



• Casanova is a popular winner for Bega hobby trainer Bruce Stewart, leading all the way to take out the Merimbula RSL Club Merimbula Centenary Benchmark 60 handicap over 1200m at Sapphire Coast Turf Club on Saturday. Photo: Bradley Photographers.

## Bega trainer Stewart records victory

BEGA hobby trainer Bruce Stewart maintained his consistent strike rate at Sapphire Coast Turf Club's Merimbula Centenary Race Day on Saturday.

His former-Sydney galloper Casanova scored a tough, all-

the-way win in the Merimbula RSL Club Merimbula Centenary Benchmark 60 handicap over 1200 metres.

The win was the third from seven starts at the track for the six-year-old gelding by Exceed and Excel, and came

just on a year after his purple patch of form last year when he won two races in a row on his home track.

"It's good to see the horse return to form and hopefully there are better things to come," Stewart said after

Casanova (\$10) just lasted to score by a short head from the fast-finishing favourite Gregory's Fortress (\$4.40) with Gelderbelle (\$15) a galant third.

Stewart said Casanova was ridden against his normal pat-

tern to take advantage of his inside barrier draw and lead, with Gelderbelle working hard to cross from the outside barrier to sit outside him.

Casanova kicked clear in the straight to establish a winning break, and Stewart praised

jockey Michael Travers for his ride.

"He went from the 200 (metre post) and the horse only has a 150-metre sprint, so it was nice to be still in front on the line," he said.

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## Clarkes dominate awards

Josh Bartlett

THE annual Far South Coast Showjumper of the Year presentation was again dominated by a local father and son combination.

Mogilla's Brett Clarke took home the Keith Gordon Senior Showjumper of the Year Award while his son Lane, 14, won the Graham Johnson Junior

Showjumper of the Year Award.

It is the third successive year the pair has won the prestigious prizes and Brett said he was happy with the results.

"I am proud to win... it was a tough series," Brett said.

"It was pretty good for Lane too."

Brett rode GH Tigerlilly to victory while Lane recorded his series win on GH Rambo.

"It's nice to do this together as a family," Brett said.

"We bred the horses ourselves, which was pleasing."

Brett won the senior competition by a narrow margin, edging out Gemma Harrington and her mount Presto.

The seven-event series was reduced to six after the cancellation of the Bemboka Show.

Brett admitted that Harrington may have overtaken him if that event had gone ahead.

Meanwhile, Lane recorded a much more comfortable win in the junior series, finishing streets ahead of runners up Lucy Evans and Webb.

Far South Coast Showjumping Club spokesperson Kirsty McPaul said Lane was a "phenomenal talent".

"Lane was a clear winner and was untouchable, as he has been for the past three years," McPaul said.

McPaul said Lane's standout performance was at the Bega Show, when he moved into the senior division on behalf of his dad.

"Brett had broken his ribs and Lane went excellently," she said.

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