



Bethany's two great loves come together: behind the lens at the Ipswich races. (Trackside Photography)



Spicy Martini and Bethany Allday take a break between workouts on the sand track. (Bethany Allday)

Bethany on the right track

By Peter Foley

Talk to Bethany Allday about horses and she instantly lights up. Mention one horse in particular, and the reaction is something else again.

A trackwork rider for Gold Coast trainer Toby Edmonds, Bethany is the regular work rider for Spicy Martini, winner of this year's Group 1 Stradbroke Handicap.

The mare gave jockey Taylor Marshall his dream first Group 1 win and Toby Edmonds a cherished second Stradbroke, but the victory was special for Bethany, too.

"I've worked with her a lot since she was a yearling. It's amazing how far she's come," Bethany said.

"But she's always been tough. She's got an attitude. If she wants to do it, she's gonna do it."

Bethany is one of the six emerging riders selected for the inaugural Queensland Apprentice Jockey Program (QAJP).

The other apprentice jockeys are Harry Cahill, Alex Gorey, Hope Rees, Jessica Black and Maddy O'Grady.

Designed to develop Queensland's next generation of jockeys, the QAJP will be delivered at

the new Racing Institute on the Gold Coast

Similar to other states' apprentice programs, it includes mentoring from people including Harry Cahill's dad Michael Cahill, plus support with physical conditioning, nutrition and mental well-being.

Senior apprentice jockey coach Shane Scriven said the group dynamic was important because the new riders were learning from each other as much as from their formal teachers.

Jockey mentor Bernadette Cooper said quality teachers were invaluable for advice on riding and horsemanship but also guidance away from the track.

"In my day, it was a bit hit and miss, really. So we were incredibly inexperienced when we went to the races," Bernadette said.

Given her racing background, Bethany is entering the apprentice program with her eyes wide open.

"I know it's going to be a lot different to what I've done, but I think having been in racing for 10 years, I'm aware of what's going to happen and what's involved," she said.

From Melbourne, Beth Allday didn't come from a racing family, but her passion grew from

watching the races as a kid, mainly at Moonee Valley near home with her Mum.

"To me, horse racing's always been about the horse. It was never about betting. It was about celebrating how magnificent they are, how athletic they can be," she said.

"It's about the relationship you have with the horse, and how that can bring out the best in them.

"I absolutely always had an obsession with horse racing. Me and my best friend went to trail rides every month; that's how I got into riding.

"I got into racing in year 12. I did my Certificate 3 in Racing the year after I finished school.

"I was working at Flemington on the ground and then I got a job doing trackwork.

"I absolutely loved it, but I honestly hated the cold."

Asked to describe the first time she rode a racehorse, Bethany said it was a huge thrill.

"You have that first gallop and the power is just extraordinary. It's a huge feeling. It must be like driving an F1 car," she beamed.

She was drawn to many elements of horse racing, but the main attraction was always the star

of the show.

"It's just the speed, the power, that athleticism. I love all sports, but then it's horses so it's all tied into one," she said.

"And then the fun of it. Melbourne Cup Day was my favourite day of the year because everyone loves it; you've got the crowds and the races, the jockeys and trainers."

She joked that when she was working at Nev's Trail Rides, she'd have the horses work uphill to pretend it was the Cup.

Though Spicy Martini has a special place in her heart, Bethany's favourite horse remains Black Caviar. She was thrilled to see her in the flesh.

"My whole world was just Black Caviar," she said.

For the past couple of years - starting while sidelined with a ruptured ACL - Bethany has worked for Trackside Photography. It ties in her two great loves.

"You get to capture the horse and how magnificent they are," she said.

"It's cool to be able to do two different things. I love the creative side, and I love the sport."



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