



One More Grand to tackle the Thunderbolt

By Marcus Laudenbach

HORSE RACING

DESPITE having not raced for more than two months, local trainer Neville Layt believes One More Grand will run a "very bold" race when he returns to the track this weekend in the 1000m Thunderbolt Handicap.

One More Grand has come back from a spell ten times and has only placed on two occasions first up. Regardless, Layt believes his horse has done everything that has been asked of him in an extended preparation and will be ready to fire on Sunday.

Layt's horse stands above the rest of the field in terms of experience and success having won upwards of \$400,000 prize money over his four-year career.

"One More Grand speaks for himself; he always stands up and gets counted ... he has got to be the class horse of the race," Layt said.

"The 1000m might normally be a bit too short for him, but being fresh it's the ideal race ... I expect big things of him this time around."

The last two years have produced some indifferent results for the six-year-old but Layt believes his horse is getting close to the form that saw him win two high quality



Queanbeyan trainer Neville Layt (left), Thunderbolt hopeful One More Grand and stablehand Steve Neal.

Photo: Andrew Johnston

metropolitan races in 2010.

"As a two-year-old and early on as a three-year-old he was doing everything right but he went through a period

there later on as a three-year-old where he didn't fire at all," Layt said

"Ever since he was a four-year-old he has just gone

onwards all the time. He's only a six-year-old now and I think he has matured into a really nice horse."

Worth \$25,000, the

Thunderbolt is the premier sprint race on the Queanbeyan racing calendar.

And along with One More Grand, fellow Queanbeyan

trainer Garry Clarke's Oh So Adorable and Julia Ceely's Anything You Touch look set to mount a strong local charge in the race.

Smith, Cleary look to bring Cup back to Queanbeyan

By Andrew Johnston

QUEANBEYAN CUP

IT'S fair to say it hasn't helped him much in the past. But

Queanbeyan trainer Mick Smith is hoping home track advantage will help him claim a long elusive Queanbeyan Cup this Sunday.

Smith will have two runners in this weekend's Cup, wet tracker Street Spirit and fancied five-year-old Dubai Ruler.

It's a race his Two Stubbies stable has long targeted. Smith has fielded runners in eight of the past 10 editions of the Cup.

His first Cup runner was Street Spirit's mother Revive a decade ago.

Since then, he's thrown everything bar the kitchen sink at the race with little to show for his efforts.

"If we could finally win it there will certainly be great celebrations," he said with a laugh. "The Cup's been a long term ambition of ours

and so far we haven't had any success so it's definitely one we'd love to win.

"Winning your hometown Cup is something that every trainer wants to do. I've had some good horses in it over the years and thought I had some good chances for not much result.

"I think the horse deserves it to. She's a really nice horse and this will be her last attempt at it before she's put out to stud so this is her big chance."

Fellow Queanbeyan trainer Joe Cleary will also be in the hunt in the \$40,000 race with six-year-old High Density to jump from barrier two.

Cleary's father, Frank, won the Cup with Bomber Command in 2009 before Mike Petrovik made it a local double in 2010 with

Carski Drum.

Since then, Canberra and inter-state runners have successfully raided Queanbeyan's most prized piece of racing silverware.

Smith however, said he was hopeful the unusual nature of the Queanbeyan course would see home track advantage come into play on Sunday.

"The good thing about Queanbeyan is that it's a bit of a tricky track and often horses trained here do have a bit of an advantage," he said. "Especially in a 2000m race, the last 300m is hard work."

"Horses come around the final corner coming down the hill thinking they're going alright but it's all uphill from the 300m mark to the post and you really see them start to shorten up on the run home."

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