

TASMANIAN RACING CLUB INC
RECEPTION TO MARK THE 2025 HOBART CUP CARNIVAL
REMARKS BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
BALLROOM, TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2025

VICE-REGAL SALUTE IS PLAYED

Good evening, everyone. I warmly welcome you all to Government House to celebrate the 2025 Tasmanian Racing Club Hobart Cup Carnival.

May I acknowledge the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather. I acknowledge today's Tasmanian Aboriginal Community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

We all know that horse racing has long been a special part of our Australian identity. So much so that intercolonial races, with large numbers of horses moving between the colonies to race, were very popular and betting robust.¹ So, it is unsurprising that the Hobart Cup is a tradition in Tasmania's sporting and social calendar, dating back to 1875. The inaugural Tasmanian Racing Club program ran over two days. Twelve races were held, the final two being the Hack Stakes and the Consolation Stakes.

The winner that year was the mare, Ella, by two lengths. Old Strop, Swiveller, Lord Harry, and the famous Old Marchioness were some of the early winners of the Hobart Cup.²

I mention two colourful names, described in Hobart's satirical *Punch* magazine in 1866, as thinly veiled skewering of high-profile public identities and in the legal profession, I quote,

¹ Speech given by HE Baker 9 February 2022 Tasmanian Racing Club Reception.

²[Trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/26321498?](https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/26321498)

“‘Stuffed Judge’ is an aged animal of a very sour temper, and who can never manage to behave well under any rider. The old horse is scarcely to be trusted upon his pins. Betting against ‘Stuffed Judge’ stands at one hundred million billion to 1”, good odds!

The other, a horse called ‘Landshark’ was sailors’ slang for a lawyer.³

The names of the nominated horses for this year's Hobart Cup are not quite as colourful, but I like Strawberry Rock and Travelling Gigolo!

On a more serious note, last year’s celebration of the Club’s 150th anniversary reflects the longevity of racing in Tasmania and the support of all those who have followed it over the years. The anniversary was marked with great enthusiasm, with a reception here at Government House, a special Derwent River cruise, and the Ladbrokes Hobart Cup itself.⁴ These events honoured the Club's history.

However, 2024 was not without its challenges. The Club faced financial difficulties with rising costs and economic pressures. I acknowledge the work of the Club’s leadership in addressing these challenges. Their efforts to secure new income opportunities, negotiate lease terms, and advocate for appropriate prize money levels are all steps towards helping the long-term viability of racing in Tasmania.⁵

May I commend Chairman Andrew Scanlon, Vice Chair Tony Field, Treasurer Ross Burridge AM, and all our Tasmanian Racing Club Committee for their efforts and dedication. Their commitment to the Club and the broader racing industry is valued, and I thank them for their hard work.

I also extend my appreciation to Chief Executive Officer Brendan Blomeley and all staff, contractors, and volunteers whose efforts make the Hobart Cup Carnival possible.⁶

³ *Tasmanian Punch* (Hobart) 29 September 1866 page 5.

⁴ TRC Annual Report 2024

⁵ TRC Annual Report 2024

⁶ <https://www.trchobart.com.au/corporate>

As we look ahead, the challenge remains to preserve and strengthen the Hobart Cup Carnival, an historic part of Tasmania's culture and identity.⁷

I wish the best to all the competitors in this year's event. May the Carnival continue to celebrate our racing community and our rich history of racing in Tasmania.

Thank you.

⁷ TRC Annual Report 2024