

Racing's night of champions – one to remember

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER RACING'S PRESTIGIOUS 'NIGHT OF CHAMPIONS' WAS BEAMED LIVE TO AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE WORDS: SHARON HUNT (EXECUTIVE OFFICER – NSWROA)

Incredible! NSWROA Racing's Night of Champions was truly a night no attendee will ever forget.

In a first for our flagship event and indeed for Australian racing award nights, the pairing with our exclusive media partner Sky Racing, saw Racing's Night of Champions this year televised live to an international audience on Sky Racing World. Highlights of the night were also shown on Sky Racing 1 and Sky Racing 2.

This year's gala black tie event on Thursday 11 August was held in the Randwick Pavilion at Royal Randwick Racecourse.

Our hosts for the night, Greg Radley and Jo McKinnon opened proceedings from the red carpet and then invited NSWROA President Ray McDowell to the stage to officially welcome guests.

Racing awards nights don't come any bigger than Racing's Night of Champions.

At this night of nights for the NSW industry, the equine equivalent to the Academy awards, the NSW Racehorse Owners Association (NSWROA) pays homage to the best New South Wales has to offer both in the equine and human categories.

There was glitz and glamour in abundance as well as red carpet interviews conducted by Christy Johns which featured the stars of the racing season and racing royalty.

Racing's Night of Champions was in aid of the Vincentian House KEEP Program, a Special Work of the St

Vincent de Paul Society NSW.

KEEP (Kids Engaged in Education Program) is underpinned by seven strategies that aim to break intergenerational cycle of poverty and disadvantage and offer a range of targeted support for children and young people who are staying at Vincentian House – a crisis accommodation and case management service for homeless families.

And so to the awards ceremony – the top honour of the night, the Luxbet.com NSW Champion Horse of the Year title, went to More Joyous who was also successful in the NSW Sprinter/Miler and Queen of the Autumn categories.

NSWROA presented an additional seven awards on the night. The award winners appear in the table below.

The Bart Cummings Medal was taken out by Chris Waller making it a double celebration for him on the night as he also picked up the TJ Smith Award for winning the Sydney Trainers' Premiership.

Other awards presented included the George Moore Award (Nash Rawiller), the Theo Green Award (Josh Adams) and the Sydney Strapper of the Year (Michael Doolan).

Another highlight of the evening was the keynote speech of the president of the St Vincent de Paul Society, Ray Reynolds, who thanked guests for their attendance and support of Vincentian House.

After the conclusion of the awards ceremony, Australia's favourite cabaret and Broadway performer David Campbell took to the stage as the feature artist for the evening.

In no time at all he had the large crowd in the palm of his hand with his unique and masterful style. His wonderful repertoire enticed guests to their feet to dance the night away.

Speaking of wonderful, Greg Radley was at his brilliant

Award	Winners
NSW 2-YEAR-OLD OF THE YEAR	SEPOY
NSW 3-YEAR-OLD OF THE YEAR	RETRIEVE
NSW SPRINTER/MILER OF THE YEAR	MORE JOYOUS (NZ)
NSW MIDDLE-DISTANCE HORSE OF THE YEAR	SO YOU THINK (NZ)
NSW STAYER OF THE YEAR	STAND TO GAIN (IRE)
QUEEN OF THE AUTUMN	MORE JOYOUS (NZ)
NSW COUNTRY CHAMPION HORSE OF THE YEAR	VOICE COMMANDER
NSW PROVINCIAL CHAMPION HORSE OF THE YEAR	HAY LIST



ABOVE: A large crowd was in attendance for this year's Racing's Night of Champions
BELOW RIGHT: Greg Radley (left) and Jo McKinnon (hosts for 2011 Racing's Night of Champions) with performer David Campbell
LEFT: NSWROA president, Ray McDowell, welcomes guests to the night





ABOVE: Duncan Grimley proudly holds the Luxbet.com NSW Champion Horse of the Year Award won by More Joyous after Luxbet's Craig Nugent had presented the trophy
LEFT: Gai Waterhouse accepts one of the awards for her super galloper More Joyous, whilst Duncan Grimley and the mare's strapper Dave Meijer (right) look on



best as guest auctioneer of the Monster Auction. With nine fantastic lots up for grabs, Greg worked the room into spirited bidding contests.

The Carrazzo Consulting Silent Auction, hosted by Jimmy Smith, was also a hive of excitement with some 33 items up for grabs.

In yet another first for the night, an electronic bidding system was used which allowed guests to bid from the comfort of their tables.

The International Animal Health Products Raffle, with three wonderful prizes on offer, was yet another success on the night.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the importance of our sponsors. The success of Racing's Night of Champions relies predominantly on sponsorship monies, the monster auction and the silent auction.

The event this year was proudly sponsored by Luxbet.com, Racing NSW, Patinack Farm, Sky Racing,

Emirates, Ambassador Travel, Gow Gates Insurance Brokers, Australian Turf Club, New Zealand Bloodstock, Inglis, Carrazzo Consulting, International Animal Health Products, De Bortoli Wines and Lion Nathan.

Our thanks also to Greg Radley and Jo McKinnon, our hosts for the night; Ray Reynolds, our keynote speaker; Jimmy Smith, for his assistance with the Silent Auction; Christy Johns, our Fashionista, our feature artist the incredible David Campbell, DJ Abel of Groove Academy, our event managers, Arinex and all the wonderful staff at Royal Randwick Convention Centre and in particular Roger Brassington.

I would also like to thank my fellow Racing Night of Champions Organising Committee members – Ray McDowell, Kylie Biggs and Leahna Harvey for their tremendous work and also Frances Rogeurex and Chantal Pravas.

And finally in closing, my thanks to all who attended the function to support Vincentian House and I look forward to seeing you all at the 2012 Racing's Night of Champions.

Racing's Night of Champions is the flagship event of the NSW Racehorse Owners Association and to view more information regarding this year's event, visit NSWROA's website – www.nswroa.com.au **RNSW**