

PAST THE POST (FINAL EDITION)
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When the Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racing Club decided to end their season on XXXX Gold Kalgoorlie Cup day they must have had the interest of the locals at heart.

There were plenty of tired conveyances at the conclusion of Saturday's successful climax – and I'm not just talking about the thoroughbreds.

It's a long season and the fact that there is no meeting this weekend ends a tradition that dates back many years. Often that meeting was anti-climatic and when you think about, most would be all partied-out after the Round.

And what a Round it was!

The cream on the cake was the win of Priceless Matt in the \$125,000 XXXX Gold Kalgoorlie Cup (2300m). The story behind the winner is a beauty. Adding the gloss was the fact that he is partly owned by one of the genuine real good blokes in George Grljusich, along with his wife Pat and adoring family.

George is one gentleman you just have to admire. He loves racing and he thrives on a life in the Goldfields. The number of people wishing him well after the win was testament to that.

What about Sharon Miller? Back-to-back Hannan's winners' puts her in elite company. The last trainer to do that was Frank Maynard in 1988-89.

The story of Wire Detonator is equally inspiring.

Apparently when Davor Prerad – who bred and owns Wire Detonator – arrived in Leinster he knew nothing about horses.

Stalwart of racing in the town Billy Biggs, recounted several interesting yarns about the likable owner.

“When he arrived he was just 17,” Billy recalled about his first meeting with Davor.

“I remember he said he was going to ride a horse, even though he had never had any involvement with them. Undeterred, he got aboard one, and sure enough he was tipped off.”

Biggs then went on to explain how the determination the Hannan's Handicap winning owner demonstrated to finally succeed.

The fact Davor purchased the mother of Wire Detonator (Princess Ifrad) from Leonora legend Neil Biggs in the North-Eastern Goldfields is a terrific advertisement for racing in that part of the world.

With the cups set down for decision in Leonora, Laverton and Leinster in future weeks, perhaps another major winner may stem from the outer tracks in years to come.

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(WE HAVE A PICTURE OF DAMIEN OLIVER WITH THE APPRENTICE RIDERS)

What a treat to have champion hoop Damien Oliver in town for this year's Round.

If you had the pleasure of meeting the bloke you could not fail to be impressed by this inspiring and genuine talent.

Oliver is about to set off around the world as an ambassador for the Melbourne Cup. First stop is Hong Kong, and then plenty of other places from there.

Whilst here, Oliver took the trouble to speak to apprentice riders (and a couple of senior jockeys) in Kalgoorlie-Boulder for the Round.

What they heard would have provided them with plenty of inspiration for the future.

As for Oliver, his back is gradually regaining strength and he is optimistic about his prospects in the saddle during 2006.

There's not too many people that stop people in their tracks on Hannan Street, but that's what Oliver did all week with plenty wanting the signature of the star hoop.

Damien recently launched the Oliver Foundation. It was established in memory of his father Ray and brother Jason who were both tragically killed in racetrack falls.

He spoke warmly about assisting families that go through such a loss. If you would like to support the foundation details are available from the KBRC.

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Speaking of the Oliver Foundation, part proceeds from the Harry Wulff Memorial Golf Day conducted during the Round went to that organisation.

Trainer and local real estate tycoon Aaron Bazeley and his team won the event from his partner's team in Misty Parsons.

The fact the groups were playing together raised a few eyebrows, but they were crowned the victors on the day nevertheless.

Misty has had an outstanding season combining mainly with John Eaton to chalk-up ten winners this year.

Her relationship with Mahawangsa in particular proved to be most successful. It's fair to say her season was one of her very best. Arguably, no hoop would have had a better strike rate in tight finishes than Misty this season

Aaron looked resplendent in a black striped shirt on Saturday and Misty equally as appealing in a striking white outfit. The inaugural Brent Hunt Fashion Award therefore goes to the happy couple. Congratulations.

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Being the final PTP for the season, some further awards to finish the season off.

I'll start with yours truly. After a reasonable start to the season, my tipping form genuinely was woeful until Hannan's day.

Prior to that meeting, from the previous 5 fixtures (that's 35 races) I managed just the one winner. That's a 3% strike rate. To all those connections concerned and to those that may have followed the tips through those dark days, I apologise as I collect the "Better Give It Away Award".

Broadcaster David Sheehan (who by the way did an outstanding job under plenty of pressure over the past few weeks) collects the – "Never Misses A Beat Award."

"The 2005 Toyota Award," goes to trainer Cliff Smith. Those at the track early in the morning understand that most trainers get around in what they can find in the dark when they wake. Cliffy fronted for his appearance on the Sky Channel show – Off The Beaten Track – dressed like a walking billboard for Goldfields Toyota.

Therefore the "Opportunist Award," has to go to Andrew Inglis from Goldfields Toyota.

The – "I Can't Wait For Cup Day 2006 Award," goes to the gentleman who did the streak down the home straight on Coolgardie Cup day. Stewards disqualified him for a year late last week.

KBRC committeeman David Prance doesn't escape the net and picks-up – "Most Expensive Plonk Award In 2005," for generously paying above the odds for a bottle of wine earlier in the year. If the Swans win on Saturday, he could be tempted to drink it.

The – "Back From The Dead Award," goes to Captain Rob Scarvaci who nearly perished at sea before being rescued by authorities earlier this year.

Our final award goes to one of the members of the People's Syndicate in 2005 - I promised he'd remain anonymous. That award is – “The Most Positive Person On Track Award,” for the following statement after the syndicate's horse in Polish Pleasure finished a distant last again (and we are talking over 20 lengths from the winner). The comment - “I like it when he gallops by himself because it's easier to take photos of him.”

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To all those that trained a winner, rode a winner, owned a winner, backed a winner in 2005, - heartiest congratulations to you.

Having had the thrill of winning a few races this year as part of a syndicate, it certainly is a great feeling.

Finally - thanks to all those that made this column possible.

That group comprises KBRC Chairman Glen Forrest along with his committee, Jan, Helen and Sian in the KBRC offices, a multitude of owners, trainers, jockeys, stewards, track-staff, bookies, and to all those who read this column each week.

It would be remiss not to acknowledge the team at the Kalgoorlie Miner. I reckon you would be battling to find a regional newspaper anywhere in Australia more committed to local sport, particularly racing.

Until they are ready to jump at the historic KBRC again in 2006, good punting!

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