

Wednesday 21 July, 2021

Racing update

## Queen Qwara eyes Maturity crown

High profile Victorian trainers Andrea Dailly, Jason Thompson and Jeff Britton are all striving to win the \$142,750 Group 1 KCR Pet Transport Maturity Classic (525m) for the third time on Saturday night at The Meadows.

Andrea Dailly won the Maturity with the great **Fernando Bale** in 2015 and his daughter **Dyna Patty** in 2018 and is taking aim at a third success in the last six years with TAB's \$3 favourite **Qwara Bale** (Box 3), the only female sprinter in the \$100,000 to-the-winner age-restricted feature.

**Qwara Bale** is already a G1 winner, having claimed the female-only Sapphire Crown at Sandown Park in May, while she out-pointed the males in the G2 Warrnambool Cup.

Interestingly, **Qwara Bale** shares Maturity favouritism with first reserve **Koblentz**, whose 11-race winning streak came to an end when edged out by **Aston Fastnet** (Box 8), trained by Jason Thompson, in a thrilling heat battle in the fastest qualifying time of 29.850sec.

**Aston Fastnet** shaded the lightly raced **Handsome Rhino** (Box 6) for heat honours, with **Handsome Rhino** clocking 29.852sec for Paul Galea, passing the biggest test of his 15-start career with flying colours.

Thompson already has two Maturity trophies on the mantelpiece, courtesy of **Run's House** (2007) and **Aston Trivett** (2009).

While **Koblentz's** defeat was a body-blow to David Geall, the astute Lara trainer bounced back with a heat double, courtesy of **Hill Top Jack** (Box 2), a litter brother to **Koblentz**, and **Fernando Mick** (Box 4).

Jeff Britton is the other trainer eyeing a third Maturity title; his hopes lying with **Mr. Fix It** (Box 5) after previous victories with **Mepunga Hayley** (2014) and **Mepunga Blazer** (2017).

Britton also has the \$3.30 favourite for Saturday's other feature at The Meadows, the \$35,500 G3 Destini Lodge Fireball (725m), in **Hank The Hustler** (Box 1).

After winning a star-studded edition of the Maturity in 2020 with ill-fated superstar **Simon Told Helen**, David Burnett is chasing back-to-back victories with \$41 outsider **Envy To Burn** (Box 7).

The shock heat defeats of series favourites Koblentz and Aston Rupee threw the Maturity wide open, and it was a similar story in the Fireball heats for the stayers where G1 Sandown Cup hero Zipping Rambo was eliminated, with the heats won by **I'm Easy Boys** (Box 2) and youngster **Whatever I Say** (Box 5).

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Here's a rundown of the contenders:

## **Group 1 Maturity Classic (525m)**

### **1 NIHARI BALE**

**Trainer:** Mark Delbridge (Balliang)

**Breeding:** February 2019 Dyna Villa x Dyna Maddie

**Comment:** Won 9 from 32. Took advantage of Box 1 in upset heat victory over series favourite Aston Rupee. Won three of six starts over the track/distance and three of five career starts from Box 1. (PB - 29.83sec)

### **2 HILL TOP JACK**

**Trainer:** David Geall (Lara)

**Breeding:** May 2019 Fernando Bale x Up Hill Jill

**Comment:** Won 13 from 29. Emerged from the shadow of superstar brother Koblenz with his impressive heat victory. Won five from 12 at The Meadows but needs to improve on 30.20sec qualifying effort. (PB - 29.91sec)

### **3 QWARA BALE**

**Trainer:** Andrea Dailly (Anakie)

**Breeding:** April 2019 Allen Deed x Daithy Allen

**Comment:** Won 17 from 30. Only female in the field and won G1 Sapphire Crown at Sandown and G2 Warrnambool Cup in May. Won five from 10 at The Meadows and set to start favourite. (PB - 29.79sec)

### **4 FERNANDO MICK**

**Trainer:** David Geall (Lara)

**Breeding:** February 2019 Fernando Bale x Noaki Moth

**Comment:** Won 9 from 31, including six from 14 this track/distance. Consistent type that's won past three starts, including Meadows PB of 29.81sec from this draw. (PB - 29.81sec)

### **5 MR. FIX IT**

**Trainer:** Jeff Britton (Anakie)

**Breeding:** January 2019 Fernando Bale x Alpha Demeter

**Comment:** Won 15 from 37, including excellent record at The Meadows, winning nine from 16 with four seconds. Having his first career start from Box 5 but is undefeated in four starts here from Box 4 including his heat victory over classy litter brother Do It. (PB - 29.75sec)

### **6 HANDSOME RHINO**

**Trainer:** Paul Galea (St Albans)

**Breeding:** May 2019 Aston Dee Bee x Got The Attitude

**Comment:** Won 7 from 15. Lightly raced 'X' factor of the race after scoring a brilliant heat victory. Facing biggest test of his short career but has won four of his five starts at The Meadows, breaking 30.00sec on three occasions. (PB - 29.75sec)

### **7 ENVY TO BURN**

**Trainer:** David Burnett (Little River)

**Breeding:** April 2019 Superior Product x Strength To Wyn

**Comment:** Won 8 from 20. G2 WA Derby finalist earlier this year and has returned to best form, winning two of his past three, opening his Meadows account at his fourth attempt with an upset heat victory. Trainer won Maturity last year with champion Simon Told Helen. (PB - 30.02sec)

### **8 ASTON FASTNET**

**Trainer:** Jason Thompson (Pearcedale)

**Breeding:** April 2019 KC And All x Aston Miley

**Comment:** Won 9 from 20. Prodigious talent with G1 ability. Has run scorching 29.11sec at Sandown Park and produced the fastest heat performance, when running down boom speedster Koblenz in thrilling fashion, his first win at The Meadows. (PB - 29.85sec)

### **Reserves**

### **9 KOBLENZ**

**Trainer:** David Geall (Lara)

**Breeding:** May 2019 Fernando Bale x Up Hill Jill

**Comment:** Won 16 from 22. Sensational record and won 11 straight before narrow heat defeat. Likely to start favourite if he secures a start. (PB - 29.78sec)

### **10 SHIMA CLASSIC**

**Trainer:** Andrea Dailly (Anakie)

**Breeding:** April 2019 Mepunga Blazer x Shima Song

**Comment:** Won 10 from 25. Two-time G1 finalist in 2021, contesting Australian Cup at this venue and running third to Qwara Bale in Sandown's Sapphire Crown. (PB - 29.76sec)

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## **MATURITY HEAT WINNERS (fastest to slowest)**

29.850sec Aston Fastnet

29.852sec Handsome Rhino

30.02sec Envy To Burn

30.04sec Nihari Bale

30.05sec Fernando Mick

30.09sec Mr. Fix It

30.19sec Qwara Bale

30.20sec Hill Top Jack

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## **GROUP 3 DESTINI LODGE THE FIREBALL, 725m**

*The Meadows Saturday, 8.19pm*

*\$25,000 – \$7,000 – \$3,500*

- 1 HANK THE HUSTLER (Jeff Britton, Anakie)
- 2 I'M EASY BOYS (Ray Henness, Heathcote)
- 3 MY FATHER'S SON (Michael Chilcott, Heathcote)
- 4 STAR BLAZER (Angela Langton, Anakie)
- 5 WHATEVER I SAY (Robert Redenbach, Cranbourne South)
- 6 ZIPPING TICKET (Andrea Dailly, Anakie)
- 7 FIVE STAR (Paul Abela, Parwan)
- 8 SO PREDICTABLE (Deborah Coleman, Lara)

### **Reserves**

- 9 RUN LIKE JESS (Robert Camilleri, Lara)
  - 10 LAKEVIEW LOLA (Monique Whelan, Metung)
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## **KEY TIMES**

- 6.38pm First race
  - 8.19pm G3 Destini Lodge Fireball final (Race 6)
  - 8.38pm FFA Sprint featuring Equalizer, Aston Rupee, Koblenz and Shima Shine (Race 7)
  - 8.58pm G1 KCR Pet Transport Maturity Classic final (Race 8)
  - 10.27pm Last race (Race 12)
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## **HOW TO FOLLOW THE ACTION**

- Comprehensive coverage on **Sky Racing Active** with Jason Adams and Mark Ohlmus from 6.30pm, which will also be streamed via **The Watchdog app**.
  - Watch every race LIVE and FREE via **watchdog.grv.org.au** or on **Sky Racing**.
  - Regular updates with Trent Langskaill on **RSN Racing and Sport** (927 AM).
  - **SEN Track** (1593 AM).
  - Extensive Twitter coverage with '**@WatchDogRacing**' & '**@TheMeadowsDogs**'.
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