

Jocelyn's living the dream

HOW MANY OF US ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO SAY WE'RE LIVING OUR DREAM – LONGSTANDING NSWROA MEMBER JOCELYN MAY IS ONE OF THOSE LUCKY PERSONS

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Jocelyn May is a self-described “tragic” when it comes to horses and her love of horses is paramount in her life.

Presently she has shares in a couple of very promising horses – Less is More (Fr), a smart stayer and winner of the Listed-ATC Premier's Cup at Rosehill Gardens, and Alkadabra.

The latter is a two-year-old that recorded two barrier trials wins before an excellent fifth to Law in the Listed-Breeders' Plate (1000m) at Royal Randwick last month.

It certainly is exciting times for Jocelyn who was simply glowing following Alkadabra's splendid debut in the Breeders' Plate.

“He's a gorgeous big darling and such a character. He got to the barriers and decided to just stand ... just like Octagonal used to, and take it all in,” she said.

Wouldn't it be wonderful for Jocelyn and her co-owners if Alkadabra had a few more of Octagonal's traits – in particular his incredible ability to know exactly where the finishing post is!

Jocelyn has had several good horses over the years the best of which was Snadame (who she also bred) which was successful in the Group 3-AJC Fernhill Handicap, 2nd in the Gr 3-AJC Roman Consul Stakes, 2nd in the Listed-AJC Widden Stakes and 3rd in the Gr 1-BTC Sires' Produce Stakes.

In recent times, the ever-consistent Maysong (another home bred for Jocelyn) has recorded four wins, two second placings and a third placing from her 14 career starts while Bold Leo is showing great promise having



Jocelyn May and Brent Davenport arrive at the 2013 NSWROA Racing's Night of Champions

recorded a win, a second and a third from his last three starts.

In Bold Leo's latest run he was beaten a half neck and a neck by Duke Albert and Onemore Eightmore at Canterbury Park.

The imported Less is More is the current 'star' of the team and since arriving in Australia in late 2012, has faced the starter 12 times for two wins, two second placings (including the Gr 3-BRC Premier's Cup) and a third placing at Royal Randwick.

Jocelyn's ultimate aim is to win a Group One race but she is of the view that every win is a great thrill.

So how was Jocelyn introduced into

this wonderful industry that we all love – initially, via school.

Jocelyn said: “I went to school with Percy Sykes's daughters and it was through him I went to Tommy Smith's stables. What an experience for a young girl?”

“I knew straight away that this industry was something I wanted to be in.”

Jocelyn was taught to ride a racehorse by another legendary figure in the industry, Albert O'Cass.

“Alby was a very special person to me. He was a wonderful man and I now donate a Cup in his memory at Hawkesbury Race Club each year.”

Having learnt how to ‘stay aboard’ a racehorse, Jocelyn got a job with TJ Smith riding work. Bear in mind this was 1972 and a time when women were very much the minority of the industry.

No women were apprenticed at that stage so TJ was trailblazing yet again.

Jocelyn speaks highly of the man who was a true genius with a horse: “TJ was wonderful to work for. He had an incredible eye for a horse – nothing escaped him. I think the regulars at the track were shocked when he took us girls on, but, as with most things, TJ had the last laugh.”

It was also at this time that Jocelyn started riding work for Des Lake at his property. Her ‘day job’ of public relations and secretarial duties, with a bit of modelling thrown in, was good enough but her heart kept taking her back to horses and the racetrack.

Jocelyn also managed and ran the stable for Sterling Smith – nephew to TJ. She also owned (with a partner) Mt Batten Stud Holiday Farm where



Less is More (Jay Ford) wins the Listed-ATC Premier's Cup at Rosehill Gardens. Picture by Steve Hart

she spent many hours converting children to the love of horses as well as owning and operating her own farm in Dooralong Valley.

Jocelyn entered the breeding ranks with her family and was associated with Emirates Park for a number of years.

The May family breeding empire started with the Kaoru Star filly, Biddy Bounder as the foundation mare for this venture. Biddy Bounder is the grand-dam of Black Type winner Snadame.

Jocelyn's current business 'Jocelyn May Thoroughbred Racing & Breeding' is getting bigger all the time as it covers all facets of racing.

Together with business partner Brent Davenport, they have a spelling farm at Grafton where they stand former smart sprinter Swift Alliance (Don Eduardo (NZ)-Visual Emotion

(USA) who raced under the Gooree Pastoral Company colours.

Swift Alliance, who stands for a \$5,500 service fee, recorded wins in the Gr 3-STC Star Kingdom Stakes (twice), Gr 3-VRC Hong Kong Jockey Club Stakes, LR-AJC Show County Quality and the LR-AJC Razor Sharp Quality.

When asked what advice she would give to someone thinking of entering the ownership ranks, Jocelyn had no hesitation saying that homework was imperative.

"You really need to learn about horses and do homework big time. It is a tough industry but with good advice, particularly from your trainer, it can be very rewarding."

Her love of horses was never more apparent than when Jocelyn said: "Be absolutely 100% kind to your horses. Give them time if they are not happy and remember it's all about the welfare and happiness of the horse and never, ever, over-race them."

Jocelyn now intends to slow down on the breeding size of her business as too many losses are taking their toll, but she will continue to keep racing as long as she can and hopefully breed a few winners as well.

"I absolutely love the industry, the people in it, the camaraderie, the atmosphere. It's fantastic and I am living in my dream – I am very lucky indeed."

Racehorse ownership – there is nothing quite like it! Racehorse owners are very special people; are you one? If not, why not give it a go!

If you are interested in participating in this wonderful sport, become a member of NSW Racehorse Owners Association.

NSWROA Membership runs for a calendar year and applications for the 2014 year will be opening soon. Simply visit our website www.nswroa.com.au or telephone the NSWROA office on (02) 9299 4299 for further information. **RNSW**