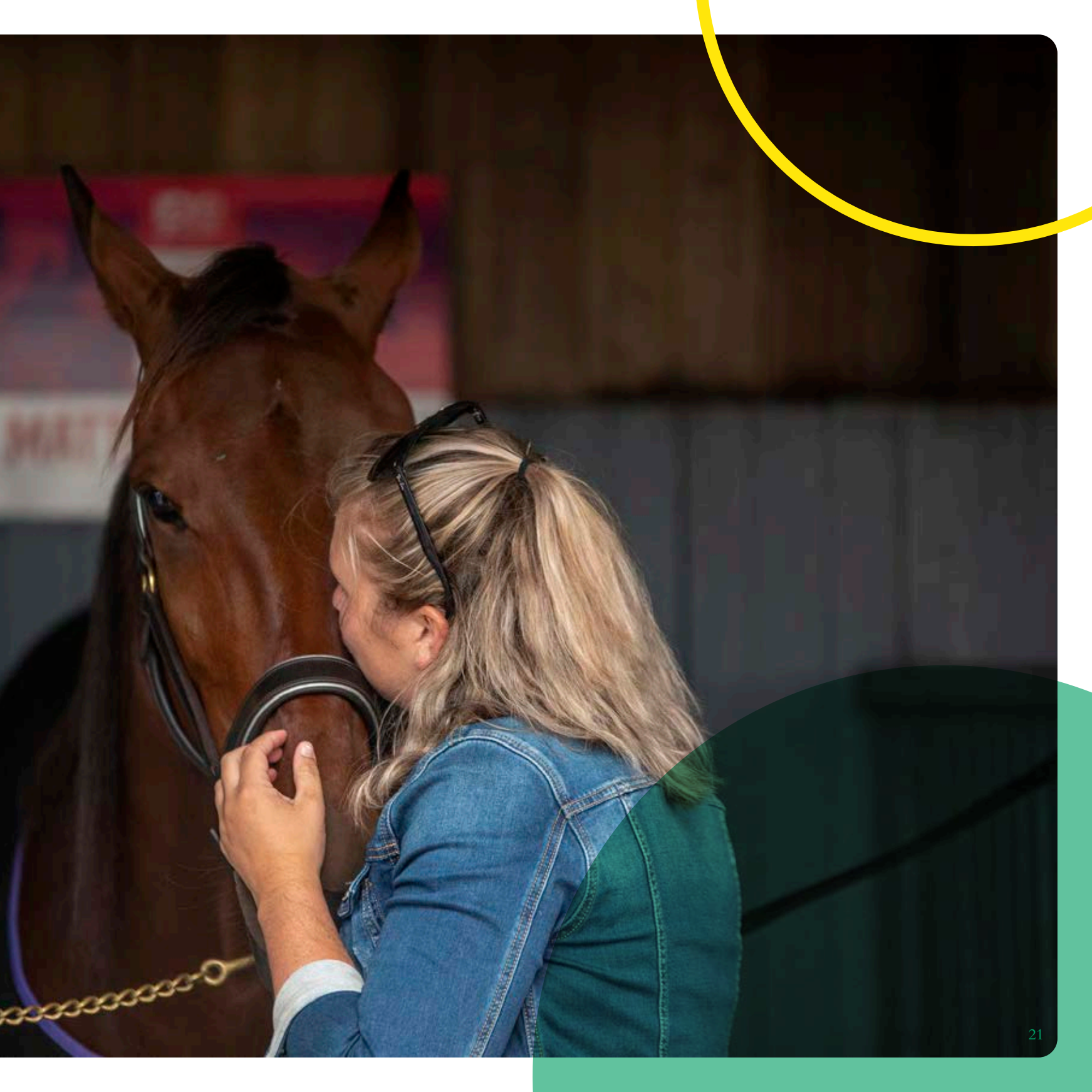
And the final leg of the series went to local hero Colt Thirty One who relished a genuine speed throughout before producing a barnstorming burst to take the Blacks A Fake Queensland Championship at Albion Park.

The Grant Dixon prepared four-year-old established a new track record with a winning mile rate of 1:53.7 for the 2680m mobile start feature.

In the end, Tiger Tara finished with 375 points, well ahead of Thefixer (164) and Our Uncle Sam (122).

Overall, Tiger Tara claimed a trio of features as did the All Stars but the influx of youth throughout the season was a pleasing aspect with the likes of Turn It Up, Spankem and Colt Thirty One looking genuine Grand Circuit contenders for many seasons to come.





APG Trotting Masters Review



By Chris Barsby

The 2018/19 Australian Pacing Gold Trotting Masters series crowned rising star Sundees Son as the latest champion following a dominant backend of the season display which netted both Auckland features – the ANZAC & Rowe Cups.

New Zealand trained trotters have owned the Trotting Masters, first commencing during the 1999/2000 season, the Kiwis have had eleven (11) individual champions crowned.

The mighty Lyell Creek (2000, 2001 & 2005) started the domination which was followed Take A Moment (2003 & 2004), Allegro Agitato (2006), One Over Kenny

(2007 & 2009), Mountbatten (2008), I Can Doosit (2012), Vulcan (2013), Stent (2014 & 2015), Speeding Spur (2016), Habibti Ivy (2017) and now Sundees Son (2019).

By comparison, Australian trained trotters to claim the title include La Coocharacha (2002), A Touch Of Flair (2007), Sundons Gift (2010 & 2011) while the most recent was Sparkling Success (2018).

In 2007, the title was split between One Over Kenny and A Touch Of Flair.

But it was Sundees Son that stamped himself as a supercharged trotting talent of the future with his outstanding achievements in the North Island.

Prepared by father/son combination of Robert and John Dunn, the Majestic Son – Stardon four-year-old gelding is raced by his breeder Colin Hair.

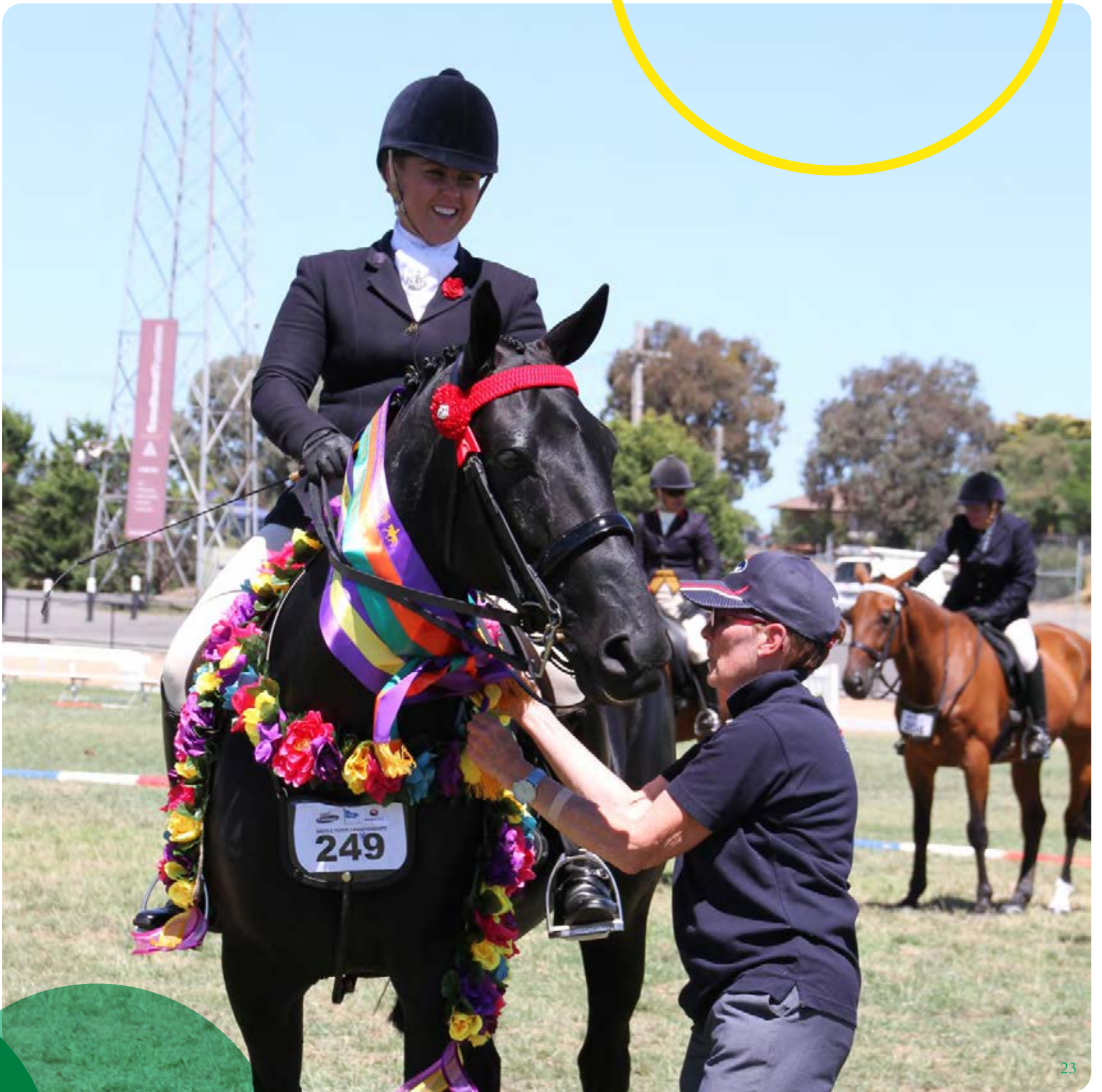
In his 11 starts during the season, Sundees Son amassed more than \$245,000 owing to his 8 victories while taking his overall earnings past \$300,000.

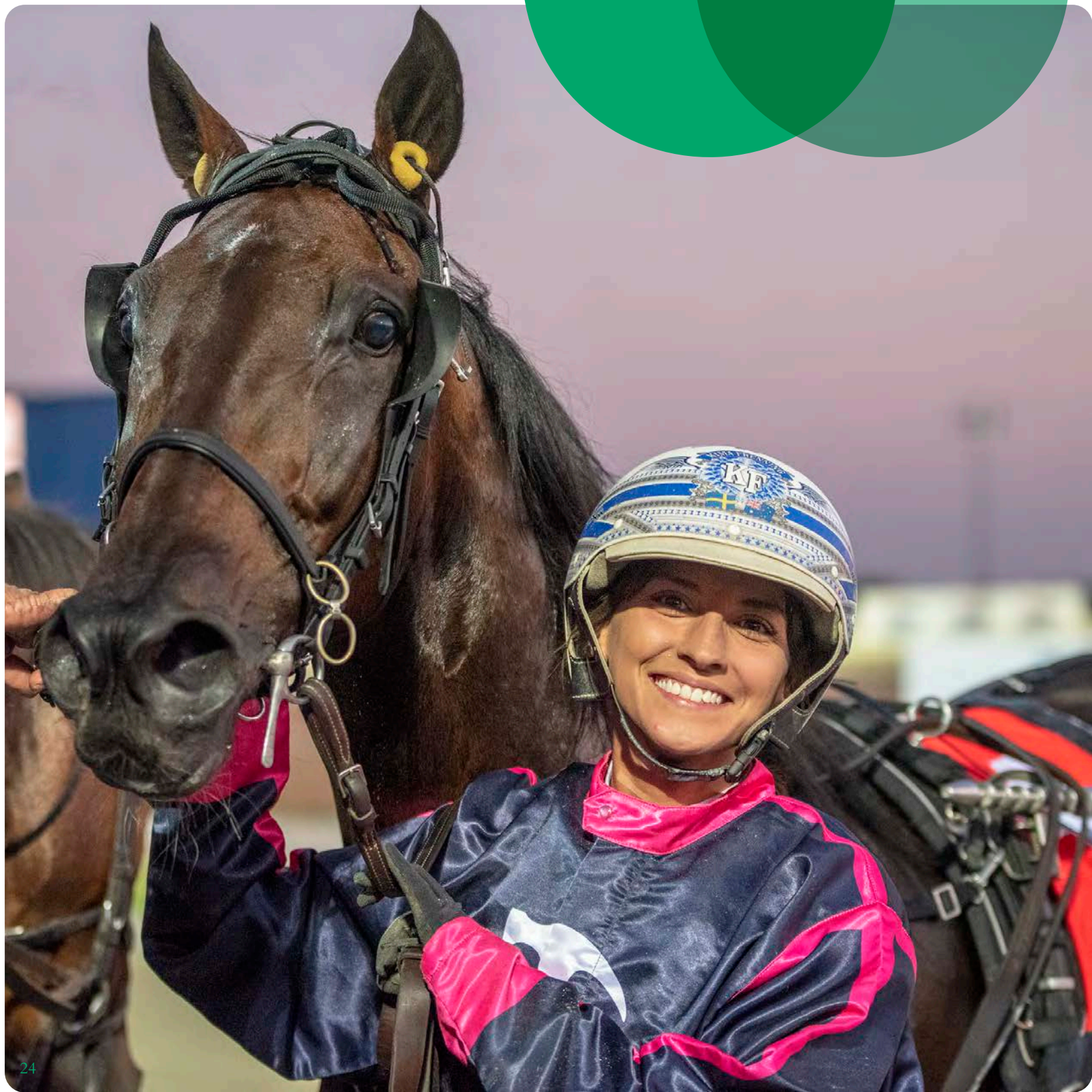
The six leg APG Trotting Masters series commences in November at Christchurch with the Dominion before heading to Melbourne for the Inter Dominion, Great Southern Star and the Australian Trotting Grand Prix while the series concludes in Auckland with the ANZAC and Rowe Cup at Alexandra Park.

The \$300,000 Used To Me @ Haras des Trotteurs Dominion went to the stables of West Melton horseman Ken Ford again following the dominant display from Marcoola.

Unlike the previous year when stable entrant Amaretto Sun scored at cricket score like odds, Marcoola was strongly fancied and delivered a thrashing to his rivals in the 3200m stand start feature.

Adopted Aussie Tornado Valley landed the \$150,000 TAB Inter Dominion Grand Final for husband and wife Andy and Kate Gath.





The New Zealand bred gelding was faultless throughout the series and put an exclamation mark on the series with his emphatic display in the 2760m mobile start feature.

The Gr.1 \$250,000 What The Hill Great Southern Star at TABCORP Park, Melton was being tipped as the best trotting event of the season with an all-star cast assembled, unfortunately, race favourite and Inter Dominion hero Tornado Valley was a race day scratching which robbed the race of some interest.

However, the race itself lived up to the hype with an action paced 2760m mobile start event and the Anton Golino prepared and Mark Purdon driven Dance Craze who triumphed.

Dance Craze is a daughter of champion stallion Muscle Hill from the multiple Gr.1 winning mare La Coccaracha.

The \$100,000 Hygain Australian Trotting Grand Prix went to the locally prepared Big Jack Hammer for father/son combination of David and Josh Aiken.

The gifted young trotter prevailed after defeating Dance Craze in the 2240m mobile start event.

Raced by Domenic Martello, Big Jack Hammer claimed three Gr.1 events throughout the term.

With the final two legs staged in Auckland, Sundees Son claimed both the \$102,000 H R Fiske & Sons ANZAC Cup plus the \$156,000 Reharvest Rowe Cup a week later.

In both victories, Sundees Son was sublime with a commanding effort in the 2200m mobile start ANZAC Cup while showcasing his great strength in the Rowe Cup, a 3200m stand start classic.

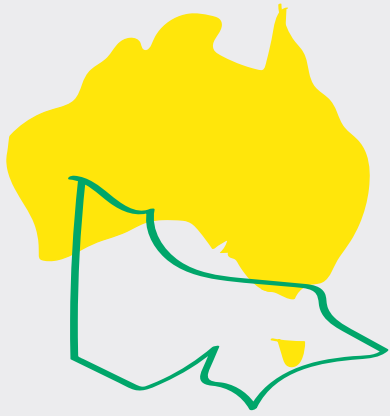
In the end, Sundees Son finished with 200 points, 40 clear of Dance Craze (160) while Speeding Spur (143) took third place.

Next season, Sundees Son will be looking to become the first trotter since Stent (2014 & 2015) to claim back to back Trotting Masters titles.



State Controlling Body Reports





Victoria



Dale G Monteith

Chairman
Harness Racing Victoria

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Some of the key themes of the mainstream coverage were that women's involvement in harness racing is stronger than ever.

Season 2018-19 will forever be remembered fondly for Victorian harness racing with the Inter Dominion (ID18) returning to our state for the first time in a decade.

The magnitude of the Inter Dominion should not be undersold. Given Victoria's position as the trotting capital of Australian harness racing we felt it especially important to revive the Inter Dominion Trotting Championship alongside its pacing equivalent and implement other key strategies.

Securing mainstream media coverage for the sport via free-to-air television on Channel 7, radio and daily metro print newspapers was paramount. Through Harness Racing Victoria's partnership with the Herald Sun, ID18 received 14,680 words of coverage and an online reach of 215.5m for the campaign period. Further, ID18 content received 2,834 podcast plays via our Trots Media channel, 890 minutes of radio airtime on RSN, 1.8m social media impressions, 300,673 page views and almost 10,000 page views of our GoodForm Punters Paradise section, promoting the important wagering message.

Some of the key themes of the mainstream coverage were that women's involvement in harness racing is stronger than ever – which was a great story told across all platforms featuring Kate Gath, Kima Frenning, Bec Bartley, Emma Stewart and others – and of course that horse welfare

is absolutely paramount in all we do. The promotion HRV's HERO (Harness Education and Re-Homing Opportunities) program was essential and well received. To hear feedback from participants acknowledging and thanking the HRV team for “making us relevant again” meant a lot.

Key to the success of ID18 was regional involvement and celebrating harness racing's impact in rural communities. The economic boost to Cranbourne and Ballarat through ID18 was significant and it was great to see so many locals in those areas getting to the track to engage with harness racing.

I'd like to thank my fellow Board members and the HRV Executive Management team, along with the HRV staff and the wider industry for their dedication to harness racing in Victoria in 2018-19.

For the second successive year it was pleasing to report that HRV has recorded a profit (\$0.4m). This was significant given in 2016-17 HRV reported a \$1.6m loss, and if not for the prudent strategies employed by the Board and the Executive Management Team under the leadership of outgoing CEO David Martin that downward trend was set to continue. David announced that he would step away from his role in September and I wish him well in his future endeavours and thank him for his efforts at HRV.

While pleasing to have returned two successive profit years, we continue to face challenges in 2019-20 and beyond. The impact of the new Point of Consumption Tax (PoCT) on race-field fees and turnover in the second half of the 2018-19 financial year was substantial.

Acknowledgment

I wish to acknowledge and thank the Victorian State Government for its continued support and contributions to industry funding, with \$1.5m committed to integrity, \$3m p.a over two years for prizemoney, and \$1m from the FY19 state budget. This is vital capital for our industry and we are very thankful for receiving it. I look forward to continuing to work closely with the State Government and Minister Pakula to maximise funding opportunities and support all sectors of the industry in 2019-20 and beyond.

Other projects of significance at HRV in 2018-19 included increased focus on the important area of animal welfare with all licensed participants undergoing a training program to ensure best practice, development of an in-house customer service team, and leading the way nationally on the rolling out of the National Ratings Based Handicapping System, which went live in July 2019. We are seeing more competitive racing and fewer long odds-on favourites since the new system was implemented and, whilst it is still early days and tweaking of programming will be required, all signs point to an improved racing product. This is vital for increasing returns from the all-important wagering dollar and harness racing's market share.

“

I'd like to thank my fellow Board members and the HRV Executive Management team, along with the HRV staff and the wider industry for their dedication to harness racing in Victoria in 2018-19.

Dale G Monteith



New South Wales



Rod Smith

Chairman
Harness Racing NSW



The overall impact of our four main revenue streams will have a decisive impact on our ability to increase prize money along with improved breeding incentives into the future.

Harness Racing Industry in New South Wales continued to be positive during the year despite the state being affected by the continuing drought.

This has been achieved through a very cooperative working relationship with Club Menangle and the various Industry Support Associations.

Sustain

Improve Infrastructure

- \$12 million Riverina Paceway Wagga opened in March.
- \$2.5 million Training Centre at Gold Crown Paceway Bathurst now in final tender and construction commencement imminent.
- \$2 million improvements to Tamworth will be completed by end November increasing capacity to 100 onsite stable accommodation.

With these industry owned facilities along with Club Menangle we are now in control our own destiny.

Quality Standards

Independent review of all racing facilities with corrective action taken to ensure total compliance with statutory OH&S and Public Liability requirements.

Youth Development

Youth Development Manager appointed to coordinate and enhance structural change to mini-trots and more importantly liaison and development of our growing number of junior drivers and trainers.

Improve

Revised Handicapping

- National Rating System introduced 1st July 2019 has been generally well accepted following a number of consultation meetings in each region.
- Cultural change to programming is now possible under the National Rating System whereby we can now tailor make programs by Region given specific horse ratings.
- Ownership expansion has been evident with the National Rating System and prize money increases allowing for very positive clearance rates at recent yearling sales.

Grow

Event Meetings

- Miracle Mile prize money increased to \$1 million
- Bathurst Gold Crown now has 4 Group Ones
- Riverina Carnival in April 2020 to incorporate 4 Group Ones
- Newcastle Mile now Group 1 status and winner automatically qualifies for Miracle Mile

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...predicting the future is and will continue to be a challenge.

Rod Smith



Maximise Asset Utilisation

- 12 extra meetings added to Riverina race day calendar for 2019-2020 season.
- 6 extra meetings added to Tamworth calendar following improved facilities
- 26 extra races added to Club Menangle Saturday night meetings to enhance mares racing and to accommodate “Where Horses Fly” country series.

HR Digital Channel Business Case

Purchase of RISE through HRA by all States will settle on 31st October and will ensure enhanced marketing, electronic communication and flexible business development going forward.

Drought

The adverse conditions have continued and support of \$1 million towards feed subsidy, transport costs for feed, mare relocation have been made to date.

This support will continue until 31st December 2019 when position will be again reviewed and further assistance provided if required.

Moving forward

The overall impact of our four main revenue streams will have a decisive impact on our ability to increase prize money along with improved breeding incentives into the future.

The TAB

Our main revenue source has seen pari-mutual on the decline for some time partly offset by the migration to fixed odds although a lessor income return.

Corporate

Revenue has been consistent, with the smaller players being absorbed by acquisition and mergers by the larger players now reducing the number to less than six significant players.

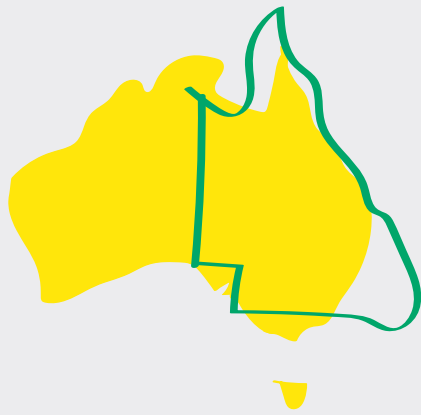
Tax Parity

Now in the fourth year saw revenue of \$7,178,000 and will plateau in 2020, has assisted in maintaining our overall revenue stream.

Point of Consumption Tax

Government introduced a 10% tax during the year and whilst revenue of \$2,674,000 in the first year is welcomed, this is reliant on continued current turnover. However, it is likely the Corporates will change their model to accommodate the additional tax and that may lead to reduced revenue overall.

This is an industry where we have limited control over our income streams and predicting the future is and will continue to be a challenge.



Queensland



Steve Wilson AM

Chairman
Racing Queensland



Racing Queensland has recently published its 2018/19 Annual Report with significant progress made over the past year.

RQ has transformed a parent company loss in FY16 of \$19.9 million (the sixth consecutive loss) to a normalised parent profit of \$1.1 million in FY19.

The normalised consolidated result was a \$1.5 million loss versus a \$3.2 million loss last year, while the reported consolidated result was a \$12.4 million profit.

We are charged to be financially sound but existing for the purpose of growing our great sport from a sustainable base. Therefore, as revenues increase, our goal is to increase payments to participants.

It is most pleasing that we have significantly exceeded our goals as payments to participants are up 23% since FY17 to \$203 million (on a normalised basis), primarily in prize money.

A record-breaking year for wagering turnover was the standout performance for the harness code throughout 2018/19 with turnover reaching \$473 million and revenue growing by more than \$700,000 to \$11.0 million.

Over the course of the year, Racing Queensland conducted 274 TAB meetings – a 3.8% increase on 2017/18 – and featured 2330 races.

RQ also conducted five non-TAB meetings during FY19 with Marburg, Redcliffe, Gympie and Kilcoy all hosting events.

Pleasingly, after two years of annual decreases, TAB field sizes grew by 1% with 21,627 starters throughout the year and total standardbred racing numbers increasing across the state.

Prize money and industry sustainability

During FY19, the Queensland harness code benefited from an additional \$3 million (annualised) in prize money to progress industry viability concerns, boost grassroots participation and improve cash flow for participants and owners.

Co-funded by RQ and the Queensland Government, prize money increases included:

- Introduction of QBRED For Life, increasing QBRED stakes and bonuses to over \$2.5 million;
- All standard Friday races increased to minimum \$6,500;
- All standard Tuesday races increased to minimum \$8,000;
- Minimum stakes for Redcliffe Wednesday and Thursday meetings increased to \$4,000;
- Marburg to Albion Park finals increased to a minimum \$10,000;
- Saturday night \$20,000 features to be programmed more frequently; and
- Ninth race added to the majority of Thursday programs.

In mid-June, RQ announced a three-year increase to the base driving fee for harness participants.

Having agreed to a 22% increase in FY18, the base driving fee for all races worth \$3,000 or more will rise by \$17 per drive between 2018 and 2021 following positive negotiations with the Breeders Owners Trainers and Reinspersons Association of Queensland.

The incremental increases will be implemented as follows:

- 2019: \$2 per drive increase to \$57 per drive;
- 2020: \$3 per drive increase to \$60 per drive; and
- 2021: \$2 per drive increase to \$62 per drive.

RQ also announced that it would fund insurance for participants in 2019 and 2020 and increase the regularity of grassroots racing opportunities on Sundays to twice monthly as it continues its drive to ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of the code.

In addition, RQ introduced a \$500 in-foal rebate to the breeder of any mare – inseminated between August 1, 2018 and January, 31 2019 – that receives a positive 42-day pregnancy test.

The rebate was established following industry research which found the rising cost of feed and agistment due to drought would likely accelerate a decline in breeding by up to 30%.

During FY19, RQ distributed more than \$110,000 to over 130 individual breeders.

Queensland Winter Racing Carnival

A record-breaking \$2 million in stakes and bonuses has headlined the 2019 TAB Queensland Winter Harness Racing Carnival

During the two-month campaign, Racing Queensland was able to attract some of Australasia's premier standardbreds including a 12% increase in inter-state and New Zealand starters.

This year 20 black type races were run and won with the Queensland Oaks, Queensland Derby, Sunshine Sprint and the Queensland Trotters Cup elevated to Group 1 status.

In total, eight Group 1s were conducted with the \$250,000 TAB Blacks A Fake featuring three of the top-five place getters from this year's Grand Circuit including Inter Dominion champion, Tiger Tara.

A new Albion Park track record set by hometown hero, Colt Thirty One, underlined the quality of the Blacks A Fake field, while in the Queensland Derby, New Zealand raider, Self Assured, maintained his unbeaten start to his career with his first victory at Group 1 level.

The Group 1 winners throughout the year were:

- Blacks A Fake: Colt Thirty One;
- Sunshine Sprint: Ohoka Punter
- Queensland Oaks: Our Princess Tiffany
- Queensland Derby: Self Assured
- Queensland Trotters Cup: Majestic Courtney
- QBRED Triad 2YO Fillies: Jiggle And Jive;
- QBRED Triad 2YO Colts & Geldings: Expensive Ego;
- APG 2YO Colts & Geldings Final: Jilliby Nitro;
- APG 2YO Fillies Final: Pelosi;
- APG Brisbane Yearling Sale Final: Expensive Ego; and
- Redcliffe Yearling Sale Final: Governor Jujon.



QBRED highlights

The nation's premier breeding incentive scheme, QBRED, continued to pay dividends throughout 2018/19.

In total, \$1.67 million in bonuses were paid out under QBRED including an increase in first win bonuses for two-year-olds from \$7,500 to \$10,000.

RQ also announced the first QBRED feature for two-year-old trotters.

The introduction of this race coincided with the inaugural running of the 'Springboard Series for 2YO Trotters' which was strategically developed to enhance the trotting gait in the Sunshine State.

In FY20, RQ has announced an exciting new chapter, with the introduction of 'QBRED For Life' with \$2.5 million in bonuses and stakes up for grabs.

Under 'QBRED For Life', the age restrictions on the first and second win bonuses for standardbreds will be lifted, with eligible horses also able to access the \$1,000 QBRED cash bonuses, which are available on selected races.

Racing highlights and premierships

For an eighth straight season, Grant Dixon was Queensland's leading trainer with 340 winners which also saw him take out

the National premierships. Grant also took out the leading state driver, finishing the season with 237 winners. Matt Elkins was the leading Queensland concession driver for the first time with 110 winners.

In November, RQ hosted the Australasian Young Drivers Championship for a successive year, with Nathan Dawson and defending champion, Narissa McMullen, both representing Queensland.

On this occasion, New Zealand's Sheree Tomlinson clinched the title on the track, while off the track the series raised important funds for charity partner Youngcare, a not-for-profit organisation spearheading powerful change for young people with high-care needs, with more than \$4,000 raised for the cause.

In the Australian Female Drivers Championship, McMullen and Kelli Dawson represented Queensland, finishing first and third respectively.

RQ were honoured to host the event for the first time, an event that continues to play a vital role in highlighting the significant contribution of female participants to the code.

As part of the series, a fundraiser for Team Teal was held with RQ, Albion Park, Redcliffe and TAB raising \$12,000.

Throughout the year, RQ continued to innovate with the introduction of a mobile barrier camera and live sectional times to the Sky Racing broadcast.

With sectional times critical to the story of every harness race, the innovation was warmly received by participants and punters alike.

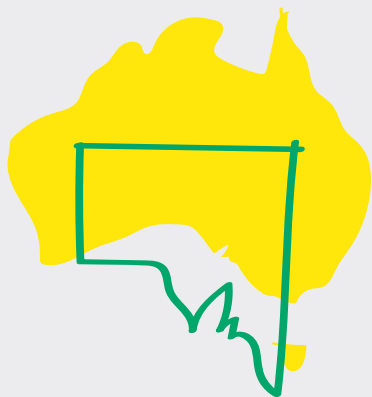
2019 Queensland Harness Awards Winners

In September, RQ staged the 2019 Queensland Harness Awards in Brisbane.

Grant Dixon was once again recognised as the Queensland Trainer of the Year, while the Dixon stable also picked up the Queensland Horse of the Year title with Colt Thirty One.

The award winners were:

- Queensland Harness Horse of the Year: Colt Thirty One;
- Queensland Trotter of the Year: Our Overanova NZ;
- Queensland Trainer of the Year: Grant Dixon;
- Queensland Driver of the Year: Grant Dixon;
- Queensland Concession Driver of the Year: Matt Elkins;
- Queensland Filly/Mare of the Year: Pelosi;
- Queensland Aged Pacer of the Year: Colt Thirty One;
- Queensland Breeder of the Year: Solid Earth Pty Ltd (Kevin and Kay Seymour); and
- Queensland Owner of the Year: Solid Earth Pty Ltd (Kevin and Kay Seymour).
- The Hall of Fame inductee was:
- Warren Cummins: Associate.



South Australia



Gary Crocker

Chairman
Harness Racing South Australia

“

The industry recorded several highlights during the year, these including another successful Allwood Stud Farm SA Yearling Sale.

The 2018/19 season has been a challenging one for harness racing in South Australia

Harness racing in the state has undergone many changes over recent years, and will continue to face many more in attempting to remain relevant in an everchanging operating dynamic.

During the season in review, harness racing in SA faced a number of challenges, both internally and externally with these including reduced horse numbers, an aging participative population and, similar to most other jurisdictions, a much diversified and competitive wagering market.

In addition, the HRSA Board also took issue with the administration of the states principal club, the South Australian Harness Racing Club, after it recorded yet another significant operating loss. While racing ultimately returned to the Globe Derby Park, venue the Boards' concerns nonetheless remain and the club must overcome significant deficiencies if it is to reverse its declining fortunes and contribute positively to harness racing in the state.

However, despite these ongoing challenges, the industry recorded several highlights during the year, these including another successful Allwood Stud Farm SA Yearling Sale.

To this end HRSA is indebted to the support of Bob and Marilyn Fowler of Allwood Stud Farms who, once again, contributed significantly by supporting, not only the sale, but also the industry in general in SA.

The inaugural running of 'The Allwood', South Australia's only Group One race, was conducted in June and one by the classy Courage Under Fire colt Pandering, who was purchased through the 2018 Allwood Stud Farm SA Yearling Sale by prominent Victorian owner Justin Baker. Justin, and his team of supporters, were on hand to see Pandering storm to victory in the \$100,000 event and certainly enjoyed their visit to South Australia for the race.

The state's other major feature, the 2019 TAB South Australian Pacing Cup, was won in stylish fashion by the Brent Lilley trained Sicario, who in the hands of Gavin Lang used the passing lane to win comfortably.

It was also heartening that after strenuous submissions to state politicians there was an announcement from the Liberal Government that it would commit some of the monies gained through the introduction of the Point of Consumption Tax back to the racing industry with it being for a three-year period. We welcome the State Governments re-engagement with racing and look forward to greater working relationships with both the Racing Minister and the Government.

One matter flowing from the Ministers repatriation of the POC Tax has been his desire that all governing racing boards in the state, be independently appointed. The HRSA Board welcomes this initiative and is working positively to achieve this outcome.

I would also like to make mention the contribution of the South Australian Country Harness Racing Clubs Association. This association, and its constituent clubs, form the backbone of the SA harness racing industry, and the work and commitment put in by a great many people epitomises what has made harness racing such an indelible part of the Australian sporting and social landscape.

It has been heartening that the Country Clubs have freely embraced the notion of change and the requirement to employ change as a mechanism to help the industry grow in the future.

During the season the Board also adopted the notion of 'putting SA first' and to this end changed conditions of our Southern Cross Racing and Breeding Scheme, so to better reward those actively contributing to harness racing in the state. The realities being that SA does not have the 'fire-power' of our bigger neighbours and we need to ensure that those actively involved and participating in the state reap the appropriate rewards.

Racing

During the 2018/19 season 932 horses competed in 933 races conducted at the 110 meetings held in the state. The total number of starters in races being 8082.

Ryan Hryhorec, for the sixth successive season, was the state's leading trainer recording 75 wins.

Once again, we congratulate Dani Hill in winning the states drivers' championship recording 106 wins. A remarkable effort considering Dani was off the scene for the majority of the second part of the season due to horrific injuries sustained in a race fall at the SA Cup meeting in February.

I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of all those who give of their time and energies to produce a high-quality product in SA.

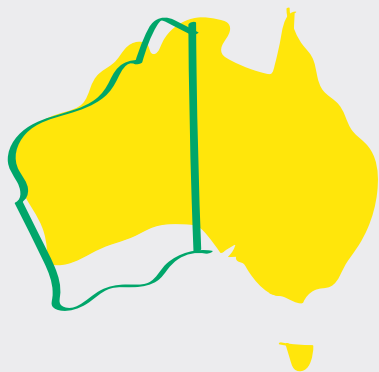
The commitment and dedication shown by so many within the state who support and promote the sport of harness racing, despite the rewards not being equal of those in other states.

Harness Racing in SA will continue to face challenges and these must be addressed so that the state can remain relevant in today's modern operating environment.

“

**Ryan Hryhorec,
for the sixth
successive
season, was the
state's leading
trainer recording
75 wins.**





Western Australia



Jeff Ovens

Chairman
Racing and Wagering Western Australia

“

RWWA provided funding to clubs and participants to the value of \$37.3M, including \$1.7M in Westbred Bonus payments.

Western Australia hosted 256 race meetings throughout the season, which encompassed 2,207 individual races, providing 21,107 racing opportunities for 1,585 individual horses.

It is again my pleasure to present the State Annual Report for harness racing in Western Australia.

Starters were trained by 360 individual trainers with 55 of these trainers having 100 or more starters for the year, and 24 having 200 or more starters.

During the season a total of 292 Western Australian trained mares earned \$247,800 in EPONA credits as a result of winning 575 races. Four mares each earned the maximum credit amount of \$5,000.

A total of \$143,000 was paid in subsidies to the owners of 63 mares during the 2018/19 season.

The Australian Pacing Gold Yearling Sales recorded a sale aggregate of \$1.6M (\$1.3M in 2017/18) and an average sale price for fillies of \$15,000 and for colts \$21,000. The median sale price was \$15,000, up from \$11,000 last year.

The training partnership of Greg and Skye Bond were named the Leading State Trainer for the season, achieving 183 wins and \$2.3M in stakes

Gary Hall Jnr was the Leading State Driver with 193 winners and \$2.8M in stakes, ahead of Ryan Warwick with 176 winners.

Throughout the season two drivers passed the \$2M in stakes and five drivers passed the \$1M in stakes earnings.

Seven of the Western Australian Concession Drivers had more than 300 drives for the season and Emily Suvaljko was the Leading State Concession Driver.

On 28 March 2019, 12 new inductees were welcomed into the Western Australian Racing Industry Hall of Fame. The event, held every two years, welcomed over 400 guests to honour some of the industry's most accomplished. Harness Inductees included:

- Gary Hall Jnr (Category: Trainer/Driver)
- Jack Morris (Category: Horse)
- John Hunt (Category: Associate)
- Mick Lombardo (Category: Associate)
- Norms Daughter (Category: Horse)

In November 2018, RWWA implemented its New Business Model to improve the commerciality of harness racing and provide a more sustainable future for the code. The model has a number of integrated components including race circuits, stakes tiering, meeting schedules, race programming, race handicapping and internal business systems and practices. The system is intended to provide greater racing opportunities for all horses and reduce the number of horses exiting the industry prematurely.

RWWA launched a new welfare support program for licenced participants called Racing Assist. The initiative provides free confidential support through counselling to any trainers, drivers, stable hands, stable forepersons and farriers.

Other key highlights for the 2018/19 season include:

- Group One WA Pacing Cup won by ROCKNROLL LINCOLN (NZ), trained by Justin Prentice and driven by Gary Hall Jnr.
- Group One Fremantle Pacing Cup won by MY FIELD MARSHAL (NZ), trained by Tim Butt and driven by Anthony Butt.
- Group One Golden Nugget won by ANA MALAK (NZ), trained by Greg and Skye Bond, and driven by Ryan Warwick
- Group One WA Derby won by MAJOR

TROJAN (NZ), trained by Gary Hall Snr and driven by Gary Hall Jnr.

- Group One WA Oaks won by HAS NO FEAR, trained by Justin Prentice and driven by Jocelyn Young.
- Group One Mares Classic won by MILLVIEW SIENNA (NZ), trained by Ray Williams and driven by Aldo Cortopassi.
- Group One Golden Slipper won by JASPERVELLABEACH, trained by Kristy Elson and driven by Nathan Turvey.

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In November 2018, RWWA implemented its New Business Model to improve the commerciality of harness racing and provide a more sustainable future for the code.





Tasmania



Gene Phair

Chairman
Tasracing

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Funding numbers for the Harness code grew by \$383,000 or 6.2%, to \$6.51 million during the reporting period.

There were 16 feature races in Tasmania during the season with stakes money of \$20,000 or more, with prize money across these races totaling \$655,000.

Victorian trainer David Aiken took out two of the feature races with Tasmanian-owned Max Delight in the Tasmanian Derby and Shelby Bromac in the \$75,000 Tasmania Cup Final.

Two-year-old Blame It On Me, bred, owned and trained by Douglas Nettlefold, had an outstanding season with six wins from seven starts, winning both the \$20,000 2YO Fillies Sweepstakes final and the \$50,000 Evicus Final.

Tasracing committed to undertake a Harness industry review, by the end of the 2019 calendar year. The first stage of this work saw the compilation of up to 10 years of statistical information incorporating ownership, racing, breeding and wagering. This information was provided to industry for review and feedback on what is required to improve the Harness code in Tasmania.

Trainer Ben Yole trained 181 winners in 2018/19 to comfortably beat his own record of 124 achieved in 2017/18.

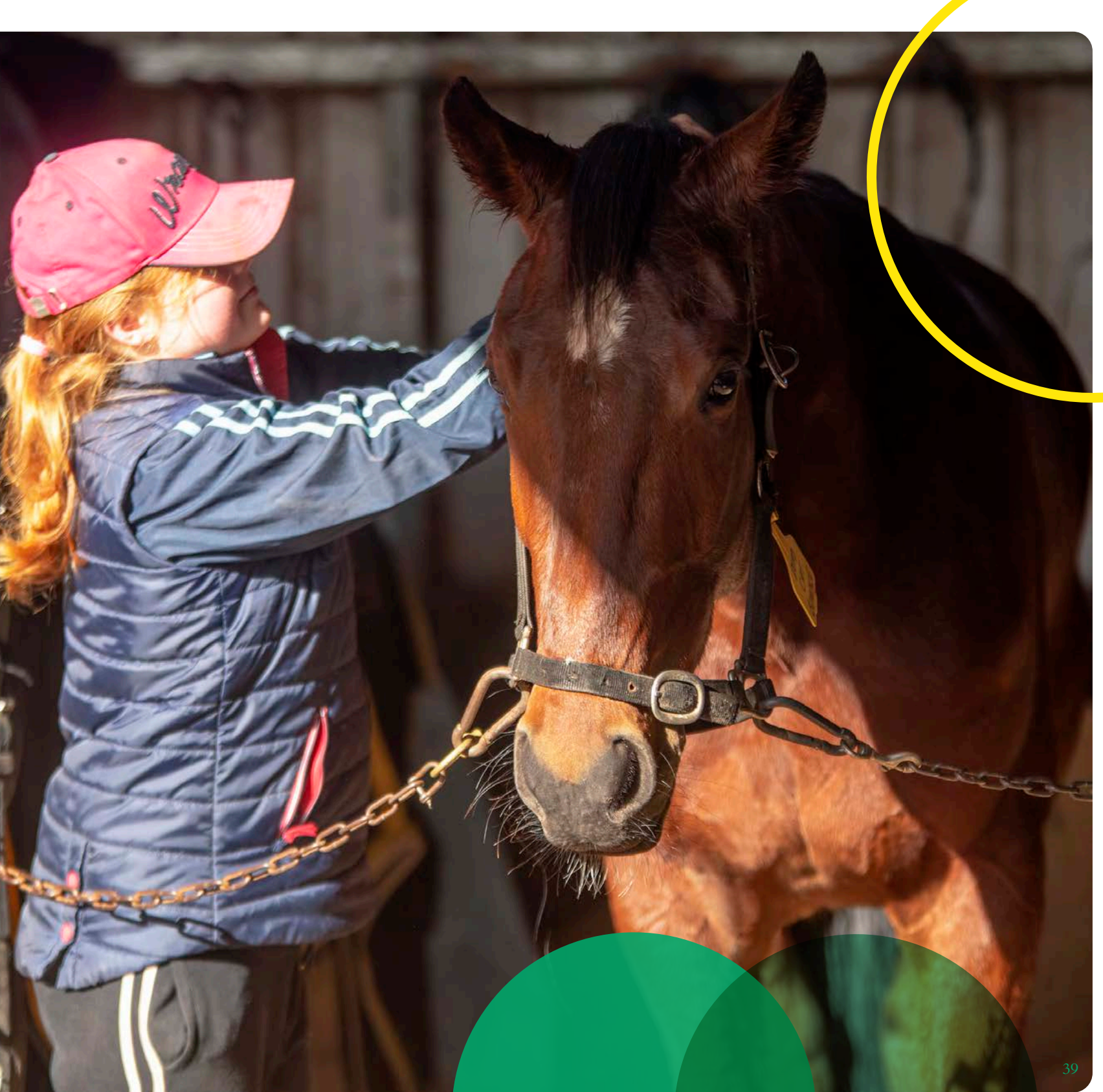
Bianca Heenan took the honours for Leading Female Trainer in only her second season with 51 wins.

Twenty-three-year-old Conor Crook won the Leading Junior Driver title for a second year in a row with 31 wins ahead of Samantha Gangell with 29 wins. This performance did give Gangell enough wins to take out the Leading Female Driver prize.

Team Teal, the campaign to raise awareness about women's cancer, ran between 1 February and 16 March, concluding at the Tasmania Pacing Cup in Hobart. Hannah Van Dongen was the Tasmanian ambassador. More than \$130,000 was raised from female wins across Australia during this period.

King Island Racing was again held over the December/January period with seven combined Harness / Thoroughbred meetings. There was an average of 9.4 starters per meeting.

Tasbred Breeders Coupon and Tasbred Owners Breeding Incentive payments of \$138,980 (including \$12,000 for the additional support incentive) were also paid out during the reporting period.



“

Given the \$50,000 Tasmanian Government grant towards breeding, the Tasbred Bonus distribution was adjusted with two and three-year-olds now eligible for a \$5,000 bonus for their first wins. Total Tasbred Bonus payments of \$242,000 were paid out in 2018/19.

Payment of foal notification fees on behalf of breeders saved industry participants more than \$17,000.

The industry has been on a steep learning curve with the introduction of the new National Ratings Handicapping System on 1 July 2019. A Ratings Review Team with representatives from each state meet on a regular basis to discuss feedback from the industry. Initial statistics have revealed that the impact on short price favourites has been positive with programming the key to ensuring it has a positive impact in Tasmania.

A programming sub-committee was established with representatives from each club and association. The aim is for programs to be released quarterly.

Double Seated Sulkies were used for promotional purposes at some of the club's feature race days receiving great support from both the industry and general public.

Two Mini Trot representatives, Jacob Duggan and Brodie Davis, travelled to Melton to compete in the biggest Pony Trot meeting of the year in December 2018. Tasracing and Medical Edge sponsored both drivers providing driver silks, rugs and a contribution to travel.

The Harness Industry Forum (HIF) continued to meet quarterly in 2018/19.

Tasracing appreciates the time and effort all HIF participants commit to this process that facilitates direct interaction and consultation between Tasracing and industry.

Australian Drivers Championship



Young gun reinsman Todd McCarthy registered a slice of history at Globe Derby Park.

By emerging triumphant against a host of the nation's best drivers, McCarthy became the first person to secure the Australian Drivers' Championship and Australasian Young Drivers' Championship outright.

Representing New South Wales, McCarthy captured the latter series in Perth during the 2016 Inter Dominion.

Queensland's Grant Dixon features on both honour rolls, but shared his Australasian Young Drivers' Championship win with Tasmania's Ricky Duggan in 1993.

"I'm extremely thrilled," McCarthy said. "It's one of those series where it comes down to draws and luck on the night and on this occasion it went my way.

"Just to be competing against such amazing drivers is an honour, but to come home with the win is amazing."

Fourth in the opening heat, McCarthy made his way into the winners' circle after scoring with Imprincessgemma in the second event.

A subsequent second and a pair of fourths saw McCarthy accumulate 72 points to complete a two-point victory from Queensland's Adam Sanderson.

Western Australia's Chris Lewis - who won the 1977 Australasian Young Drivers' Championship as a South Australian - was third with 66 points.

"I only scraped in, but a win is a win," McCarthy said. "I cannot compliment Harness Racing SA enough on how well they looked after us and how smoothly it ran.

"It was really professional set up and all the drivers involved had a great time."

Paul Courts

2018 Australian Driving Championship Results

Driver	State	HEAT 1		HEAT 2		HEAT 3		HEAT 4		HEAT 5		HEAT 6		HEAT 7		HEAT 8		Total POINTS
		Placing	Points	Placing	Points	Placing	Points	Placing	Points	Placing	Points	Placing	Points	Placing	Points	Placing	Points	
Todd McCarthy	NSW	4	9	1	19	4	9	2	13	8	5	4	8	10	3	5	6	72
Adam Sanderson	QLD	6	7	4	9	2	14	1	18	3	11	scr	5	6	5	12	1	70
Chris Lewis	WA	9	4	6	7	1	19	3	10	10	3	9	4	4	7	2	12	66
Pete McMullen	QLD	8	5	7	6	6	7	9	4	4	9	3	10	1	17	6	5	63
Greg Sugars	VIC	1	19	5	8	12	1	10	3	6	7	1	18	11	2	scr	5	63
Dani Hill	SA	2	14	3	11	9	4	6	6	9	4	2	13	scr	5	scr	5	62
Ricky Duggan	TAS	11	2	2	14	8	5	5	7	11	2	10	3	3	9	1	17	59
Ellen Rixon	NSW	5	8	10	3	5	8	4	8	5	8	6	6	12	1	3	9	51
Todd Rattray	TAS	7	6	9	4	3	11	12	1	2	14	11	2	9	4	10	3	45
Chris Alford	VIC	12	1	8	5	10	3	7	5	1	19	12	1	5	6	9	4	44
Shannon Suvaljko	WA	3	11	12	1	7	6	11	2	7	6	5	7	scr	5	11	2	40
Ryan Hryhorec	SA	10	3	11	2	11	2	scr	5	12	1	8	5	2	12	4	7	37

2019 Australian Harness Racing Awards





**Australian Harness
Horse Of The Year**

Tiger Tara NZ

Performances:

19 starts 9 wins 7 placings
\$865,500 1:52.7MS

Lawn Derby Awards – Pacers

AUSTRALIAN HARNESS HORSE OF THE YEAR

AUSTRALIAN PACER OF THE YEAR

AGED HORSE/GELDING PACER OF THE YEAR

(bh 2010 by Bettors Delight USA from Tara Gold NZ)

Performances: 19 starts 9 wins 7 placings \$865,500 1:52.7MS

Breeder: R P Anicich **Owners:** M Hawli, C L Pizzuto, K J Pizzuto, T N Pizzuto **Driver:** Todd McCarthy

Trainer: Kevin Pizzuto

TIGER TARA NZ

AGED MARE PACER OF THE YEAR

(bm 2014 by Western Terror USA from Art Princess)

Performances: 19 starts 10 wins 6 placings \$187,170 1.55.6MS

Breeder: M B Sandblom **Owner:** Lauriston Bloodstock - B & A Anderson **Driver:** M R Pitt, C A Alford, S Van Den Brande, D N Moran **Trainer:** Emma Stewart

PISTOL ABBEY

3YO FILLY PACER OF THE YEAR

(bf 2015 by A Rocknroll Dance USA from Designer Rose)

Performances: 10 starts 4 wins 5 placings \$260,200 1:52.4MS

Breeder: R J Walsh, D Walsh **Owner:** A Sinclair, L Flanagan, J Madruga **Driver:** L A McCarthy, T P McCarthy, D N Moran **Trainer:** Craig Cross

NO WIN NO FEED

3YO COLT/GELDING PACER OF THE YEAR

(bc 2015 by Bettors Delight USA from Lady Euthenia)

Performances: 16 starts 9 wins 3 placings \$299,310 1:51.1MS

Breeder: P F Lewis **Owner:** Michael Maxfield **Driver:** J W Aiken, D Aiken, T P McCarthy, K Frenning **Trainer:** David Aiken

MAX DELIGHT

2YO FILLY PACER OF THE YEAR

(bf 2016 by Somebeachsomewhere USA from Arterial Way)

Performances: 8 starts 7 wins 1 placing \$271,800 1:55.0MS

Breeder: G R Johnson, I G Johnson, L J Johnson, S J Johnson **Owner:** G R Johnson, I G Johnson, L J Johnson, S J Johnson **Driver:** C A Alford, G R Sugars **Trainer:** Emma Stewart

MAAJIDA

2YO COLT/GELDING PACER OF THE YEAR

(brc 2016 by Mach Three CA from Behappysam NZ)

Performances: 11 starts 10 wins 1 placing \$344,215 1:52.7MS

Breeder: Jetstarr Properties Pty Ltd **Owner:** T Bunning, T Corbett, I Delmenico, G Armstrong, J Anderson, A Bensley, P Armstrong, C Mullins **Driver:** C A Alford, L A McCarthy. **Trainer:** Emma Stewart

BE HAPPY MACH

Vancleve Awards – Trotters

AUSTRALIAN TROTTER OF THE YEAR AGED TROTTING HORSE/GELDING OF THE YEAR

(bg 2011 by Skyvalley NZ from Begin (NZ))

Performances: 12 starts 11 wins 0 placings \$250,020 TR1:54.1MS

Breeder: P L Gaugler, T M McMillan **Owners:** Norm Jenkin **Driver:** Kate Gath **Trainer:** Andy Gath

TORNADO VALLEY NZ

AGED MARE TROTTER OF THE YEAR

(brm 2013 by Muscle Hill (US) from La Coocharacha)

Performances: 14 starts 7 wins 4 placings \$238,930 TR1:55.6MS

Breeder: Yabby Dam Farms Pty Ltd **Owner:** Yabby Dam Farms Pty Ltd **Driver:** R W Petroff, M Purdon, G A Craven **Trainer:** Anton Golino

DANCE CRAZE

3YO FILLY TROTTER OF THE YEAR

(bf 2015 by Majestic Son CA from Charlotte Galleon NZ)

Performances: 20 starts 4 wins 6 placings \$87,095 TR2:00.8MS

Breeder: Moloney Management Superannuation Fund **Owner:** Y & P Males
Driver: Zac Phillips **Trainer:** Peter Males

ROYAL CHARLOTTE

3YO COLT/GELDING TROTTER OF THE YEAR

(bg 2015 by Majestic Son CA from Rosemaryz Luck (NZ))

Performances: 11 starts 8 wins 2 placings \$95,450 TR1:59.1MS

Breeder: Alabar (NZ) Ltd **Owner:** Norm Jenkin **Driver:** Kate Gath **Trainer:** Andy Gath

MAJESTUOSO NZ

2YO FILLY TROTTER OF THE YEAR

(bf 2016 by Andover Hall (US) from I Am Who I Am)

Performances: 7 starts 5 wins 2 placings \$107,200 TR2:00.2MS

Breeder: G F Love, B J Robertson, D A Jack **Owner:** G F Love, B J Robertson, D A Jack
Driver: Gavin Lang **Trainer:** Russell Jack

JAXNME

2YO COLT/GELDING TROTTER OF THE YEAR

(chc 2016 by Love You (FRA) from One Over Kenny NZ)

Aust Performances: 4 starts 4 wins 0 placings \$87,490 TR2:00.5MS

Breeder: L E Williams, H R Williams **Owner:** E & M Stride **Driver:** Anthony Butt
Trainer: Phil Williamson

ULTIMATE STRIDE NZ



*Australian Trotter
of the Year*

Tornado Valley NZ

Performances:

12 starts 11 wins 0 placings
\$250,020 TR1:54.1MS

2018/2019 Globe Derby Awards

LEADING SIRE BY STAKEMONEY

BETTORS DELIGHT USA

(for the 8th time)

LEADING JUVENILE SIRE BY STAKEMONEY

BETTORS DELIGHT USA

(for the 4th time)

LEADING SIRE OF TROTTERS BY STAKEMONEY

MAJESTIC SON CA

(for the 4th time)

LEADING JUVENILE SIRE BY STAKEMONEY (2&3YO'S)

BETTORS DELIGHT USA

*(for the 4th time) 169 starters 122 winners
343 wins \$3,893,747*

LEADING SIRE OF TROTTERS BY STAKEMONEY

MAJESTIC SON CA

*(for the 4th time) 133 starters 75 winners
205 wins \$1,973,336*

LEADING BROODMARE SIRE OF TROTTERS BY STAKEMONEY

SUNDON USA

*(for the 9th time) 194 starters 108 winners
266 wins \$2,906,168*

LEADING BROODMARE SIRE BY STAKEMONEY

CHRISTIAN CULLEN NZ

*(for the 3rd time) 365 starters 258 winners
682 wins \$7,104,624*

LEADING BROODMARE SIRE OF 2YO'S BY STAKEMONEY

ART MAJOR USA

*(for the 3rd time) 69 starters 42 winners 68
wins \$863,249*

LEADING BROODMARE SIRE OF 3YO'S BY STAKEMONEY

ART MAJOR USA

*(for the 1st time) 72 starters 52 winners
136 wins \$1,452,641*

2018/2019 Statistics

LEADING SIRE BY STAKEMONEY

BETTORS DELIGHT USA

*(for the 8th time) 568 starters 411 winners
1166 wins \$13,644,682*

LEADING SIRE OF 2YO'S BY STAKEMONEY

BETTORS DELIGHT USA

*(for the 3rd Time) 51 starters 33 winners 66
wins \$1,199,914*

LEADING SIRE OF 3YO'S BY STAKEMONEY

BETTORS DELIGHT USA

*(for the 6th time) 118 starters 89 winners
277 wins \$2,693,833*

LEADING SIRE BY WINNERS

BETTORS DELIGHT USA

(for the 4th time) - 411

LEADING SIRE OF 2YO'S BY WINNERS

ART MAJOR USA

(for the 9th time) - 33

BETTORS DELIGHT USA

(for the 2nd time) - 33

LEADING SIRE OF 3YO'S BY WINNERS

ART MAJOR USA

(for the 5th time) - 102

LEADING BROODMARE SIRE BY WINNERS

CHRISTIAN CULLEN NZ

(for the 2nd time) - 258

LEADING BROODMARE SIRE OF 2YO'S BY WINNERS

ART MAJOR USA

(for the 2nd time) - 42

LEADING BROODMARE SIRE OF 3YO'S BY WINNERS

ART MAJOR USA

(for the 1st time) - 52



**Winona Award – 2019
Broodmare of the Year**

Aston Villa USA

Owned by Lauriston Bloodstock

2019 Joseph Coulter Media Awards



2019 Joseph Coulter Media Awards

Joseph Coulter Best News Story Of The Year

'Pizzuto and Tiger Tara cheat death for Inter Dominion shot' - Chris Roots - Sydney Morning Herald

Graham Goffin Memorial Award - Best Feature Article

'An Ornament to the Game' - Duncan Dornauf - Tasracing, Harness Racing Weekly & National Trotguide

Graham Goffin Memorial Award - Best Regional Story

'Elusive reward after 173 attempts' - Terry Gange - Harnesslink

Graham Goffin Memorial Award - Best Historical Feature

'Bendigo Memorabilia, a gateway to John Phyland's story, From Sheep to Stallions' - Noel Ridge - thetrots.com.au

Best Book

'Our Mate Smolda' - Marcus Kirkwood and Smolda's Mates

Best Published Action Or Still Photograph

'The Gentle Giant' - Ashlea Brennan

Special Commendations:

'In The Wet' - Scott Hamilton
'Enjoying A Splash' - Stacey Lear

Best Radio Feature To Air

'Carrick Cup Day Coverage' - Duncan Dornauf, David Moohr - City Park Radio

Best Television/Video/Film Feature To Air

'Girl Power' - Louise Ford - Crocmedia

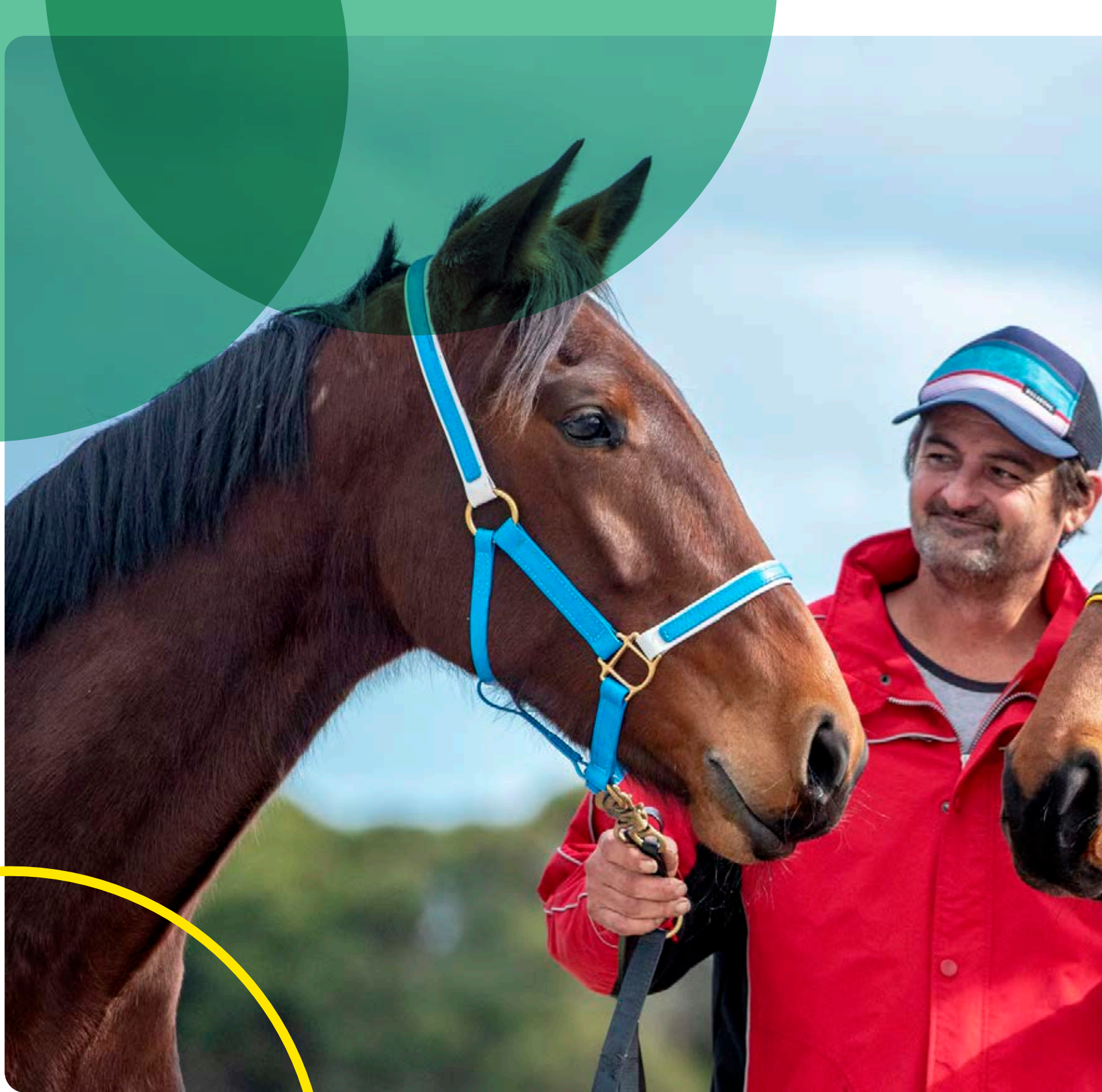
Award Of Merit For Demonstrated Excellence In Promotion

'Gloucester Park Coverage' - Hamilton Content Creators

Award Of Merit For Demonstrated Excellence In Social Media Usage & Innovation

Paul Campbell







Acknowledgements

Harness Racing Australia wishes to thank and acknowledge those who contributed written articles to this publication - Chris Barsby and Paul Courts.

Special thanks must go to Ashlea Brennan for providing photography for the publication.



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The Timeless Story
of the **Horse** and
Human Connection

**THERE IS NO
FINISH LINE**

www.harness.org.au

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