

# Recharged Taylor runs hot

By Peter Foley

He's well-loved as a good guy, but jockey Taylor Marshall wants to prove not only that good guys don't always finish last, but they can also be champions.

Taylor is at a turning point in his career. Recently returned from a suspension he decided to turn into a positive, he has his best years ahead of him.

Now, recharged, winning and with the support of influential trainers, he is heading into the Winter Carnival primed for the time of his racing life.

Last September, stewards found Taylor guilty of changing the date on his 2023-24 health clearance and submitting it as his 2024-25 form.

It was part of a crackdown on dishonest or fraudulent conduct in racing that also caught out jockeys Rob Thorburn and Luke Tarrant.

After pleading guilty, Taylor was disqualified for eight months. That was halved on appeal last November.

"It was a blessing in disguise. Just a reprieve from the intensity of the industry. It's a very demanding schedule that us jockeys have," Taylor said.

Armed with a new approach, he's hit the ground running.

"I've had a terrific run off it; its been 10 winners in the past 20 rides," he said.

"I find I'm enjoying my riding more so than ever.

"I think it comes back to the enjoyment. Enjoyment first and performance flows off the back of that.

"I'm more driven than I've ever been; probably as much if not more than when I was an apprentice; a fresh babyface on the scene.

"I'm noticing that same passion to showcase the level that I know I can perform at.

"I'm finding that my base of trainers that is supporting me is growing.

"It's absolutely great to be in the position I'm in and having trainers that I like supporting me."

With the Brisbane racing carnival starting Saturday, Taylor has upgraded his goals to being established in the top class of jockeys.

One of his most enduring supporters is leading Brisbane trainer Rob Heathcote, who Taylor started riding for when he was an apprentice.

"The first thing that comes to mind is what a delightful young man," Rob said.

"He's very well-mannered and he's a natural lightweight, which is a big asset for me.

"And he does his homework. He understands and knows the horses that he's riding.

"He's a rider that is underestimated by a lot of people. He's better than what his record shows.

"He may not have the Stakes wins next to his name but that will come in time.

"He's always been a hard-working jockey and it shows in his riding.

"He's come back after what I thought was a travesty of justice. The penalty was way too excessive for what he did.

"But he's come back with a renewed enthusiasm and it's showing in his results."

Taylor, who had a great association riding Star-



Jockey Taylor Marshall in a place he hopes to spend much more time – the winners' stall. (Peter Foley)

tantes for Rob, said one of the things he valued most about riding for him was he calls a spade a spade.

"He does," he smiled.

"The reason I'm smiling is I've been on both ends; letting me know where I could have done better, and vice versa, enjoying a day where you're riding winners.

"I appreciate transparency like that. I think you know where you stand with Rob."

Rob happily admitted telling jockeys they have made a mistake. Taylor takes it well.

"I think he knows me that it's not a personal attack," he said.

"He takes it on board, looks at the replays, and will call me and say, 'Gee, you were right, you know. I made a mistake.'

"If I have to give a jockey a little bit of a prod, then it's done and dusted. Move on.

"Every jockey that's ever ridden for me has made mistakes."

The feeling between Taylor and Rob was boosted by Taylor's win on Inquicktime at Ipswich racetrack last Thursday.

Rob revealed the gelding was close to his last chance before Taylor won on him at the Sunshine Coast on April 12.

"We were close to sacking him, because his record was seven or eight failures," he said, emphasising the last word.

"We specifically chose Taylor because of his aggressiveness.

"Now it's two wins in a row."



Inquicktime (pink and black checks) powers to victory ahead of his rivals in the Great Northern Handicap (1700m). (Trackside Photography)

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