



Western Australian Trotting Association Quarterly Newsletter

From The President's Desk

WATA President John Burt

In this, our first edition, I would like to introduce myself as the new President of the Western Australian Trotting Association and also to review where we are, where we have come from and where we are heading. Some members have made the comment to me that I face a difficult task in my new role as President, but I must say I personally do not believe this to be true.



I am not stepping on to the deck of the *Titanic*, I am in fact stepping on to the deck of a very stable craft indeed, one that we will attempt to steer in a slightly different direction to the course previously charted.

When our current financial position and our performance levels are considered, we are in a healthy position. .

Let us consider some of the achievements of the WATA under the stewardship of Garry Scott, the Committee of the day and CEO Rob Bovell up to this point.

The WATA has:

- Staged one of the most successful InterDominions ever held throughout Australasia.
- Reduced the Association's non-current liabilities in the form of bank debt by \$3 Million, thus

substantially reducing interest payments. This effort was partially attributable to the successful sale of the Byford Complex to Racing and Wagering Western Australia.

I have also heard some comments that this outstanding achievement has been brought about by the sale of an asset, namely Byford and that is true, but Byford was an asset created by WATA to cater to the needs of the Harness Racing Industry and was never seen as a core product of the WATA business.

It was the belief of the previous Committee that with RWWA controlling the future of the Western Australian Harness industry, it was appropriate that they should be responsible for the control of an integral industry tool such as Byford.

Rest assured, under the terms of the contract should conditions change, the industry will be well looked after.

- Ensured, where possible, that WATA produced balanced budgets.
- Committed to maintaining Gloucester Park as the metropolitan venue for harness racing.
- Committed to a plan for the redevelopment and revitalisation of the metropolitan harness racing Facility.
- Established income streams away from normal race night income, such as the Punters' Club and the new Exotica Punters' Club.
- TAB turnover is up both on and off course. For the last six months ended 31st December 2005, after adjustments for the 2004 Ross North Inter Dominion, metropolitan staked meetings' on-course turnover rose from \$8.45M to \$9.14M or an 8 per cent increase.

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Where To Now?

Well, firstly following on from the settlement at Byford, funds have been set aside to employ a project manager to prepare plans for the future development of harness racing's major asset in this State, Gloucester Park.

We hope to announce the successful applicant, some time prior to the end of this financial year, and his charter will be to present proposals to the re-development committee within a 12-month time frame. The most interesting aspect of this project will be, that with the advancement of modern engineering and our imagination may be our only inhibitor.

We have a dynamic marketing team headed up by Kristi Hurley and ably assisted by Brett Mathers and Amy Wiggers. We have also recently appointed Pam Peterson as a consultant to encourage new sponsors to harness racing. Pam will be well known by many after her stint with Perth Racing and has recently returned to Perth after two years as marketing manager for the South Australian Jockey Club.

The "More F in Fun" promotion, which targets our future market, the younger generation, is showing encouraging results so far.

There are some exciting plans being worked on to make the Golden Nugget Room a mecca for football codes over winter.

The WATA Committee is united in its endeavours to maximise and develop its income streams, as well as ensuring the re-development of Gloucester Park will enhance W A harness racing's pre-eminent position in Australasia.

As for me, I see the future as one of enormous excitement, a huge challenge but one that when all is overcome, will bring fantastic rewards for the WATA and indeed the entire harness racing industry.

John Burt

Melbourne Cup Whisper

Gloucester Park has gained permission to race on Melbourne Cup Day. With sensational restaurant facilities available on course, there is sure to be plenty of interest in this great day at Gloucester Park.

There will be 8 great harness races starting from mid afternoon and continuing throughout the evening.

Staff from the WATA and Spices Catering are currently finalising details of the meet and full information on food and restaurant packages and entertainment will be available shortly. So why not pencil in Gloucester Park for your own Melbourne Cup function on Tuesday 7 November.

Lancaster Park Awards

The Hall family are dominating this seasons awards proudly sponsors by Lancaster Park.

The leading driver award is getting extremely tight at the top with Chris Lewis reducing the gap on Gary Hall Jnr. In the trainer award Gary Hall Snr has an almost unassailable lead.

Leading Driver As at 29/03/06

Lancaster Park Jim Schrader Medal

<i>Gary Hall Jnr</i>	52 wins
<i>Chris Lewis</i>	49 wins
<i>Colin Brown</i>	38 wins

Leading Trainer As at 29/03/06

Lancaster Park Bill Horn Medal

<i>Gary Hall Snr</i>	52 wins
<i>Callan Suvaljko</i>	29 wins
<i>Grant Williams</i>	24 wins

Leading Junior Driver As at 29/03/06

Kim Prentice Medal

<i>Kade Howson</i>	10 points
<i>Hayden Charles</i>	8 points
<i>Justin Prentice</i>	8 points

Customs Trio Land A Trifecta Treble

The good people at the WA Trotting Association were left scratching their heads on Friday February 10 2006, when Matthew Llewellyn became the third Customs worker in three years to win a Toyota at Gloucester Park.

When Matthew Llewellyn's trifecta bet didn't come in at the trots on Friday February 3, his losing ticket joined the thousands of other unsuccessful trifecta tickets in Gloucester Park's Toyota Corolla competition.

Matthew's luck changed when his ticket was drawn out on February 3 and on Friday February 10 he joined 11 other finalists who each drew a horse from the 12-horse field in the lead up to the eighth race on the card, the Toyota Corolla Stakes. He thought he'd lucked out when he drew the \$45 rank outsider Onaventure.

But his fortune well and truly changed as the 8 year-old gelding flashed down the outside to beat his more highly-fancied rivals. Matthew, who has followed pacing at Gloucester Park for the past 12 years won the best going away present he could have imagined.

The 36 year-old was about to transfer in his job to Canberra (he left Wednesday February 15), won a Toyota Corolla courtesy of Toyota Genuine Parts, Service and Accessories plus \$5,000 from Toyota Finance.



Matthew Llewellyn (right) is congratulated by Andrew Burton Regional Manager Toyota Financial Services (left), TG Man and Phil Nelligan Assistant General Manager for Toyota Genuine Parts, Service and Accessories.

Matthew's custom's workmates and fellow punters Paul Grant and Walter Hill won the Toyota competition previously, Paul in 2005 and Walter in 2004. And both were at the track on Friday February 10 to help celebrate when Matthew landed his big win!



Matthew with customs workmates and previous winners of the Toyota Competition Walter Hill and Paul Grant.

Rollercoaster Ride for Exotica Punters

Punters participating in Gloucester Park's Exotica Punters Club have experienced various emotions in the short existence of the club.

Run by Frank Regan the club bets on course during meets held at Gloucester Park and Cannington Greyhounds. Punters joined by purchasing a share for \$250, the opening balance on February 1 2006 was \$130,750.

Within a couple of weeks the club had won around \$35,000 to be above \$165,000. Punters were over-joyed with the success, that however was short lived with the latest balance being just over \$115,000. We have seen fluctuations in both directions now we look forward to it going way only...up!

Meanwhile the Punters Club being run by Russell Betts is doing well. The latest balance was slightly over \$58,000, up around \$10,000 from the opening balance of \$48,000.

COMING EVENTS

March 31 Burswood Empress Stakes Family Night

April 13 Peters & Brownes Easter Cup, Free Entry, gates open at 3:30pm

April 21 \$150,000 Sky Channel WA Derby (Group One)

May 12 Gannon's \$125,000 WA Oaks (Group One) Ladies Night

May 19 \$100,000 Toyota 3YO Sires Stakes Final



SPONSORS



Race nights throughout the harness racing season wouldn't happen without the generous support of our valued sponsors.

