

# THE COUNTDOWN



Jockey Michael Murphy is looking to see what he weighs. Kym Daly, the clerk of the scales, checks the computer screen to make sure the weight is correct. Pieces of lead can be added if the weight is too light.

The clerk is holding the rider's whip and skull cap. Those two items, the safety vest and the saddlecloth are not included in the total. The jockey takes the saddle and saddlecloth to the doorway to his horse's trainer.



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The Mechanic is very relaxed as his trainer Glenn Richardson settles the saddle on the saddlecloth.

The horse is wearing a halter. That is what is on the head if the the horse is standing like this or being led around.

To get it ready to be ridden, a bridle is used. It has a bit that goes into the horse's mouth and reins for the jockey to hold to help control and steer.

The brass plate on the strap near The Mechanic's cheek has the woed Richardson inscribed on it.

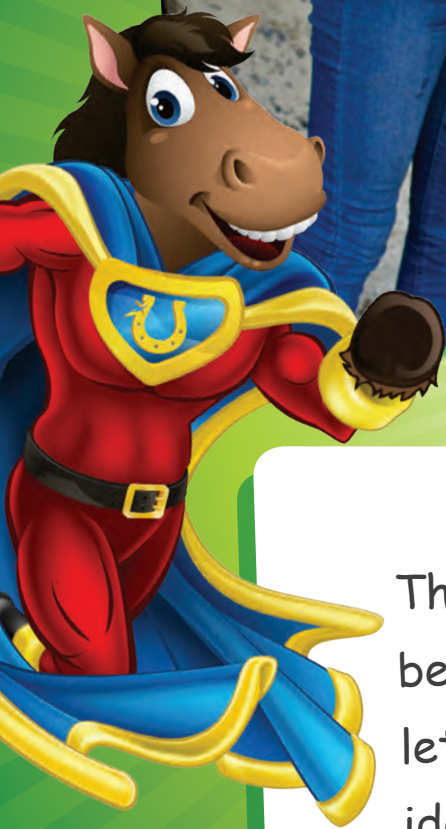
The breastplate going across the neck is there to stop the saddle from sliding.



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The trainer is tightening the girth It is like a belt. It goes around under the horse. The R K letters is the brand mark. It is there to help identify the horse. Horses also put the heads down like that when they sleep.

They can sleep standing up.



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The trainers, owners and jockeys are talking about their plan for a race at Doomben. Right beside them is a special area. It is known as the mounting yard or parade ring.

An old word for it is the birdcage. A long, long, long time ago in Melbourne the high fences around this type of area made it look like a cage.



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This is the Eagle Farm mounting yard. The white water trough is very, very old.

The silk colours the jockeys wear belong to the owners or trainers.



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The clerks-of-the course are on their grey horses. They are there to help. You will see them beside horse as they travel to the start. Some racehorses settle down and relax more if they have this company. The clerks are wearing red safety vests. If a horse escapes, they try to catch it. After the race one of the clerks escorts the winner back.



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It is time for the jockeys to be legged aboard their mounts.

The strappers who lead them are wearing big bibs. The number showing is the same as the one on the saddlecloth.

A steward makes sure the parade is in number order. Here you can see the numbers 4,5,6 and 7. The people at the fence have come to watch the behaviour of the horses and see if they like the way they look.



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The excitement is building. The photographers are busy.

The dark grass in the middle of the picture behind horse

number 10 is where the winner comes back to at Doomben



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A musical fanfare is sometimes played on very special days to let people know that the race is coming up very soon.

At a Teddy Bears' Picnic Race Day, Lucky George had a go at playing the trumpet.



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