



L R: Winning part-owners Tim & David Reed with Simon Miller, Todd Hepden and Damien Bandy with Kate Witten



## CONNECTIONS RULE AT ASCOT

Racing Connections gave participants in the Own The Dream competition a taste of racehorse ownership at Ascot in December and January.

Brennan Fyans, RWWA Racing Marketing Co-ordinator and Jacki Taylor, WA Representative for Racing Connections promoted the WA Owners Only initiative leading up to the 2019 Perth Magic Millions Sale.

By Christmas, over 400 people had entered to participate in the Owners Only series that culminates in a grand prize of a 20% share in a yearling bought at the 2019 Perth Magic Millions plus all training expenses for two years.

RWWA and Racing Connections boosted interest and involvement in the competition by offering Stable Mates experiences at Ascot.

Among them were Todd Hepden and Kaylene Cole who were both paired with winners in December. Todd was first cab off the rank with Market Ruler in Race 1 and Kaylene bought up a double with Angelic Ruler in Race 3.

Both horses are by Scenic Lodge sire Universal Ruler and were expected to win as short-priced favourites.

Todd was there with his mate Damien Bandy and an enjoyable day out was helped along by backing a few winners. "Punting is only a hobby but we've put a team together for the Owners Only series," he said. "And we will be attending all the events starting with the Sundowner at Caversham."

Hepden and his wife Candice operate Todd The Tiler renovations in Kardinya. There's four in their Owners Only team - Todd, Damien, Jay Hepden and Thomas Mancusso.

"I was really impressed with Jacki and Brennan's hospitality. We went down to the horse stalls while Market Ruler was being saddled and her trainer Simon Miller was approachable and generous with his time.

"Market Ruler dominated her race and we went back to the mounting yard to hear the feedback from Kate Witten. Then we were invited back to the Winner's Bar for a drink with Simon and the other winning connections."

Kaylene Cole was paired with the Dan & Ben Pearce trained Angelic Ruler who was backing up from a strong win just a week prior with Tayla Stone taking over from Damian Lane.

The ladies watched Tayla bring her home from last on the home turn with a superbly-timed finishing burst. One of Kaylene's guests was her daughter Georgia who loves all things horses including her own appaloosa.

"It was an exciting experience for everyone cheering home and celebrating a winner," Taylor said. "Hopefully, every one of those participants will now consider ownership with a bit more confidence and enthusiasm, and pass on their recommendations of the Stable Mates program."



L-R: Kaylene and Georgia Cole, Racing connections rep Jacki Taylor, jockey Tayla Stone, Deanna Ham and Holly Beggs

## SHOOTER PUTS PEDAL TO THE MEDAL

Shaun McGruddy has built an outstanding strike-rate with Misty Metal winning 6 from 8 aboard the daughter of Oratorio.

They won the LR Jungle Mist Classic (1200m) and LR Summer Scorcher (1000m) during the summer carnival and there's more black-type looming in the months ahead.

Trainers Robert and Todd Harvey have several options including the LR Scenic Blast Stakes (1200m) and LR Cyril Flower Stakes (1200m) at Ascot as well as feature provincial sprints like the LR Pinjarra Classic (1300m) and LR Bunbury Stakes (1400m).

Misty Metal is a homebred for Lex and Shirley Piper and her record now stands at 9 wins in 17 starts for \$434,935 in prizemoney. "I was a bit concerned behind the barrier before the Summer Scorcher because she felt a bit too relaxed," 'Shooter' McGruddy said. "But she's the ultimate professional - when the gates opened it was game on.

"She was in top gear around the home turn even though I still had a hold. And there was a heap there when I let her head go."

Misty Metal's 3yo sister Minika can add her name to the family's long list of winners in her first preparation. Their dam Rubitawny (Rubiton) was a two-time Belmont winner for the Pipers. Second-dam Kentiara (Metal Storm) won the LR York Stakes and LR Detonator Stakes at Ascot.

Rubitawny foaled an Oratorio colt earlier this season and was bred back to Mungrup Stud's champion sire in September. Oratorio has 13 yearlings entered for the 2019 Perth Magic Millions and all bar one are on account of Mungrup Stud.



Dark Dream in Sha Tin

## DREAM QUEST FOR HONG KONG DERBY

The G1 Hong Kong Derby is high on the horizon for Dark Dream after the All American import took his rivals apart at Sha Tin last month.

Racing second-up after a G1 Queensland Derby triumph in June, he charged through a gap in the straight for a four-length victory in the Long Ke Hcp (2000m). It laid down a very persuasive early marker for the classic in March.

"I was blown away by that effort," trainer Frankie Lor said. "I hope we have the Derby winner - we've got a chance - and I don't mind if he's the favourite or not.

"Silvestre (de Sousa) was second last at the turn and he stayed on the inside instead of the outer where the track should be better. Maybe the horse likes it a little bit softer."

de Sousa is in no doubt that Dark Dream is destined for big things. "I knew I had the horse under me to get the job done," he told South China Morning Post. "I was travelling so well and knew if we were good enough to go around then we were good enough to stay on the inside.

"He handled everything very well but, at the same time, he's still a bit green. He got to the front and started looking around. He's just immature and is getting to know the place.

"Zac (Purton) will probably ask for the ride back but I would love to keep it," De Sousa admitted. "He was very impressive today."

Geisel Park Stud stands All American and his first WA-bred yearlings have been catalogued for the Perth Magic Millions in February. Dark Dream's dam Buchanan Girl has also been tested in foal this season off an October cover to All American.