

Racing

2008 Tasmanian Racing Hall of Fame inductees

LONGFORD trainer George Blacker has joined his best-ever horse St Andrews in the Tasmanian Racing Hall of Fame. St Andrews, a winner of three Launceston Cups and a Hobart Cup, was inducted last year.

Blacker was inducted last night at the racing industry's annual awards dinner in Hobart.

This year's other inductees were jockeys Bill Dunstone and George Stebbings; trainer Bill Bullen; administrator, owner and breeder Gordon Jennings; successful racing family Ray, Michael and Adam Trinder; and horses Alfa and Gay Lungi.

The Hall of Fame, now in its fourth year, has four categories — horses, trainers, jockeys and associates — and there can be no more than two inductees in each category each year.

2008 inductees are:

ALFA: trained by Barry Campbell and later Bart Cummings, was a star performer of the mid-1990s. He was unbeaten in Tasmania as a two-year-old, winning the Debutante Plate, Silver Ingot Cup, Gold Sovereign Stakes, Tilford Stakes and Fosters Classic, and went on to win four consecutive races in Melbourne as a three-year-old including the Group 1 Caulfield Guineas. He dead-heated for second in Group 1 Victoria Derby. Alfa contested seven Group 1 races as an older horse, with his best result a second to Filante in the Caulfield Stakes. He was placed in stakes races behind Might And Power, Juggler and Ebony Grosve, the best horses of the era.

GAY LUNGI was regarded as the best Tasmanian-bred horse of his era in the 1950s. Over three seasons, he won 17 races in succession. After winning the

The State racing industry last night inducted several trainers, jockeys and horses into its Tasmanian Racing Hall of Fame, as The Examiner's chief racing writer GREG MANSFIELD reports.

1956 Tasmanian Newmarket Handicap at Mowbray as a three-year-old, he ventured across Bass Strait to win at Caulfield which, at the time, was considered a feat of great magnitude. His 17 successive wins in Tasmania included nine at Elwick, seven at Mowbray and one at Brighton. Gay Lungi (Lungi-Gay Fairy) was raced in partnership by Walter Blackwell and Frank King and ended his career with 26 wins and 20 minor placings from 68 starts.

BILL BULLEN: was a successful apprentice jockey in Victoria before moving to Tasmania in 1947. Rising weight saw him switch to jumps racing and he was the State's leading jumps jockey for 11 years, winning both the Grand National Steeple and Grand National Hurdle three times. Bullen later became a highly successful trainer, winning two Hobart Cups with Sailing Prince and Strident King and building a reputation for his ability to win races in Victoria. His 15 Melbourne winners included Glen Lang (multiple city winner) and Nickleburn (Kyneton Cup). Bullen was the master of several leading apprentices including Ron Riley, Arthur Farrell and Craig Hanson.

GEORGE BLACKER: has been one of Tasmania's leading trainers for more than three decades and his record in feature races is second to none. His first feature win was the 1980 Queen's Cup with Lloyd Boy. He has since won two Hobart Cups (Courtly Way and St Andrews), four Launceston Cups (St Andrews

three times and Bitter Spring), seven Newmarket Handicaps, four Thomas Lyons Stakes, the Tasmanian Derby and Tasmanian Oaks. Blacker has five times supplied the Tasmanian racehorse of the year. Although he's never had big numbers in his stable, he has nearly always had at least one topline.

RAY, MICHAEL and ADAM TRINDER: form arguably the most successful Tasmanian racing family of the modern era. Ray rode over hurdles as an amateur until he was 66. He was one of the State's leading owner-trainers, winning more than 300 races including a Launceston Cup, four Grand National Steeples and four Grand National Hurdles. He owned 1972 Melbourne Cup winner Piping Lane and other prolific winners such as Joking, steeplechaser Aberfoyle and hurdler Flaming Sun. Ray's son Michael has been one of Tasmania's top trainers for more than 25 years. Despite never having a large stable, he's won two trainers' premierships, in 1986 and '87. However his main claim to fame is his outstanding success in feature jumps races in Victoria. He has won four Hiskens Steeples with Monsist, Tengah Hari, Red Cavalier and Misty Weather as well as the Grand National Steeple with Outstride. Michael's son Adam has forged a successful career as a jumps jockey and is among the leaders of his profession in Australia. He has ridden in the US, Japan, New Zealand and Ireland and his biggest wins include two Hiskens



Trainer George Blacker with his top horse St Andrews in 2003. Both horse and trainer are now members of the Tasmanian Racing Hall of Fame.

Steeple on Misty Weather and Spanish Symbol.

GORDON JENNINGS: came to Tasmania in 1948 as an engineer with Public Works to help build Hobart Airport. He later established his own business and developed the highly successful Runnymede Stud racing and breeding complex which has been kept going since his death in 1996 by his family. Jennings owned 1982 Hobart Cup winner Powerful Prince, ridden by Malcolm Johnston and trained by Tommy Smith, and had winners in Melbourne trained by Theo Howe. He stood the stallions Acidity and Skydream at his Runnymede property. As a TRC committeeman, Jennings led the campaign to have the inside grass at Elwick set up as a separate track.

BILL DUNSTONE: was one of the top Tasmanian jockeys of a strong era and will always be remembered for his association with Vamos, one of Tasmania's best-ever mares. They combined to win successive Launceston Cups in 1954 and '55. Dunstone also won the Launceston Cup in

1952 on English. Originally from Victoria, he came to Launceston for a visit in 1945 and stayed. Dunstone was regarded as a "gentleman jockey" and associates recall the story of him riding a horse to four consecutive wins for a big-betting owner and not once getting the traditional "sling". Rather than complain, Dunstone kept riding the horse and, after win No. 5, returned home to find his "present", a new car, parked in his driveway.

GEORGE STEBBINGS: was one of Tasmania's best jockeys for 30 years before tragically losing his life as a result of a race fall at Elwick in 1908. He was a multiple winner of nearly every Tasmanian feature race of his era. His seven Tasmanian Derby victories, including three in succession between 1893 and 1895, remains a record. He won two Hobart and two Launceston Cups, eight Longford Cups and four Deloraine Cups. In the 1882 Deloraine Cup he rode No Faults to victory ahead of Sheet Anchor, who went on to win the Melbourne Cup, and Coronet, a subsequent Caulfield Cup winner.

Big names to battle in Liston Stakes



THE MAIL

With JOE O'NEILL

THE Melbourne Carnival really is starting to hot up and today we see another cracker programme of races at Caulfield. I get a sense of excitement when I talk to racing enthusiasts and I can't wait to see the big races this weekend.

The battle between Weekend Hustler and Light Fantastic in the Liston Stakes is surely the highlight of the weekend. Weekend Hustler has had his problems leading into this meeting and he didn't look a oil painting when he galloped at Caulfield last week. He is certain to be unders but he is taking on some very talented gallopers and will need to be near his best if he is to win again.

Maldivian ran a terrific race in the Liston last year when third to the very good galloper Apache Cat. What occurred at

Caulfield on Cup day was a tragedy and Maldivian was the best horse in Australia at that time. I won't be surprised to see him in the money here. He is trained by a good one and I have a huge respect for the horse.

There is no doubt Light Fantastic will strip a fit horse for this and he is also trained by one of the best. Alamosa has a great record in NZ and could easily be in the money here. I'm prepared to wait to see. In a great race:

Best: LIGHT FANTASTIC
Main danger: MALDIVIAN
Others: WEEKEND HUSSLER and ALAMOSA

THE Quezette Stakes is a really good race and I do like the chances of Altitude. She was backed off the map and won accordingly recently at Sandown. The form was franked with Shine On Anna which finished third coming out and scoring an impressive win at Flemington last week. This may well be a very strong form line.

Burgeis had a massive wrap on her and has ability and if she is near her best could



Light Fantastic, ridden by jockey Craig Newitt and wearing number 18, is up against the talented Weekend Hustler in today's Liston Stakes at Caulfield.

well be hard to beat. I'd like to have a close look at her before jumping into her.

I have cleaned up backing the Tasmanian visitors in the past couple of weeks and will be on the job here again with Testamarrige. She could well be named Tasmanian two-year-old of the year by the time this is printed and has form around Huiskes which Tempest Toss had form around. Don't leave her out.

Viennese is probably the most valuable

horse running at Caulfield today and should run well. I'm not a Sugar Babe fan.

Best: ALTITUDE
Main danger: TESTAMARRIGE
Others: BURGEIS and VIENNESE

MY BEST is Captain Bax at Rosehill. He is flying and shows what a difference gelding can make to a horse's performance.