

# INTERNATIONAL ALL STAR SERIES (March 7-12)



Some of the best drivers from around the world will converge on Victoria next March for the inaugural International All Star Series conducted by Harness Racing Victoria.

Five local drivers will represent Victoria on tracks right across the state, while five star international reinsmen will make up the World Team.

The series will culminate on Great Southern Star night at Tabcorp Park Melton (Saturday, March 12).

HRV General Manager – Operations Vaughn Lynch is excited about the new series, which will cast an international spotlight on Victorian harness racing across “International Week”.

“We’re pumped to have some of the best drivers in the world heading Down Under to compete in the International All Star Series,” Mr Lynch said.

“And I expect the Victorian stars will be holding their own, too, led by world record reinswoman and the first woman to ever win a New Zealand Trotting Cup Kerryn Manning.”

Representing Victoria will be Chris Alford and Gavin Lang (over 5000 wins each), Greg Sugars (over 2000 wins), Kerryn Manning (world record reinswoman) and Jason Lee (two-time Concession Driver of the Year).

The World team will be made up of New Zealand pair Dexter Dunn (current World Driving Champion) and Anthony Butt (seven-time A. G. Hunter Cup winner), Canada’s Yannick Gingras (the No.1 driver in the USA and the biggest name in the sport worldwide) and leading US drivers Brett Miller and Corey Callahan.

“This is going to be great. I’m so excited to be heading to Victoria for the first International All Star Series,” Gingras said.

“There will be no holds barred out there and I’m really looking forward to getting on track, as I imagine all the guys will be.”

The International All Star Series will see the stars trek from Melton on Monday March 7 to Echuca on Tuesday night March 8. Then it will be off to Maryborough for Wednesday March 9, Ballarat on Thursday night March 10 and the action turns to Bendigo on Friday night March 11.

There will be four International All Star Series races on each night except the final meeting, the Great Southern Star, when there will be one.

In addition to attending the trots around Victoria the drivers will also be getting involved in a range of community events, sending the harness racing message to the masses.

“The Victorian industry will garner worldwide attention from this series,” HRV CEO John Anderson said.

“It will engage young people right across the state and trots fans will be able to meet their heroes in person, which will be great for the promotion of the industry.

“Providing country clubs with the opportunity to showcase the world’s best is also a key component and one that I’m sure the clubs involved will embrace enthusiastically.”

All the competing drivers will be wearing personalised silks, which they helped design themselves to reflect their personalities. All of the races will be penalty free and trainers’ incentives will also be offered.

HRV acknowledges the important State Government funding this project has received as part of the Victorian Racing Industry Fund.

## **EVENT DETAILS**

The International All Star Series will be conducted at tracks throughout Victoria, giving the regional areas the opportunity to showcase some of the best trots driving talent in the world.

As mentioned in the media release the drivers will also be taking part in community activities in the local areas and HRV Media will document that as it happens.

The final race of the International All Star Series will be conducted on Saturday night, March 12, at Tabcorp Park Melton's Great Southern Star meeting.

### **International All Star Series calendar**

- Monday March 7 – Tabcorp Park Melton (day meeting)
- Tuesday March 8 – Echuca (night meeting)
- Wednesday March 9 – Maryborough (day meeting)
- Thursday March 10 – Ballarat (night meeting)
- Friday March 11 – Bendigo (night meeting)
- Saturday March 12 – Tabcorp Park Melton (night meeting)

### **Venue details**

#### **Tabcorp Park Melton**

Address: 2 Ferris Rd, Melton South

Phone: 03 8746 0600

Website: [www.tabcorppark.com.au](http://www.tabcorppark.com.au)

Email: [info@tabcorppark.com.au](mailto:info@tabcorppark.com.au)

#### **Echuca**

Address: Frank Ryan Raceway, 201 Simmie St, Echuca

Phone: 03 5482 2036

Website: [www.harness.org.au/echuca](http://www.harness.org.au/echuca)

Email: [echuca@hrv.org.au](mailto:echuca@hrv.org.au)

#### **Maryborough**

Address: Carisbrook Raceway, Chaplins Rd, Maryborough

Phone: 03 5464 2451

Website: [www.maryboroughharness.com.au](http://www.maryboroughharness.com.au)

Email: [maryborough@hrv.org.au](mailto:maryborough@hrv.org.au)

#### **Ballarat**

Address: Bray Raceway, Bell St, Ballarat

Phone: 03 5335 9619

Website: [www.ballarattrottingclub.com.au](http://www.ballarattrottingclub.com.au)

Email: [paul@ballarattrottingclub.com.au](mailto:paul@ballarattrottingclub.com.au)

#### **Bendigo**

Address: Lord's Raceway, McIvor Rd, Junortoun

Phone: 03 5449 3205

Website: [www.bhrc.com.au](http://www.bhrc.com.au)

Email: [bendigo@hrv.org.au](mailto:bendigo@hrv.org.au)

## **DRIVER PROFILES**

### **Yannick Gingras (Canada)**



**Age:** 35

**Mini Bio:** At just 35 years of age Yannick Gingras is already well ahead of the pace set by Hall of Famer John Campbell in the US, passing \$100 million stake earnings and 5000 career wins in 2014. 'The Green Hornet' as he is also known is widely recognised worldwide as the biggest name in harness racing.

Twitter handle: @Gingras3

### **Dexter Dunn (New Zealand)**



**Age:** 26

**Mini Bio:** Current World Driving Champion Dexter Dunn is an international globetrotter and makes another trip across the ditch in March for the International All Star Series. Last time he was here

Dunn walked away with the World Driving Championships title earlier this year. Dex has won multiple Group 1 races in Victoria including the 2014 A. G. Hunter Cup aboard Christen Me.

**Twitter handle:** @DexterDunn1

### **Anthony Butt (New Zealand)**



**Age:** 49

**Mini Bio:** Seven-time A. G. Hunter Cup winning driver Anthony Butt has been long regarded as one of the best big-race drivers in Australasia. Now based in Victoria, Butt has developed a strong partnership with leading trainer Brent Lilley and added numerous feature race victories to his already impressive CV.

### **Brett Miller (United States)**



**Age:** 42

**Mini Bio:** USA's Brett Miller is quick to push self-praise to the side when talking about his achievements. "It's always the horses," he says. "I'm driving good horses for some top trainers." In 2014 Miller's drives amassed \$7.9 million in stakemoney and this year that figure could balloon beyond the \$10 million mark. Miller drove a record equalling 10 wins on a 13-race card at Northfield Park on April 11, 2007.

### **Corey Callahan (United States)**



**Age:** 36

**Mini Bio:** Corey Callahan posted a top-three finish in his third season at the Meadowlands last year with 93 wins. Always media friendly, Callahan has been involved with some great promotions of harness racing in the US, including being honoured with his own bobblehead doll in 2013.

**Twitter handle:** @CC\_USA

**Kerryn Manning (Victoria)**



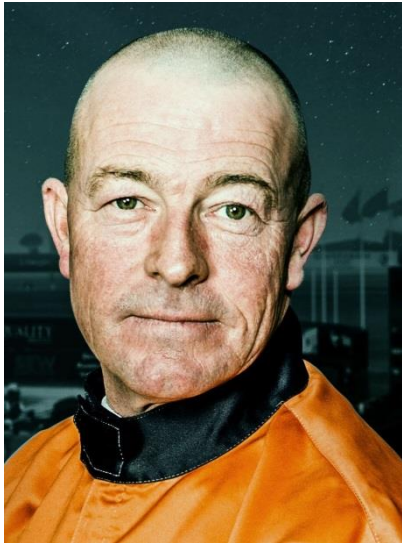
**Age:** 39

**Mini Bio:** Kerryn Manning has been described a trailblazer for women in harness racing, helping pave the way for a generation of women drivers to reach the pinnacle in Australian trots. Manning was the first person to win 300 races in a season in Australia or New Zealand, the first woman to drive a winner in both the Southern and Northern Hemispheres, the first woman to drive a NZ Cup win and last year she was awarded Harness Racing Victoria's prestigious Gordon Rothacker Medal.

**Twitter handle:** @KerrynManning



### Chris Alford (Victoria)

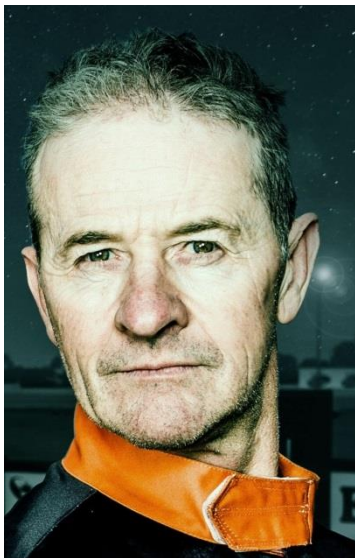


**Age:** 47

**Mini Bio:** Reinsman Chris Alford has long been at the forefront of the trots scene in Australasia. With a CV boasting over 5000 wins, Alford's record is virtually second to none. A nine-time leading national driver, Alford's career highlight came in the 1995 Inter Dominion aboard Golden Reign. Last season Alford tied with Gavin Lang in the Victorian Metropolitan Drivers title.

**Twitter handle:** @ChrisAlford5000

### Gavin Lang (Victoria)



**Age:** 57

**Mini Bio:** Gavin Lang has set the pace in Australasian harness racing for many years. One of the most respected reinsmen among his peers, Lang's cool demeanour in high-pressure race situations earned him the nickname "The Ice Man". Like his compatriot and arch rival Chris Alford, Lang has driven well over 5000 winners during an illustrious career and finished tied in last season's state metropolitan drivers' premiership.

### Greg Sugars (Victoria)



**Age:** 31

**Mini Bio:** At 31 years of age, Greg Sugars has emerged as a genuine star of Australasian harness racing. Last season Sugars was clearly the state's leading driver with 253 wins, his drives earning over \$2 million in stakes. Sugars has made a strong start to season 2015-16, currently leading the Victorian metro drivers' table from Gavin Lang and Chris Alford. Earlier this year Sugars surpassed the 2000-win mark.

**Twitter handle:** @GRSugars

### Jason Lee (Victoria)



**Age:** 20

**Mini Bio:** Jason Lee's career in the sulky is off to a flying start. He has won the past two Victorian Concession Drivers' premierships and last season achieved his first Group 1 victory aboard Jilliby Jitterbug in the Australian Pacing Gold Final at Tabcorp Park Melton. With almost 250 career victories in just five seasons in the cart, Lee is a superstar of the future.

**Twitter handle:** @JLee\_8



## **MEDIA NOTES**

- All the drivers involved in the International All Star Series will be available for interviews with media throughout the series.
- Local media at regional venues are encouraged to attend the series' race meetings and will be granted access to the drivers for interview and photographic/video purposes.
- The community events element of the series is yet to be finalised but information will be posted on the International All Star Series event page at [www.facebook.com/harnessracingvictoria](http://www.facebook.com/harnessracingvictoria)
- The structure of the International All Star Series competition is yet to be finalised and will be announced via the event's Facebook page in coming weeks.
- International All Star Series media enquiries should be directed to:

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Harness Racing Victoria  
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e: [cwinnell@hrv.org.au](mailto:cwinnell@hrv.org.au)