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REIGN OR SHINE

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**Contact us**

**ADVERTISING:**

Paul Woodrow (02) 9282 3197

**EDITORIAL:**

- Craig Young (02) 9282 2039
- Chris Roots (02) 9282 2091
- John Gilmour (02) 4979 5967
- Geoff Wilson 0418 654 698
- Peter Davis (02) 4221 2214
- Danny McGrath (07) 3031 6231

**THE FORM:**

Tony Zuccarini (Editor) (02) 9282 2767  
 Email: [tzuccarini@smh.com.au](mailto:tzuccarini@smh.com.au)

**Production**

Email: [smhturf@smh.com.au](mailto:smhturf@smh.com.au)  
 Craig Mordey (02) 4221 2643



**COVER:**  
 Agent 99 ... Gai Waterhouse has her eyes on a century of group 1 wins at Randwick this Saturday.  
 Photo: Kitty Hill

# Randwick's rise is ticket to shine



MAX PRESNELL

**T**he Tulloch Lodge influence, still in vogue with Gai Waterhouse, was a major contributor to the conjuring prowess of George Moore at Royal Randwick.

With cotton fingers and lightning reflexes, Moore rode the Randwick rise like no other jockey. Or so it seemed.

"Always a great tactician Moore also had the allegiance of T.J. [Smith], which helped," Ron Quinton, seven times Sydney's premier jockey, recalled.

Quinton rode against Moore and for Tommy Smith, who was as dynamic on ground level with horses as Moore was on top of them. Despite being born in Queensland, Moore is favoured to be the greatest hoop to ride in NSW, which celebrates 200 years of racing on October 15.

"T.J.'s horses and Gai's [Waterhouse, Smith's daughter], for that matter, find another gear at Randwick," Quinton said. "Possibly it's because they are trained there. But my experience was at the 600 metres they would start picking up and ready to get on their bike. On other horses it was a different feel..."

Yet Moore's magic exploded on the rise: his knack of waiting for the split second to cut loose or to nurse when others were exerting. At Randwick in the autumn of 1969, he had 15 winners from 29 rides. About 20 years earlier, his first impact success, Cordale, was also at headquarters in the 1946 Metrop for Gordon Rae before Smith became a major force.

"Moore always used to say, 'You don't go until the rise,'" Quinton said. "I explained to Hughie Bowman [apprenticed to Quinton] it's not so much the rise but more being 300m out. At their top, horses can't go any longer than 300m."

"I remember Lester [Piggott] came out here on his retirement trip, and I got him on Tiger Holland's thing. I hadn't been away to Europe or Ireland then. I told Lester when he got to the top of the rise go for your life. After he won, he said: 'I missed the rise.'"

"Lester didn't even realise it was there. After having the experience overseas, the Randwick rise is an anthill compared to what they are have there..."

Do jockeys have favourite circuits? "Loved Randwick," Quinton answered. "I won four Golden Slippers at Rosehill but when Randwick is in good condition there is no better track. Randwick now has problems."

"When old George Johnston



Talking tactics ... T.J. Smith and George Moore, pictured here in 1956, were a dynamic trainer-jockey duo.

[the grass at headquarters was immaculate under him in Moore and Smith's era] was getting into August you'd be saying this ground isn't right. Then all of a sudden it would explode. He knew every blade of grass. Old George was the boss, nobody told him what to do. He done his job and done it great. Probably too much interference here now."

Quinton has no qualms about top jockeys handling the rise but adheres to other advice from Moore. "You won't see me on the

Moore attribute in the present crop, Brown has sweet hands, seen to advantage on Shocking, another runner ridden wide to advantage, in the last Melbourne Cup. In the majors, he handles Once Were Wild (Epsom Handicap) for Waterhouse, while her other key runners Herculean Prince (Metrop) and More Strawberries (Flight Stakes) have the services of Nash Rawiller.

Regardless of the navigator, the home-ground advantage is again anticipated for Waterhouse on Saturday. Now on 99 group 1 tri-

whose touch was hardly restricted to the Randwick rise. The only Australian riders who could challenge Moore's overseas record, in the United States as well as Europe, were Rae "Togo" Johnstone and Scobie Breasley.

Moore put his early success in Sydney down to his Brisbane education, a fact emphasised by other greats, particularly those who came out of the Albion Park (known as The Creek) period.

"In Brisbane you had to think quick, be alert, particularly on the sand track at Albion Park where you got your mount out of the barrier smartly and took every opening," he said.

At first it came against him. "In Sydney I was riding the same way as I did at The Creek, making my run at the half mile and, for a while, couldn't understand why other horses were running over me in the straight."

The Australian Jockey Club will display a special exhibition about the champ at Randwick on Saturday, October 16, as part of the 200th anniversary celebrations. AJC vice-chairman, John Cornish, has also pledged an area in the new grandstand to be called the "Cotton Fingers Bar".

Moore's magic exploded on the rise: his knack of waiting for the split second to cut loose or to nurse when others were exerting.

rails when I'm on a good thing," he said despite the folklore about his famous whistle, sounded to get an inside run. For a price, of course. "Sydney, in particular, places too much importance on taking the shortest route," Quinton said.

Corey Brown stressed the benefit of picking his ground, well off the fence, on Drumbeats at Randwick last Saturday. Looking for a

umphs, with 21 being notched on the corresponding program, her favourite events are the Flight Stakes (seven), Epsom (six), and Metrop (six).

Waterhouse hasn't had the same impact with stable jockeys as her father. Arguments rage about the most important cog with the Smith-Moore machine. Smith did very well indeed without Moore,

## New Waterhouse book makes for a fine read

**Max Presnell**

Like the author, *Gai* is bright and bubbly with a sting in the tale.

The subtitle, *In My Own Words*, describes the Gai Waterhouse book, compiled from her blog and edited astutely by Stephen Howell from 400,000 words for the Slaterry Media Group.

Always a station for entertainment, the Waterhouse website gives an insight into stable life,

racing in general and superb social notes, reminiscent of Nola Dekyvere, the grand dame of the Sydney scene when Waterhouse was "coming out".

But her "in-and-around Tulloch Lodge" is required reading.

"Percy Sykes, this fragile and diminutive vet, now in his 90s, put his hand down her throat," Gai wrote regarding Extra Happy. "The young vet, Rachel Salz, had her arms outstretched behind

him in case he fell. 'She has a couple of rough teeth back there,' said Percy as he retrieved his worn hand covered in blood from a sharp molar."

On Nash Rawiller, regarded as one of her recent highlights, Waterhouse explained: "What a difference these years have made to this excellent young man. When he relocated from Melbourne to Sydney, Nash was shy and introverted and certainly

not the man I work with today ... we all agree he is one of the great jockeys of Australia."

Alan Jones hosted yesterday's book launch and Waterhouse divulged: "John Singleton has been gruelling me."

Later asked to explain, Singo reckons he has been accused of many things but "gruelling" was a first. "Gruelling" in *Encarta* is "extremely arduous and exhausting".