



Soothsayer (right), with Daniel Moor aboard, swoops to snatch the Barrier Reef Pools Eye Liner Stakes (1350m) from La Roja (second from right) and Esjay (left). (Trackside Photography)

Emotions in Eye Liner win

By Peter Foley

The usually reserved jockey and the been-there-done-that trainer let their emotions run free and “aye aye yippee yippee aye” was sung for the second time in a week amid jubilant scenes after the Eye Liner Stakes.

Soothsayer’s stunning last-to-first win in last Saturday’s \$200,000 1350m feature sparked high times in the mounting yard.

Winning jockey Daniel Moor pumped his fist toward the euphoric throng of owners as he rode Soothsayer into the winners’ stall.

The owners, including Ipswich accountant Danny Riggs, broke into an exuberant rendition of the Queensland State of Origin side’s Alfie Langer-inspired unofficial anthem.

Hall of Fame trainer Lee Freedman, dressed in jeans and pullover, joined the party as the backslapping owners filled the mounting yard.

Lee left the celebrations to watch a replay of the race outside the jockeys’ rooms – maybe to make sure it really did happen.

On the way, he clapped Emily Lang on the shoulder to congratulate her on winning the Ipswich Cup.

He saw Soothsayer, the widest runner on the home turn, appear in the replay only at the last instant to snatch victory from runner-up La Roja and third-placed Esjay.

“It was exciting,” Lee said after turning from the screen.

“We made the decision late that we’d ride him really quiet.

“It was a bet that obviously paid off because there was a ton of speed in the race.

“It was a pretty good performance.”

Lee thought the Eye Liner would be a good race for Soothsayer but when he drew barrier 14, the stable was a bit deflated.

“But your initial thoughts are usually right. I thought he’d get good speed and he’s in great form, this horse. He’s come back really well,” he said.

Soothsayer, a six-year-old gelding by Divine Prophet was away from racing for almost three years with a tendon injury.

Lee paid tribute to his owners for sticking with him.

“You’ve got to keep in mind, those boys paid up for the horse for two years, and a lot of money

to get him rehabilitated for his tendons,” he said.

“And fair play to them, I reckon.”

Lee recently handed over his Gold Coast stables to his brother Michael after nearly 3000 wins highlighted by 124 Group 1s.

“I’m just helping my brother,” he said, cheerfully.

Is it hard to walk away?

“No, not at all,” he insisted.

“I don’t define myself through horses; I’ve got a lot of other things in my life.

“I’ve done a lot of things with horses, but I’m enjoying this at the moment. It’s good fun.”

For Warrnambool jockey Daniel Moor, who came to Queensland from Victoria last year to restart his riding career, his show of emotion had a personal element.

“I never used to; my wife’s a big component in that,” he said. “Just enjoying the moment and enjoying it with good people. It was a good thrill.

“Good people winning races, to be honest. They just seem like good larrikin blokes who were having a ball today and hopefully can continue into the night.

“I think you have to allow yourself to have a good time and enjoy yourself. It’s a very serious game; we get beaten an awful lot more than we win. So we need to enjoy it.

“It’s a big credit to the stable. This horse had three years off, and to come back and be in the form he is now, after a substantial injury, is a massive effort. So I was really pleased for the whole team.”

Daniel left his wife Lauren and children Jack and Penelope at home when he first came to Queensland. The Eye Liner win was a part of the pay-off for the family’s sacrifice.

“It’s repaying myself and my family, because we’ve been enjoying ourselves and I’m able to be more present as a dad and a husband, which is great,” he said.

“Trying to establish yourself anywhere, if you can win races that have a long history and are well regarded in the area, is fantastic.

“I go back a long way with Lee. I’ve ridden a few hundred winners for Lee here and abroad.

“So it’s nice getting another win for him and Michael too.”



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