

**PAST THE POST**  
**24 AUGUST 2005**

Sunday sees the running of the \$100,000 Aon Coolgardie Cup (1600m) and marks the start of the Goldfields annual feast of racing. So does it start the Round?

Many might consider the week of the Round to be conducted from Sunday, 11 September (Boulder Cup day) as the true definition of such a term.

History suggests they would be technically incorrect.

According to historian Norm Healy in extracts from his memoirs on racing in the Goldfields, the "Round" as we know it has its origins back to the late 1800s.

He states – "The now-famous 'Round' also had its genesis in 1897. It was decided that Kalgoorlie would hold the first meetings of the Winter Carnival in August, and that honour would rotate between Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie in following years."

There are accounts from other writers that more clubs were involved and people would travel to each venue – hence the name 'Round'.

Healy was very precise with his recollections and his version is most likely correct.

Back in 1897, 7,000 people fronted in Coolgardie to watch the Coolgardie Cup. In those days the race was conducted over a mile and a half compared to this Sunday's encounter over a mile. Interestingly, the distance has changed on more occasions than any other major race conducted on the Goldfields.

Le Var, who went on to win the Perth Cup the following year, collected the first Coolgardie Cup.

Since that day, the Coolgardie Racing Club has enjoyed mixed fortunes.

According to Healy, the cup of 1916 was held in miserable weather and was not a success. The club dropped out of the following rounds until 1939 – opting instead to conduct picnic meetings between the Kalgoorlie and Boulder carnivals.

Despite difficulties getting re-established, the CRC has gone from strength-to-strength in recent decades. A cup-stake of \$100,000 is impressive for the size of their town. It is most likely the richest cup race per head of population in the world.

These days the Goldfields Racing Carnival spreads over a month and stakes are at an all time high.

Nominations for each of the feature events were impressive. Entries for the Aon Coolgardie Cup led the way with significant nominations.

The exciting thing about the carnival is that history is written every year. Unlike younger clubs, racing on the Goldfields is steeped in tradition. Talk to any trainer,

jockey or owner that has captured a major on the Goldfields and you will understand the significance of it all.

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The \$100,000 Aon Coolgardie Cup is the first leg of the 2005 National Hire – The Cat Rental Store Triple Nugget Bonus.

Any horse that can claim the Coolgardie-Boulder-Kalgoorlie cups treble over the next month will collect an additional \$100,000.

The last horse to complete the feat was the mighty Lawmaker in 2002. Prior to that, Signpost collected the loot a decade earlier.

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Patrons attending Sunday's meeting at the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racecourse for the running of the Aon Coolgardie Cup will be hoping to claim some of the T. E. Cullen and Sons snaggers.

To an outsider, you would think a bundle of snaggers would not be that attractive. But we are talking about the best sausages in the world. Of all the promotions conducted at the local circuit each year, the big snagger give-a-way is one of the most popular.

Trophies will also be awarded to all winning connections of horses that salute.

The added attractions at Sunday's meeting are impressive.

The Caravan and Camping Show is on the weekend at the local racecourse and those attending the races will get a look for free.

Bluey Day is also being conducted at the track on Sunday commencing at 10.30. This is where the local police and other prominent individuals shave or colour their head to raise valuable funds for charity.

An auction will occur during the day to assist. Some of the bounty up for grabs includes signed Eagles and Dockers jumpers, gloves signed by boxer Danny Green, a Casey Chambers t-shirt and a pair of signed bathers from swimming legend Kieran Perkins. All these items will be auctioned between races.

Local emergency response teams will also be in attendance displaying some of their equipment.

If that wasn't enough, there will be a display of vintage cars assembled and if you get there before 1pm you'll be able to grab a ride in one of them.

Even more attractive is that all of the above can be viewed free of charge if you front before 11.30.

The kids have not been forgotten with free balloons and lollies, along with a bouncy castle.

The ultimate in dining will be available with Andy's Bratwurst German sausages and condiments, certain to attract plenty of attention throughout the weekend.

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Finally, let's have a look at the final field for this Sunday's \$100,000 Aon Coolgardie Cup (1600m).

A capacity field of sixteen runners are likely to face the starter with four emergencies waiting in the wings.

The composition of the field makes for interesting dissection.

The winners of the three legs of last year's triple nugget return. The Fred Kersley-trained Priceless Matt will attempt back-to-back wins in the Coolgardie feature.

Boulder Cup victor from last year in My Thornbird returns for trainer Geoff Durrant. Local galloper Violent Wind prepared by John Lugg will attempt to add a Coolgardie Cup to his owners' cabinet after claiming the 2004 Kalgoorlie Cup.

Most of WA's leading trainers are represented with various runners. Only two locally trained gallopers have won a place in the final field of sixteen. They are the Peter Fernie-trained Noon and Violent Wind.

Trainer Cliff Smith will be hoping for a scratching with the emerging Heavenly Business listed as first emergency.

There is no doubt there are several well-performed horses that are capable of landing the first leg of the rich treble. It should be a classic encounter.

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(If space – put in the final field – available now!)