



MEDIA ALERT

Friday 24 November 2023

RACING'S FIRST LADY GAI WATERHOUSE AO CROWNED LEGEND IN THE AUSTRALIAN RACING HALL OF FAME 2022/2023

Gai Waterhouse AO, Australia's national treasure and first lady of racing was given a standing ovation upon her elevation to legend status in the Australian Racing Hall of Fame last night at the Australian Racing Hall of Fame and Racehorse of the Year double-header held at Optus Stadium in Perth.

Presenting her with a stunning crystal vase, close friend Bruce McAvaney simply said "Gai – we simply thank you. Thank you for taking us on this ride, you've made such a difference to our lives and we love you".

In her heartfelt interview with emcees Jason Richardson and Brittany Taylor, Gai paid tribute to all inductees honoured and all trainers in the room mentioning James Cummings, Chris Waller, Clarry Connors and Bob Peters saying " We all have one thing in common and that is firstly, our love for the equine and how much we adore the horses and secondly the drive to achieve greatness and that takes something really special and that is a charismatic thing that people want to be close to". Adding "my father was very charismatic, a terrific leader".

With husband Rob, daughter Kate and son Tom and sister in law Louise invited up onto the stage, Emcee Jason Richardson asked Gai what she was most proud of in her racing career to which she replied " my marriage to Rob and my children " stressing the importance of the family unit. Daughter Kate paid tribute to Gai saying "what a fabulous mother, mentor and role model she always has been".

Gai also paid tribute to training partner Adrian Bott "it's a great joy working with Adrian, he's a great trainer, very talented, very astute and he has that something about him when you are looking for a great horse or a great man and Adrian is exactly that, and thank you for making it possible that I can keep training and enjoy training".

Jason Richardson asked Gai "how can we bottle this passion that you've got? To which Gai answered "you have to enjoy it. It is my life, it is not a job it is what I do".

Other special inductees on the night included Trainer, Clarry Connors who praised wife Maree for being by his side through 50 years of being in the industry. An extremely popular inductee, Clarry Connors was met with a rousing reception when he was called to the stage reflecting on the incredible success of four Golden Slippers, three VRC Oaks and two Triple Crowns being a standout in his long career.

Frank Treen Junior and Grand-daughter Kristy Kable accepted the Induction of the late and great jockey Frank Treen.

Well known Western Australian Bob Peters was inducted as an Associate of Racing for his life time contribution to racing, breeding and racing administration and was joined by his wife Sandra, daughter Melissa Peters and grandchildren.

In an emotional tribute to Rodney "Rocket" Kemp – the former jockey and mentor was given the Australian Spirit of Racing Award for his contribution to racing.

Thoroughbred Inductees included champion mare Emancipation, celebrating her outstanding success over only two seasons, Kings Stand Stakes and Mooney Valley Champion Mare, Miss Andretti and Golden Slipper winner colt Baguette.

The star studded event also celebrated Chris Waller taking out the Bart Cummings award for Group One Trainer of the 2022/23 season for the fourth time in succession.

Champion Jockey, James McDonald accepted via video and paid tribute to the James Cummings trained Anamoe who provided a scintillating thrill for McDonald in the 2022 Cox Plate, the Chipping Norton and George Ryder stakes in 2023.

I Am Invincible was crowned Champion Sire for 2022/2023 for the second year running with an incredible tally of over \$22m in stakes winnings from his star progenies.

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For Further Information:

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