

Jamie jumps for joy

LOCALLY born and raised showjumping rider Jamie Grant was only nine years old when he first came to the Bega Showground to watch the inaugural Bega Showjumping Cup.

Fast forward 17 years and Grant has been crowned the winner of the Grand Hotel Bega Showjumping Cup for 2011.

The result meant it was the third successive year that a rider with Bega connections had won the cup.

Grant and his horse Cool K, which took some of its first competition steps on the showground eight years ago, showed what many years of hard work and dedication can lead to when they posted the fastest double clear round of the prestigious grand prix event last Friday night.

The win was well received by the mostly local crowd that featured many relations of Grant including parents Sue and Denzil Grant, fiancée Jess Scianamanica and her parents Attilio and Ann.

The course set by international course designer Gavin Chester was not a huge test of the horse's scope, but rather the rider's ability to stay focused with many and varied related lines.

The starting line-up of 19 boasted some of Australia's best and most experienced riders including triple Olympian Vicki Roycroft and Australian World Cup representative Aaron Williamson.

It also had several young riders making their debut at this level, including Sam Buchanan from Ardlethan, NSW, at only 16 years of age.

The event got off to a perfect start with David Lever and his impressive young horse Clover's Luck posting a clear round.

Lever was joined in the clear round ranks by Tom Sutherland, Grant Hughes, Jamie Grant, Paul Brent, Ally Lamb, Brett Clarke and Dave Boulton.

The decision was made to only allow horses with clear rounds into the second.

With four horses bred by Daley K into the second round, this Bega event turned out to be a fitting tribute to the magnificent grey stallion that died the day after the event only 15 days before its 28th birthday.

Lever and Clover's Luck were first out in the second round and set a blistering pace galloping around the course and taking turns that made Lever's fellow competitors sit up and take notice.

Unfortunately two rails came down towards the end, leaving Lever with a very fast time and a total of eight

faults.

Next out was the determined young rider Sutherland from Sydney riding experienced stallion Nolisco.

Sutherland and Nolisco performed a faultless round and a very handy time to put the pressure on the rest of the field.

Canberra veteran Hughes set out on Blackall Park Atlantis and notched up another fantastic clear round, but wasn't fast enough to take the current lead from Sutherland.

Next into the arena were Grant and Cool K.

Grant put the pressure on the large grey gelding, which doesn't have the best of steering gear, and its gazelle-like leap over the large fences left the crowd gasping as they watched Grant's gambles pay off, one fence after another.

Clean over the last fence and it was announced that Grant's time was good enough to take the lead.

Next to contest the speed course was Paul Brent riding Animate.

Brent set a solid pace, but also finished with four faults.

His round was followed by Ally Lamb riding the white mare Penrose.

The pair looked in fine form, but one rail down had Lamb down in the final placings.

Bega Showjumping Club member Brett Clarke and GH Tigerlilly were closely watched by the crowd.

Clarke gets off to a great start, but his little mare tired and they finished the round with three rails on the ground.

The final combination, Dave Boulton and Special K, cantered into the arena and started with two clear jumps before knocking the third fence down, sealing the result for Grant.

At the presentation ceremony a slightly emotional Grant thanked his family and supporters for their help.

Sutherland finished in second position and Grant Hughes third.

Following the cup, spectators were treated to two more events, the junior six-bar and the pro-am rescue relay.

The relay event was very well received by competitors and spectators alike.

A professional or more experienced rider was teamed up with an amateur rider, who was a less experienced rider or junior rider in the case of most teams.

The teams took it in turns to negotiate the course with the first riders jumping the first three jumps, the second rider jumping the next three jumps and so on until the course was finished.



• Jamie Grant and his mount Cool K on the way to sealing the 2011 Grand Hotel Bega Showjumping Cup.

Fast change-overs between the different legs were the key to success.

The Bega Showjumping Cup event took place over three days.

The event received almost 1500 entries, about 500 more than in previous years.

This meant the days were very long, starting at 7am on some mornings and finishing after 9pm on some nights.

The Bega Showjumping Club's hard working volunteers and committee members worked tirelessly throughout three days and were instrumental to the event's success.

At the end of the competition, two awards were given out to the highest scoring horse and rider combinations.

Lane Clarke and his horse GH Rambo won the Eagle Embroidery Highest Point-Score in ring two award for the second successive year.

The Malcom Slater Memorial award for the horse and rider with the highest point-score in ring one had to be split between two competitors.

Dave Cameron brought 19 horses with him to Bega and won the most events of any rider at the show.

He won the award on his gelding Copabella Gamelan with two firsts and a fourth placing.

Vicki Roycroft and her mount Eliza Jane snuck in to be equal first for the award when they won the final class of the show.

A video of Jamie Grant's winning round can be found on Youtube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5ISO9RJZGE



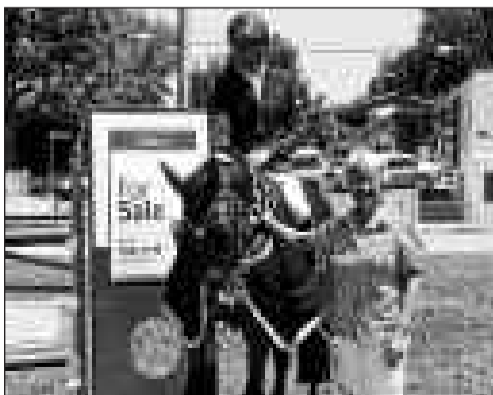
• Bega's Clint Beresford gives his horse Belcam Atlantis a pat after a great round on Friday.



• Local favourite Grant Hughes clears a fence but was unable to win the prestigious cup.



• Sponsor John Daley (left) with the winner of the Mini Prix, Brett Hickey.



• Helen Slater presents the Futurity Championship rug to Andrew Lamb.



• Dave Cameron and his stallion Copabella Cadiz clear the Kangarutha Nursery fence in style.