

Australian

STUD & STABLE
STAFF AWARDS
2021

Supported by



Godolphin



Rewarding the unsung heroes of the
Australian thoroughbred industry
Wednesday, 26 May, 2021, Gold Coast Turf Club



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WELCOME

On behalf of Racing Australia and Thoroughbred Breeders Australia, we welcome you to the seventh Stud & Stable Staff Awards ceremony in the Gold Coast, supported by Godolphin.

In particular, we would like to congratulate the Awards finalists, Jess Hood, Cassandra Simmonds, Carla Aliphan, Steve Brien, Gary Fennessy, John Brady, Mandy Radecker, Adam Shankley, Samantha Parkes, David Hanratty, Fiona Bayly, Jack Cripps, Jade Willis and Jordan Priest.

We wish each of you good luck and also welcome your families, friends and colleagues tonight. In addition, we are delighted to greet board members and representatives from Racing Australia, Thoroughbred Breeders Australia and from our Award sponsors, Magic Millions, Melbourne Racing Club Foundation, Australian Turf Club, and Inglis, as well as Racing.com and Sky Racing.

Our thanks go to all those in the various sectors of Australian racing and breeding who put forward nominations. A record 174 nominations were received – from the widest-ever range of training establishments, studs and other organisations that support and maintain an industry that is one of Australia's largest.

As we all know, the hard work and commitment of staff is the cornerstone of our industry. Without that, Australia would not be regarded as a global leader in thoroughbred racing and breeding.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the judges for the huge part they have played in adjudicating and selecting the winners in each category.

Our special thanks also go to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed and Godolphin for their continued support of the Australian racing and breeding industry, particularly through these Awards. We look forward to this event continuing for many years to come as the pinnacle of staff awards in our industry.

Finally, we hope you have a thoroughly enjoyable evening and wish all the winners and runners-up the very best for the future.

Myles Foreman
Chief Executive Officer



Tom Reilly
Chief Executive Officer



SPONSOR'S MESSAGE

On behalf of Godolphin, I am delighted our sponsorship of the Stud & Stable Staff Awards continues for the seventh year in Australia. These celebrated Awards recognise the dedication and passion of many remarkable people who work behind the scenes and are the lifeblood of the racing and breeding community.

It is exciting to see the growth of these Awards, the record number of nominations received this year and the high standard of individuals in all categories, which has given the judges a difficult task in selecting winners. The panel includes distinguished, independent representatives from every area of our industry to ensure all decisions are impartial.

Although the public's perception of racing may be of great horses at top meetings, we all know that staff will have worked long and hard, often in tough conditions, to make that happen. But they may largely go unrecognised beyond their own studs and yards. However, these are the people who have enabled us to get through the Covid-19 challenges and without their efforts, our industry may well have stalled.

The aim of these Awards is to bring wider recognition and reward to those incredible individuals who make a real difference to their horses and our great sport.

When His Highness Sheikh Mohammed generously conceived and launched the

first Awards in the UK more than 16 years ago, his aim was to reward excellence in all areas of the racing and breeding industry.

The Australian Thoroughbred Workforce Development Forum recently highlighted the dire need for our industry to 'obtain, train and retain' staff, and to attract new employees. One of the best ways to retain staff is to highlight their worth to one and all – and, most importantly, to them, as these Awards demonstrate.

So, I urge everyone across the industry to take the opportunity to nominate their unsung heroes in the future.

I'd like to thank Myles Foreman and Tom Reilly for their support, and their boards at Racing Australia and Thoroughbred Breeders Australia for sponsoring the Awards. Plus, their teams, including Mary Capuano and Cecelia O'Gorman, for all their efforts. I'm also grateful to the shortlisting and judging panels for their diligent work in selecting the winners.

Our generous co-sponsors have been tremendous, so thanks to Melbourne Racing Club Foundation, Australian Turf Club, Magic Millions and Inglis as well as our media partners, Racing.com and Sky Racing for their support.

Congratulations to all the finalists and winners.

Vin Cox
Managing Director (Australia)



AUSTRALIAN STUD & STABLE STAFF AWARDS 2021 FINALISTS

Administration and Ancillary Services

SPONSORED BY



Jess Hood
Arrowfield



Cassandra Simmonds
Magic Millions

Dedication to Breeding

SPONSORED BY



Carla Aliphan
Cityview Farm



Steve Brien
Twin Hills Stud

Horsemanship

SPONSORED BY



Mandy Radecker
Michael Lakey Racing



Adam Shankley
Arrowfield

Leadership



Samantha Parkes
Godolphin



David Hanratty
Yarradale Stud

Dedication to Racing

SPONSORED BY



AUSTRALIAN TURF CLUB



Gary Fennessy
Lindsay Park



John Brady
Waterhouse Bott

Thoroughbred Care and Welfare



Jade Willis
JW Equestrian



Jordan Priest
Eureka Stud

Newcomer



Fiona Bayly
Ciaron Maher Racing



Jack Cripps
McEvoy Mitchell Racing

ADMINISTRATION AND ANCILLARY SERVICES

SPONSORED BY



JESS HOOD
ARROWFIELD



CASSANDRA SIMMONDS
MAGIC MILLIONS

They are the organisers, fixers and protectors – the ones who know where everything is, how it all works and how to perform miracles at short notice.

Jess Hood and Cassandra Simmonds are part of an indispensable band of people working tirelessly behind the scenes across the thoroughbred industry to get the job done.

At Arrowfield Stud, Hood knows more than most about running a farm she joined 21 years ago, where she rose quickly to Yearling Manager and eventually switched to an office management role.

"I did the yearlings for 10 years and then a job opened up in the office and I wanted to make a change without leaving Arrowfield, so it was perfect," she said.

"There have been many personal rewards, but to be a finalist in these Awards is a different kind of recognition. It's humbling to know that what we do is recognised more widely."

Her wide-ranging responsibilities as Office Administrator include human resources, client liaison and dealing with imports and exports. During the breeding season, she supports the stud secretary and at major sales she draws on her yearlings experience to assist wherever possible.

To Arrowfield Manager Paul Messara, she is vital.

"Diligence, attention to detail and a

An Award to an individual staff member who works in an administration role on a stud or in a racing yard or services ancillary to racing or breeding (such as race club administrators and staff, stud or stable administration staff, farm, garden and maintenance staff). Must demonstrate exceptional skills, loyalty or some achievement that has added value to their employer's business and directly or indirectly to industry standards.

PRIZE: Trophy and \$10,000 to the winner, with \$1,000 to the employer to share among staff. \$3,000 to the runner-up.

deep knowledge of the farm, its people, its operations and its clients are critical to Arrowfield's business – and Jess possesses all of those attributes," he said.

"Jess was responsible for presenting the stud's drafts at all the major sales, including the early progeny of Redoute's Choice and his sons. The knowledge and the skills she acquired during those years has equipped her in a unique way for the job she now performs."

At Magic Millions, Cassandra Simmonds is Office Administrator (Race Series and CRM Systems). She brings her own special qualities, with diplomacy and resourcefulness high on the list.

Affectionately known as 'The Zipper' – the one who brings everything together – she is highly regarded among her peers for her outstanding ability to meet the demands of buyers and sellers. Her skills in liaising with government officials to meet the many logistical challenges during the pandemic also proved vital.

"Cass is someone whose dedication, efficiency and calm, even in the most trying circumstances, are a great asset to both Magic Millions and the countless breeders, trainers, agents and syndicators who rely on her," said one of her nominators, Tom Reilly, Chief Executive Officer of Thoroughbred Breeders Australia.

"In the past 12 months the logistical challenge has been made immeasurably more difficult due to Coronavirus. Cass

is no longer just dealing with flights, hotel bookings and transfers, but is also liaising with government on travel permits, border passes and Covid bio-security plans.

"It is fair to say Cass was single-handedly responsible for ensuring some of the biggest buyers at the Magic Millions Gold Coast sale were able to make it to Queensland."

Other industry experts, including leading syndicator Denise Martin, also praised her talents.

"Cass is peerless in this industry at being able to get things done with a truly remarkable efficiency and unwavering courtesy that is rarely seen in any industry," she explained.

While Garry Cuddy, of Spendthrift Farms, said: "In the past 12 months we have lived in a world of the unknown, but one thing the clients of Magic Millions always knew was that Cass was doing everything humanly possible to make their sales experience seamless."

For trainer Anthony Freedman, it's her ability to manage any situation that singles her out.

"Cass always goes above and beyond, no issue is too big for her to solve, she's always in control – she's one of MM's greatest assets," he said.

And finally, Peter O'Brien, of Segenhoe Stud, summed her up: "Cass is, quite simply, the most efficient person I've ever met."

DEDICATION TO BREEDING

SPONSORED BY



CARLA ALIPHON
CITYVIEW FARM



STEVE BRIEN
TWIN HILLS STUD

If there is one attribute that's common to all categories of the Stud & Stable Staff Awards, it's dedication – something Carla Aliphon and Steve Brien have in abundance.

In Aliphon's case, it is a quality that's obvious to everyone who knows her. Farm Manager at Cityview Farm at Gisborne South on the outskirts of Melbourne for three years, she has been integral to the business's success.

Her nominator, General Manager Cara Kavanagh, is full of praise for her talents.

"We had six mares in mid-2018 when Carla arrived and by the end of the season we had 30. The next season we had another 65 mares and we'll have between 85 and 100 this year," she said.

"Carla has been absolutely pivotal in the farm's success. Everything that Cityview has achieved is due to her dedication, hard work and horsemanship."

It is a view supported by well-known equine vet Ian Douglas.

"The strength of Carla's work ethic, her ability to solve complex problems and her management skills set her apart," he said.

At 15, Aliphon moved to Australia from South Africa with her family and went on to gain a Diploma of Applied Science (Horse Management) at the University of Melbourne.

An Award to an individual staff member who has shown talent in thoroughbred breeding horsemanship as well as consistency and reliability in a stud role. Must have at least five years' service in the breeding industry and have been pivotal to his or her employer's success.

PRIZE: Trophy and \$10,000 to the winner, with \$1,000 to the employer to share among staff. \$3,000 to the runner-up.

After working with Greg Bennett in New South Wales and at Eliza Park with Brett Grayling (credited with igniting her passion for working with broodmares) she joined the Cityview team.

"I'm just honoured to have come this far in the Awards – to be a finalist is such a reward," she said.

Steve Brien's devotion to the industry is beyond doubt; he has spent 46 years in the business – 36 of them at Twin Hills Stud in Cootamundra.

There is, of course, much more to a life in the thoroughbred industry than that.

"I didn't think of much else when I was a young bloke other than working in the thoroughbred business. I got into it as soon as I left school and I've stayed at it ever since," he said.

Growing up in north-western NSW, Brien went on to work at different farms, including Fred Peisah's Lomar Park Stud, and over more than three decades has seen the various incarnations of Twin Hills Stud.

"I've worked for Ferd Calvin, for Mike Willessee when the place was known as Trans Media Park, for Godolphin when they owned the farm, and now for Olly and Amber Tait," he said.

It was his enduring relationship with the farm and impeccable work ethic that prompted the Tait family to nominate their former Stud Manager for the Awards.

"Steve's loyalty to his employers and dedication to the one farm is remarkable," said Olly Tait.

"He's a wonderful human being who has devoted his life to his family and the thoroughbred industry. Steve hasn't merely provided service to the industry, he's improved it."

HORSEMANSHIP

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MANDY RADECKER
MICHAEL LAKEY RACING



ADAM SHANKLEY
ARROWFIELD

In a year when so many SSSA finalists have great expertise as a rider or horse handler, Mandy Radecker and Adam Shankley are at the top of the tree.

Radecker's experiences as a jockey, and at just about everything else in racing, also made her a finalist in last year's Awards. Her main role is Head Trackwork Rider for Brisbane trainer Michael Lakey. But there is far more to the former champion apprentice jockey who began riding at the age of three.

Starting out as a trainee stable hand with Gympie trainer Kaye Hull, she went on to an apprenticeship with prominent Brisbane trainer Pat Duff in 2004, only to suffer shocking injuries in a race fall in April of that year.

With a broken neck and pelvis and fractured hip, her racing career was in doubt, but she was back in the saddle before the end of the season – and crowned Queensland's leading provincial apprentice.

Radecker retired from race riding in 2012 – landing a winner in her last competition – and has since carved out a new life as a trackwork rider who specialises in turning problem horses around.

Her boss, Michael Lakey, summed up her many talents.

"From her award-winning career as a jockey and her ability to communicate with young horses and educate them, to her passion for rehoming, Mandy is a truly remarkable woman," he said.

An Award to an individual staff member who has shown talent for horsemanship, consistency and reliability in or out of the saddle. Must include an affinity with horses and give priority to animal welfare. Must demonstrate a degree of success with the thoroughbred, whether it be in breeding, or racing or both, that has been borne out of their particular skill set.

PRIZE: Trophy and \$10,000 to the winner, with \$1,000 to the employer to share among staff. \$3,000 to the runner-up.

Although she received considerable recognition as a young jockey, it's being an Awards finalist that gives her particular satisfaction.

"I was shocked and speechless when I was told I was in the last five. To now be one of the final two is such an honour," she said.

Senior Stud Groom Adam Shankley has looked after some of the world's finest horses at Arrowfield Stud for the last 20 years – and not for one moment has he failed to impress the farm's Manager Paul Messara.

"Adam Shankley stands out for both his superbly professional handling of our stallions and his consistent, sympathetic approach to every horse in his care," Messara said.

"Adam has worked with all of Arrowfield's stallions since he joined us and has established a relationship with them all. His immense skill, strength, judgement and horse sense is second to none"

Like so many of the finalists honoured in the Awards, Shankley started young and never diverted from the life he loves.

After working with horses at school, his career began in the yearling barn at Widden Stud before he moved to David Moodie's Hobson Lodge racing stable in Melbourne.

He didn't look back on joining the Arrowfield team in 2001 and was

entrusted with accompanying Hussonet as he shuttled to the United States just a few years later.

On his return, as a stallion manager, he was responsible for eight thoroughbreds, and has since worked with notable horses such as Redoute's Choice, Flying Spur and Not A Single Doubt.

"Adam gives everyone, including insurers and stallion shareholders, confidence and peace of mind," Messara said.

Proud to be one of this year's finalists, Shankley said: "These Awards are a concept that gives everyone throughout the industry something to strive for. We all do what we do because we love it, but the recognition we get from the Awards makes everyone feel valued."

LEADERSHIP

An Award to an individual staff member in a managerial or supervisory role in a stud or stable, who has displayed leadership qualities – in particular, quality people management, mentoring and support of staff, attention to workplace health and safety, commitment to continuous improvement and displaying good business acumen.

PRIZE: Trophy and \$10,000 to the winner, with \$1,000 to the employer to share among staff. \$3,000 to the runner-up.



SAMANTHA PARKES
GODOLPHIN



DAVID HANRATTY
YARRADALE STUD

A willingness to teach others, share your experience and knowledge and guide by example are the hallmarks of a true leader – qualities David Hanratty and Samantha Parkes demonstrate every day.

Hanratty has been Stallion and Yearling Manager at Yarradale Stud in Western Australia for 10 years and is pivotal to the farm's operation and its success at the yearling sales.

But, according to Stud Manager Bernadette Hamill, it's not only the horses who benefit from his wealth of experience.

"Davy is constantly educating the yearling prep team on best practice – not only on how to prepare the horses but how to show the horses to their best advantage," Hamill said.

"Davy expects the staff to present themselves in a professional manner, be attentive to detail and work as a team – and he leads by example."

As a teenager, Hanratty worked on studs in Ireland and after going full-time, he enrolled in the Irish National Stud's Thoroughbred Breeding Course, which led to a scholarship with Cambridge Stud in New Zealand.

On his return to Ireland, he became Yearling Manager at the Irish National Stud where he was responsible for some of the most valuable bloodstock in the world. He eventually brought that

wealth of knowledge and experience to Yarradale.

"It's a privilege to be in the position I'm in and to have had the life I've had. I learned from some of the best in the business, so it's a pleasure and a duty for me to pass on as much as I can," he said.

"You don't go into it for recognition, but these Awards offer something that is absolutely fantastic. It's a massive thing and I'm deeply honoured to have been nominated, not to mention becoming a finalist."

Samantha Parkes is renowned for her care and compassion as Broodmare Supervisor at Godolphin's Woodlands Stud.

She has always had a passion for horses. On getting her first pony at six, she became involved in the Jerry's Plains Pony Club, competing in inter-school gymkhanas and enjoying family horse rides.

"I've always been fascinated with horse behaviour and picking up on their language and emotions. When I was small, Mum couldn't keep me out of the horse paddocks, she'd often find me sitting there with the horses," she said.

"Godolphin has given me many wonderful opportunities and being a part of these Awards is another one that I cherish."

At Woodlands Stud, Parkes has joined the Godolphin team for breeding seasons in Ireland and taken part in educational seminars in China, impressing others with her knowledge and her ability to share it.

Parkes's former colleague and current Foaling Manager at Godolphin's Northwood Park, Kelly Frost, praised her talents.

"As a supervisor, it is now Sam's time to pass on her knowledge to the staff who work under her. They are very lucky, because she has the patience of a saint," she said.

These sentiments were echoed by her nominator, Woodlands Stud Manager John Sunderland.

"She teaches and coaches a lot of young people that come through the industry, including people that are undertaking courses like Godolphin Flying Start," he said.

According to a recent Godolphin Flying Start trainee: "Sam Parkes's knowledge, experience, patience and love and care for the mares and foals were obvious for every second we spent with her."

Colleague James Manning praised her "bottomless passion, dedication, reliability and good humour" while Woodlands Assistant Manager Simon Johnson highlighted her ability to absorb knowledge and communicate it to others.

DEDICATION TO RACING

SPONSORED BY



AUSTRALIAN TURF CLUB

An Award to an individual staff member who has shown talent for horsemanship in the racing field, and consistency and reliability in a racing role. Must have at least five years' service in the racing industry and have been pivotal to his or her employer's success.

PRIZE: Trophy and \$10,000 to the winner, with \$1,000 to the employer to share among staff. \$3,000 to the runner-up.



GARY FENNESSY
LINDSAY PARK

There may never be two more worthy finalists for the Dedication to Racing Award than Gary Fennessy and John Brady – between them, they have given more than 120 years' service to the industry.

And they have done so with extraordinary loyalty and devotion, each remaining at the stable where they started.

Fennessy is Assistant Trainer at Lindsay Park. His commitment began when he went to work for Colin (CS) Hayes in Melbourne in the mid-1960s, and it continues today with the third generation of the same family.

"I met CS when I was 16 and he gave me a job at the Melbourne stables which at that time consisted of eight boxes and four yards," Fennessy said.

"He was the greatest mentor anyone could've had. He listened to every word you said, and he respected what you had to say."

After 18 months at Melbourne, Fennessy – who is known in racing as 'Bim' – transferred to the original Hayes stables at Semaphore in Adelaide. However, as his boss increased his focus on Victorian racing, Fennessy returned to Melbourne, working as foreman of the stable that was to become one of the most powerful in Australia.

Horses such as Cox Plate winners Dulcify and So Called benefited from Fennessy's care, as did Melbourne Cup

winner Jeune, "an unbelievable galloper", and one of his earliest favourites, 1974 Victoria Derby winner Haymaker. He also accompanied Better Loosen Up on his illustrious Japan Cup mission.

"We thought he could win – it was a fabulous trip, a fabulous result," he said.

When Colin Hayes retired, 'Bim' continued with his sons Peter and David, and then with Tony McEvoy, who took over from the latter when he went to Hong Kong in the 1990s.

With David Hayes's return to Hong Kong in 2020, Fennessy was "inherited" by the third generation of the family, and is now Assistant Trainer in the Ben Hayes-Tom Dabernig team.

His impressive 54-year innings is rivalled by fellow finalist, stable hand John Brady. Known as 'Crewie' at Randwick, he started working with the legendary Tommy Smith in 1953 – and is still on the job at Tulloch Lodge 68 years later.

At 84, Brady is the first to turn up at the stable every morning, beating even his boss Gai Waterhouse through the gate.

Brady experienced the rise to the top of a racing stable that was the most dominant in Australia and is a rare link to the Champions of several eras – and to the horse, he is adamant, was the best of them all.

"There hasn't been another one like Tulloch, he was a wonderful horse. To do what he did after he got very sick was something I'll never forget," he said.

He summed up his old boss as being a hard man with a great eye.

"TJ was always ahead of the others, he thought differently," he said.

Gai Waterhouse, Smith's daughter and Brady's current boss at Tulloch Lodge, praised her longest-serving employee for his amazing knowledge of horses.

"Crewie arrived at my father's yard as a small boy with a crew cut and he's been working in these stables for nearly 70 years," she said.

"He has strapped and ridden some of the best horses to race in Australia, and the knowledge he has of horse care and animal welfare is second to none.

"Adrian [Bott] and I feel very proud to be working with such a man who is loved by everyone at Tulloch Lodge."

His colleague and nominator, Camille Dennis, said Brady commanded the greatest respect from everyone at the stable.

"His younger colleagues know that it pays to listen when he has some advice or a story," she said.

"He's a fantastic role model for everyone working here."

As for being an Awards finalist, Brady is overwhelmed.

"It's one of the greatest things that's ever happened to me," he said.



JOHN BRADY
WATERHOUSE BOTT

THOROUGHBRED CARE AND WELFARE

An Award to an individual who has demonstrated a commitment to the care and welfare of thoroughbreds who are not actively racing, and/or created a greater awareness, passion and care for the thoroughbred horse in its second/alternate career (breeding, breaking, pre- and post-racing career, rehoming, retraining, providing a comfortable retirement, etc). These may be, for example, a quiet achiever, paid or volunteer in retraining or rehoming of the thoroughbred.

PRIZE: Trophy and \$10,000 to the winner, with \$1,000 to the employer to share among staff. \$3,000 to the runner-up.



JADE WILLIS
JW EQUESTRIAN

In an area of the industry that is both sensitive and essential, Jade Willis and Jordan Priest fill roles that deserve significant praise and support.

Finalists in the Thoroughbred Care and Welfare category, they give their time, money, and boundless energy to provide new lives for former racehorses.

And in an area that figures prominently in the vision of Godolphin's founder, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, they continue a tradition of selfless devotion.

Jade Willis began her association with racing in New Zealand when she was given a horse to retrain. It ignited her passion to find new homes and careers for retired racehorses – and over the past 12 months she's rehomed 122 of them.

She founded JW Equestrian two years ago to further her work. As well as retraining "off-track" thoroughbreds, and finding them new owners, she instructs their new riders in various equestrian disciplines and also competes in eventing.

"I started the business to give horses a chance to be champions off the racecourse," Willis said.

"I always loved thoroughbreds and I decided that if I was going to do this, I would do it properly."

That meant buying a 40-acre property to train and condition the horses she

acquires from their previous owners and trainers.

It's her second time as an Awards finalist, which she regards as a sign of faith in her work.

"But whatever happens, I'm so thankful for the people who nominated me and for the effort that has gone into the SSSA from Godolphin, the TBA, Racing Australia and the sponsors," she said.

Like her fellow finalist, Jordan Priest entered the rehoming business to not only find new homes for ex-racehorses, but also the best, most suitable new owners for them.

"I get to know my horses as well as I can. The challenge can be to then find them the humans that suit them best," Priest said.

She has found new homes for 25 horses this year and started a riding school, the Darling Downs Riding Centre, that fits closely to the rehoming side of the business.

Priest, who also works at McAlpine's Eureka Stud, began her career in stables and leading horses in the Magic Millions sales ring for Evergreen Stud.

Her nominator, Angus McAlpine of Eureka Stud, praised her professionalism as "second to none".

"Jordan genuinely loves all the retired racehorses that come into her stables and she spends a lot of time and energy

promoting retired racehorses and the good they can do in their next life," McAlpine said.

"She regularly guides people at the sales about what they can do if their horse is too slow."

Priest has rehomed a string of "problem" or injured horses and is particularly proud of one of her "graduates" who is now a mount in Thailand's Royal Guard.

She would like to create more awareness in the racing and bloodstock industry of after-racing care and rehoming of racehorses.

"I do it as a bit of a love job, but there really isn't money to be made from retraining and selling retired racehorses once you add up all the hours spent doing it properly," she said.

"I think we are already on the right path to improvements, but I would love for everybody to care where the horses go when they have retired."



JORDAN PRIEST
EUREKA STUD

NEWCOMER

An Award to an individual who has worked in the industry, in any capacity, for less than three years. The winner will display passion for, pride in, and an excellent contribution to the thoroughbred industry. The winner will stand out from other newcomers and will be identified as a future and significant, valuable member of this industry. (This winner will not be eligible for the Thoroughbred Excellence Award).

PRIZE: Trophy, \$5,000 and a trip to Dubai for the winner, with \$1,000 to the employer to share among staff. \$3,000 to the runner-up.



FIONA BAYLY
CIARON MAHER RACING

Fiona Bayly and Jack Cripps have made outstanding starts to what they see as long-term careers – their enthusiasm, endeavour and selfless compassion are second to none.

Bayly started as a stable hand with the Ciaron Maher and David Eustace team in 2018, joining her mother who also worked for the trainers.

She quickly progressed to working with the horses, learning the basics of everything from saddling to swimming and raceday strapping.

Ciaron Maher Racing Chief Executive Andy Wiles said Bayly's progress had been a source of satisfaction for everyone involved with her.

"Fiona is hard-working, diligent, conscientious, productive, committed and incredibly proud of her role in the stable's success," he said.

As well as seizing every opportunity at the stable to learn and progress, Bayly did a three-month mustering stint on a North Queensland cattle station in 2020 to further her horse skills and understanding.

On her return, she became Assistant Foreman at the Ballarat stable of Maher and Eustace and has since undertaken a Certificate IV course in racing, with a view to becoming an assistant trainer.

Leading trainer Tony McEvoy describes his Newcomer nomination Jack Cripps

as an asset every stable would love to have.

"Jack's development in the thoroughbred industry is staggering," he said.

His first step towards racing came only two years ago when he responded to an advertisement for the Thoroughbred Industry Careers Explorer Cadetship Program.

After a 12-week boot camp at Western Sydney University, a stint at Godolphin's Northwood Park stud in Victoria and another with McEvoy Mitchell Racing, Cripps stayed on as a full-time stable hand. He now works in the Sales and Syndication office.

While his work ethic and desire to learn set him apart, his character has also impressed McEvoy.

"Such was Jack's care for others that when Covid-19 hit hard in Melbourne, he took redundancy and went home to Western Australia to ensure one of the Melbourne team with a family could be kept on," he said.

At home, Cripps came up with a plan to help build the stable's owner base through selling minor shares in horses. Since returning to Melbourne in August 2020 he has introduced 190 new people to the stable's portfolio.

"At McEvoy Mitchell Racing, we believe Jack's efforts have been outstanding. He

is a charismatic and friendly young man with an excellent work ethic and that is why we were delighted to nominate him for the SSSA Newcomer Award," McEvoy added.



JACK CRIPPS
MCEVOY MITCHELL RACING

A MESSAGE FROM WENDY SMITH, WINNER OF THE AUSTRALIAN THOROUGHBRED EXCELLENCE AWARD 2020

“There are so many people who work in the background who never get recognition. These Awards offer something to all of them”



WENDY SMITH OF BLUE GUM FARM RECEIVES HER AWARDS FOR HORSEMANSHIP AND THOROUGHBRED EXCELLENCE FROM PATTI AND PHILIP CAMPBELL

The shock and elation Wendy Smith experienced when she was named last year's Excellence Award winner may have faded, but the sense of achievement and satisfaction she feels for herself and other entrants lives on.

In her eyes, the Stud & Stable Staff Awards recognise all the unsung heroes working behind the scenes in the racing and breeding industry.

“The personal aspect is certainly something that still means a great deal to me, but these Awards acknowledge every single person in the industry who devotes themselves to the work they love,” she said.

“There are so many people who work in the background who never get recognition. These Awards offer something to all of them.

“For so many people to be nominated by their colleagues, bosses or their family members should give every one of us a lot of pride. To receive an award for loving and admiring horses is a huge bonus.”

A veterinary nurse and all-round horsewoman, Smith has been in charge of the post-natal care of Blue Gum Farm's foals for the past nine years, in which time the stud has been one of Victoria's most successful consignors to Australian yearling sales.

Blue Gum's owners, Philip and Patti Campbell, nominated Smith for the Awards for all her attributes, and during the SSSA process she revealed what might be the secret to her relationship with her horses.

“I'm not in a bad mood very often. I think they like that,” she said.

That situation, no doubt, remains unchanged.

OUR WINNERS FROM THE PREVIOUS FOUR YEARS



2020 winners (from top left): Kelly Colledge, Wendy Smith, Liz Andriske, Michael Hurry, Sarah Moran, Simon Johnson and Chris Cooper



2019 winners (from left): Lindy Thewlis, Steve Adams, Cecelia O'Gorman, David Merrick, David White, Talia Cranfield and Warren Sutton

2018 winners (from left): Meg Stanley, Lee Purchase, Scott Eeles, Joe Agresta, Peter Keating, Patrick Sheehan and Hannah Dick

2017 winners (from left): John Livingstone, Vikki Cannon, Jeremy Rogers, Jane Gollan, Lyn Dressing and Kellie McCarthy

RACING AUSTRALIA AND THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS AUSTRALIA WOULD LIKE TO THANK:

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum
Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai

JUDGING PANEL

Johan Petzer (Chair)
Chairman of Stewards, Racing SA

Melissa Weatherley
Industry consultant (QLD)

Caroline Searcy
SearcyMedia and Sky Racing (NSW)

Basil Nolan
President of Thoroughbred Breeders Australia and owner of Raheen Stud (QLD)

Chris Watson
Director, Thoroughbred Breeders Australia and owner of Mill Park Stud (SA)

Troy Corstens
Head Trainer, Malua Racing (VIC)

Peter Heagney
Former Director, Inglis (VIC)

David Merrick
2019 Thoroughbred Excellence Award Winner (NSW)

Joe Agresta
2018 Thoroughbred Excellence Award Winner (VIC)

Jenny Watson
2016 Thoroughbred Excellence Award Winner (TAS)

OFFICIAL SSSA JOURNALIST

Mike Hedge
Racing journalist (VIC)

Australian
STUD & STABLE
STAFF AWARDS
2021

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