

# Fairytale win in showjumping

Kirsty McPaul

ONLOOKERS could be forgiven for thinking that the Grand Hotel Bega Cup was held only for local competitors as, for the second year in a row, the main class was taken out by a Bega Showjumping Club member.

The club's vice president, Sandra Kenny of Narooma and her diminutive thoroughbred Alando stole the show on Thursday night as they were the only combination to complete two clear rounds over the testing course set for the Grand Hotel Bega Showjumping Cup.

The capacity crowd at the Bega Showground during the three-day event from December 29 were treated to a fantastic display of showjumping from the 17 horse and rider combinations who contested the main event which attracted one of the largest fields of entrants for many years.

Australian Grand Prix veteran Grant Hughes from Canberra with three horses was tipped as favourite to take out the prestigious event, having come second on so many occasions.

Also proving to be a red-hot favourite was Ally Lamb from near Sale who was one of the most in-form riders at the cup with recent success on the Victorian World Cup circuit.

Punters however found it hard to go past local heroes Brett Clarke riding his GH Tigerlilly and 18-year-old Clinton Beresford with his Belcam Atlantic.

Of course last year's winners Jamie Smith and Mr

Witter were also in great contention but a very short lead-up to the event cast a shadow of doubt.

The course set by international course designer and Australian Olympic rider Gavin Chester ended with a never-seen-before in Bega, quadruple combination that proved to be the undoing of a large percentage of riders.

A lot of riders were clear up until that point including Ally Lamb who incurred eight penalties (knocked two rails) on both of her mounts in this combination.

Hughes was first out for the event and made the track look like child's play on his experienced campaigner Yakity Yak by posting a clear round straight away.

Grant's fortune was short lived however when his second horse, Emmaville Ricochet stopped abruptly at the final hurdle, landing Hughes on the ground for elimination.

Clarke riding his young and extremely gutsy little mare GH Tigerlilly scored the second clear round of the evening, but they were few and far between, with Kenny completing the third and final clear round.

Beresford was last to go and put on a professional display of riding showing polish and composure beyond his years, but ended the first round with four penalties, just lowering the back rail of the large spread fence at number 9.

Smith was the keenest of them all with a goal of becoming the first person to win back-to-back Bega Cups, but also finished the first round with one rail on



• Sandra Kenny smothers her horse Alando with pats as they complete a victory lap after winning the Grand Hotel Bega Showjumping Cup.

the ground and four penalties.

With only three clear rounds and many on four faults, the event was still very much for the taking heading into the final jump-off.

The early competitors went out hard in an attempt to make up for lost ground from the first round and some succeeded by posting fast clear rounds to add to

their first round total.

Unfortunately for Smith, Mr Witter showed signs of his lack of preparation time and lowered three fences placing him well out of contention.

Beresford rode another polished round and posted a fast time, lowering one more fence to leave him on a total of eight penalties.

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• Helen Slater presents the Malcom Slater Memorial Award to Stephanie Mackillop from Sydney for having the highest point score in Ring 1.



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