



BRISBANE  
RACING CLUB

# NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 43 - DECEMBER 2020

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Let's call it "challenging".

Whatever calendar year 2020 delivered to BRC members personally I think from a racing viewpoint it was a clear pass mark for the club under extremely testing conditions via COVID 19.

As we approach Christmas and the start of a New Year I think it is time to brighten the outlook for 2021 and make a wish for a return to normal times at our two racetracks.

All areas of the BRC business reacted well to the challenges and I again thank the entire staff who had to adapt to unique issues to meet with the conditions imposed on us by the virus outbreak.

It's perhaps unfair to single out one unit for praise but I believe the track staff at both Eagle Farm and Doomben deserve special praise for their tireless efforts to ensure racing continues seamlessly.

With Eagle Farm now back in business after a spring renovation it's time to ramp up the usage of our prime racing asset.

The BRC is working closely with Racing Queensland to race more on Saturdays at Eagle Farm in 2021.

It is a fact the Eagle Farm brand resonates with punters. Traditionally Eagle Farm generates 10-20 percent more than Doomben and much more than any other venue in Queensland.

That said Doomben has been performing very well recently with regular days in excess of \$30 million in turnover compared to \$22 million for the corresponded days a year prior.

As outlined in the following pages the refurbished Guineas Room and Oaks Bar was officially opened on December 12.

The observation desk was a "first up" winner. It was noteworthy the number of Guineas Room guests who flocked to the deck which provides a view to the parade ring each race.

I encourage all members to go up to the first floor of the John Power members' stand and have a drink and see what a wonderful race day experience this facility offers.

Don't miss the opportunity to be on course for the members' Rewards Day on Boxing Day. BRC members will receive a \$20 food and beverage credit on their rewards card to spend on the day and there will be a complimentary

sausage sizzle in the Group 1 lounge on the ground floor.

Additionally two free members' guest tickets will be available to all members. Take this opportunity to bring along a couple of friends and show them what tremendous value is built into BRC membership.

Another event I commend to all members is the Opera Under the Stars evening at Eagle Farm on Friday January 22.

The BRC staged a similar music function on October 1 and guests were blown away by the talents of emerging young opera stars Xenia Puskarz-Thomas and her partner Sam Piper.

The virus has actually granted us an opportunity to be entertained by Xenia. Last year she was accepted into the internationally-acclaimed Julliard School of Art in New York but COVID 19 has meant she studied remotely in 2020 from her home near Eagle Farm.

I would like to wish all BRC members a happy festive season and a healthy and happy New Year.

**Neville Bell**  
BRC Chairman



# RACING NEWS

SADLY Queensland racing lost one of his brightest talents with the sale of Twoowoomba four-year-old Command'n'Conquer last month.

Owner-trainer Steve Tregua simply took a common sense approach when a massive offer came from Hong Kong interests to swoop on Command'n'Conquer.

Tregua is as passionate about his racing and breeding business as anyone in Queensland.

But the reality of life he faces big costs each year to maintain a band of broodmares plus a number of racing stock.

It's a far safer bet to have an instant windfall of revenue rather than hold a talented horse and hope he stays sound and can win big prizemoney.

There are no guarantees with injuries or form loss.

Command'n'Conquer had built quite a record from his career total of nine starts. He won five including an explosive first up victory over 1200 metres at Doomben on November 7.

The margin was only a half length in a Benchmark 80 event against what appeared to be moderate opposition. In fact the two placegetters Gee Tee Tee have both been subsequent Saturday metro winners.

But it was sight of Command'n'Conquer storming home from a tricky position at the home turn to haul in the leaders late which increased the Hong Kong interest.

Earlier in the year Queensland lost another emerging star when Eric The Eel was snatched from the Stewart Kendrick stable to also transfer to Hong Kong after finishing third in the AJC Derby at Randwick.

Already Eric The Eel has attracted good reviews in Hong Kong.

On a positive note the loss of horses has been offset in a huge way by the return of Michael Rodd.

Rodd has hit the ground running and clearly is serious about becoming a big force in South-east Queensland riding ranks.

He has been embraced by many of the leading stables and quickly has displayed why he has been so highly regarded in Melbourne and Singapore.

Rodd has conceded a big start in the 2020-21 jockeys' premiership. But expect him to significantly cut the leeway in the remaining seven months of the season. A premiership title is not out of the question.

The well performed Adelaide sprinter Hard Empire has been a great acquisition to the Toby and Trent Edmonds stable this summer with his first three starts yielding two wins and a luckless fourth in his new surrounds at the Gold Coast.

Hard Empire upset the hot favourite Jonker in the George Moore Stakes and the pair look set for a couple more "punch ups" over the remainder of the summer racing.



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# FOODBANK CHRISTMAS HAMPER PACK

Congratulations to Foodbank Queensland for their massive efforts in packing Christmas Hampers at Eagle Farm on Friday 4 December to feed hungry families this Christmas. Many of the Brisbane Racing Club staff members joined in on the day to help pack family hampers, ladies hampers and back to school packs for those in need. We are so proud to be a part of this amazing cause every year!

The partnership means that Foodbank were able to pack 1240 Family Hampers and 500 Back to School Packs which will help, in some small way, those people doing it tough at this time of the year.

"As a group, we are proud of the fact that since its inception some 11 years ago, we have now provided some small level of help to over 9000 families and packed product with a (retail) value exceeding \$1.1M. Again, thanks so very much for being a critical, strategic partner for us in this venture, and we look forward to continuing in the same vain next year." Vince Aisthorpe, Foodbank Christmas Hamper Coordinator.



## MEMBER PROFILE KAY COWELL

Kay was a fitting choice as the person to officially open the refurbished Guineas Room and Bar at Eagle Farm on December 5.

She recalled one of her first visits to Eagle Farm was in 1952 when Swanbro, a horse trained by her late father Eric Kirwan, won the Queensland Cup.

"Swanbro was a bold, front running stayer who would lead by ten or even fifteen lengths in some of his races," Kay said. "I was only three and very excited."

She has many memories of lunch in the Guineas with her mother Marie who turned 100 this year and sister Pam.

"Mum still has a bet every Saturday. She's in great health. We would lunch in the Guineas Room every Saturday and public holiday Eagle Farm meetings for many, many years. We would walk out into the seating in the stand to watch the races," Kay said.

"I can remember seeing some great characters in that Guineas Bar. Sir James Killen and Brian Sweeney were regulars there."

The BRC has spent \$1 million on a refurbishment of the Guineas area complete with a new deck which offers a magnificent view of the parade ring.

The room also is available for hire on noon-race days.

Also assisting with the ribbon cutting were BRC board member David Dawson and Thoroughbred Racing History Association chair Peter Howard.



## MEMBERS REWARDS DAY

# MULLINS LAWYERS *Grand Prix* STAKES RACEDAY

SATURDAY 26 DECEMBER  
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in the Group  
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### BONUS

Visitation  
point day

## MEMBERS CHRISTMAS LUNCH IN THE GUINEAS ROOM

The newly renovated Guineas Dining Room will be the stunning backdrop to the Members Christmas Lunch on Boxing Day!

This divine lunch will feature fresh and seasonal festive flavours and exceptional service. Be treated to a signature entree curated by Celebrity Chef Justine Schofield, before enjoying a Christmas "turduckham" followed by a fresh white chocolate panna cotta and much more!

**BRC Members & Guest Cards: \$90 per person**

\*Complimentary ticket holders are eligible for members pricing

**BOOK NOW - [BRC.COM.AU](http://BRC.COM.AU)**







They're back!

Opera stars Xenia Puzkarz-Thomas and Sam Piper will be back at the BRC on January 22 for another night of music with a difference.

The internationally acclaimed young stars wowed BRC members and guests at a concert of brilliant opera entertainment at Eagle Farm on October 1.

Xenia, a mezzo-soprano, this year became a Kovner Fellow at the renowned Juilliard School in New York but has been studying online from her family home in Clayfield due to travel restrictions forced by COVID 19.

A graduate of St Margaret's AGS Xenia was awarded a Bachelor of Music from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music Griffith University in 2018 with first class honours and the University Medal for Academic Achievement.

In 2019 she was a scholar of the Melba Opera Trust program supported by the Amelia Joscelyne Scholarship.

Baritone Sam, also from Brisbane, attended St Laurence's College, South Brisbane. He is a graduate of the Conservatorium at Griffith and furthered his singing education through the Pellegrino Scholarship in Italy through the Lisa Gasteen National Opera School.

Sam has worked with the Melba Opera Trust 2017-19.

The pair will perform opera individually and in partnership and have promised some interesting musical "twists" for the second BRC night.

They will be supported by a string quartet led by Xenia's sister Eugenie on cello.

TICKETS FROM \$170 PER PERSON  
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# GUINEAS ROOM GRAND UNVEILING HIGHLIGHTS

Brisbane Racing Club rolled out the red carpet for VIPs, Partners and Members on Saturday 12 December to celebrate the grand unveiling of the recently renovated Guineas Room!

The celebrations included a ribbon cutting ceremony, Q&A with Summer Food Ambassador, renowned Australian chef, author and TV presenter, Justine Schofield, and a historical video of the Guineas Room over the past 60 years.

Guests were treated to a delicious four course lunch menu curated by Justine Schofield in partnership with the BRC Culinary Team.

Racing enthusiasts were wowed by the diverse offering of raceday activities classifying the Guineas Room as the idyllic place to spend a raceday, with prime views of the Parade

Ring from the new Guineas Deck, same-level access to the Grandstand and two huge screens showcasing the local and interstate racing action and latest betting trends.

Following a \$1 million refurbishment by leading architect Greg Harris, the Guineas Room restaurant and adjoining Oaks Bar is set to become the most sought-after destination for dining, socialising and pre-race viewing.

The expansive 300-seat space will be the backdrop for dining on racedays with an a la carte menu, and the ultimate special event function space for galas, dinners and conferences.

Be one of the first to experience the new Guineas Room and Oaks Bar, that is in equal parts modern and bright as it is intimate and glamorous.



Guests were treated to an afternoon of live music. The excellent quartet featuring cellist Eugenie Puskarz Thomas, provided the perfect ambience for the Guineas Room opening.



The opening of the room was marked with a ribbon cutting ceremony by (left to right) Peter Howard (Thoroughbred Racing History Association), Pam Bernhard, Kay Cowell, and David Dawson (Brisbane Racing Club Director).



Brisbane Racing Club's Chief Executive Officer, Tony Partridge, began the launch of the Guineas Room with a speech acknowledging the historical value of the space.



Guests were treated to the pictured entree curated by Justine Schofield. The meal consisted of; a salad of lightly smoked Tasmanian salmon, pickled cucumber and cress salad, broken soft egg, crème fraiche, English mustard and white wine vinegar emulsion, hand milked salmon caviar Served with banette rolls with butter.





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