

A night of NSW champions

TWO RACING LEGENDS, JOHN TAPP AND KEN CALLANDER, WERE GIVEN STANDING OVATIONS WHEN HONOURED DURING NSW RACING'S NIGHT OF CHAMPIONS WORDS: SHARON HUNT (EXECUTIVE OFFICER – NSWROA)



Connections of First Seal (TAB.com.au NSW Champion Horse of the Year) collect the award

Before a jam-packed room and with the industry once again united in the Royal Randwick Ballroom of the Australian Turf Club, First Seal was named the Tab.com.au NSW Champion Horse of the Year at the NSW Racehorse Owners Association's (NSWROA) 2015 Racing's Night of Champions.

This year's gala black tie event, which was televised live on Sky Thoroughbred Central, was hosted by Greg Radley and Caroline Searcy and was in aid of the Prince of Wales Hospital Foundation.

Caroline was also in charge of the microphone for the red carpet interviews which featured celebrities and stars of the racing season.

With Racing NSW re-joining the event this year, their annual awards were also presented on the night highlighted by the coveted Bart Cummings Medal which was taken out once again by Chris Waller.

We also saw the "very best" in the racing world in contention for all the awards.

There were dual winners of the NSWROA Industry Recognition Award with John Tapp OAM and Ken Callander the very worthy recipients. The crowd rose collectively to acknowledge the wonderful contributions these two gentlemen have given to our industry.

Several years ago, the Association created this award, a special award to honour an outstanding contribution made to the industry. This award has only been presented on three

occasions previously. The inaugural winner of the award was Brother Dan Stafford OAM in 2008, Ian Craig OAM received the honour in 2009 and last year Wendy Walter accepted the award on behalf of her late husband Guy Walter. The award winners for the 2014/15 season were:

Award	Winners
TAB.COM.AU NSW CHAMPION HORSE OF THE YEAR	First Seal
NSWROA INDUSTRY RECOGNITION AWARD	John Tapp, OAM Ken Callander
NSW 2 YEAR OLD OF THE YEAR <i>Proudly sponsored by Australian Turf Club</i>	Pride of Dubai
NSW 3 YEAR OLD OF THE YEAR <i>Proudly sponsored by Gow-Gates Insurance Brokers</i>	First Seal
NSW SPRINTER OF THE YEAR <i>Proudly sponsored by Australian Turf Club</i>	Chautauqua
NSW MILER OF THE YEAR <i>Proudly sponsored by Sydney Horse Transport</i>	Royal Descent
NSW MIDDLE DISTANCE HORSE OF THE YEAR <i>Proudly sponsored by New Zealand Bloodstock</i>	Criterion (NZ)



Greg Radley (lectern) presents John Tapp OAM and Ken Callander (NSWROA Industry Recognition Award winners)

NSW STAYER OF THE YEAR <i>Proudly sponsored by Emirates</i>	Grand Marshal (GB)
QUEEN OF THE AUTUMN <i>Proudly sponsored by Inglis</i>	First Seal
NSW COUNTRY CHAMPION HORSE OF THE YEAR <i>Proudly sponsored by Sky Racing</i>	Scissor Kick
NSW PROVINCIAL CHAMPION HORSE OF THE YEAR <i>Proudly sponsored by Sky Racing</i>	Lucia Valentina (NZ)

By popular demand The Chantoozies returned as the feature entertainment for the night and once again quickly wowed the crowd and had everyone on the dance floor. It was truly a night to remember.

I would like to thank Greg Radley who was at his brilliant best as guest auctioneer of the Live Monster Auction. With eight lots up for grabs, Greg worked the room into spirited bidding contests with the assistance of colleague Dave Carlson.

Another hive of excitement was the Carrazzo Consulting Silent Auction, hosted by Dave Carlson, with some 27 items up for grabs. The International Animal Health Products Raffle, with five wonderful prizes on offer, was yet another success on the night.

Speaking of stars and success, 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 live monster auction and the silent auction.

The event this year was proudly sponsored by Tab.com.au, Racing NSW, Sky Thoroughbred Central, Emirates, Ambassador Travel, Gow-Gates Insurance Brokers, Australian Turf Club, New Zealand Bloodstock, Sydney Horse Transport, Inglis, Carrazzo Consulting, International Animal Health Products and De Bortoli Wines.

Our thanks also to Greg Radley and Caroline Searcy, our hosts for the night; Dave Carlson for his assistance with both the Monster and Silent Auctions; our feature entertainment The Chantoozies and our event manager, Pauline Lamb from Infinity Event & Video Production.

I would also like to thank my fellow Racing Night of Champions Organising Committee members – Ray McDowell, Leanne Zalapa, Louise Kwok and Pauline Lamb for their tremendous work.

And finally, my thanks to all who attended the function to support the Prince of Wales Hospital Foundation. I look forward to seeing you all at the 2016 Racing's Night of Champions.

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