

Mick proves he has an Art for winning Derbies

By DAVID BRASCH

STEWARD head honcho Danny Ryan just about summed it all up. "I've never seen Group 1 Mick as excited as he was behind the boxes when that dog won," Ryan said.

THAT dog is Art Mann (Southern Champ*-Lucky Penna) who overcame an apparently hopeless bid to make the final field, then overcame an apparently hopeless position at the first turn in the race to win the Group 2 Queensland Derby (520m) at Albion Park. Ryan has been watching "Group 1" Mick Zammit train winners for years.

"Mick was very emotional after that win. You would think it was his first big win," said Ryan. We all know Art Mann's victory isn't Mick's first big win. He did, in fact, train the winner of the Qld Derby in 2003 when Road Closed scored.



Selena Zammit sheds a tear on the way from the catching pen after the Derby win.



'Group 1' Mick Zammit waves to the crowd after Art Mann's Derby victory.

But Mick knows the game only too well to know he should savour Group wins every time they come along, albeit how unexpected.

Brian Guy and Michael Rodd, a couple of big names from the thoroughbred industry, came along for the ride.

Guy, who has 40 horses in work at the Gold Coast, and Rodd, one of Australia's great jockeys, are the "Soupy Confederacy" which races Art Mann.

Rodd is "Soupy". It's been his nickname since he came into the Guy stable as an apprentice years ago. Soupy because one of the wags at the

stables reckoned he was so skinny he looked like soup bones.



Art Mann streaks away to win the Qld Derby.

Mick told his new owners Guy and Rodd he reckoned Art Mann would make a Qld Derby dog right back when he bought him from Sarah Pringle a few months ago.

Mick didn't reckon on brother Tony's superstar Surf Lorian being an overwhelming presence in the final.

While Surf Lorian was never out of trouble, the fact of the Derby final is that Art Mann (initially the second reserve) gave Surf Lorian four lengths start at the first turn, got dream runs throughout the race and won going away.

It was as though Rodd was guiding him every stride of the race.



Owners Brian Guy and Michael Rodd flank Mick Zammit and Art Mann at the Derby presentation.

Which was just about what happened. Rodd, Guy and their families rode Art Mann from the

grandstand and cheered louder than they do when one of their horses win.

And that happens often.

Mick Zammit has had a commission for three years from Guy to find him a dog. "It's not easy to find the right one," said Zammit. "I felt this dog was the right one."

Brian Guy has been a dog man for years. "Alan Denham and I went to the dog in Sydney when we were kids," said Guy.

"And when he decided to buy a greyhound, I tagged along."



An emotional Mick and Selena Zammit and congratulated by Gary McKnight after the derby win.

The former top class stayer Donovan Bailey was one of their first. Guy was hooked.

When he shifted his thoroughbred team north to the Gold Coast five years ago, he brought along a maiden greyhound he owned at the time and gave it to Mick Zammit to train.

Mick won a maiden with it at Albion Park and promptly told Guy to get rid of it. "I thought we had a nice dog," said Guy. "Mick told me that was as far as it was going to go. We've been looking for the right replacement ever since." Michael Rodd's first foray into greyhound ownership has continued his fantastic run in the saddle. He is heading to Hong Kong in August for a riding stint.

"Don't worry," said Guy. "He'll know all about how this dog is going.

We'll keep him informed."

Rodd was apprenticed to Guy but ended up mates. It was only natural they would share ownership of Art Mann.
Rodd described Art Mann's victory as "an unreal thrill".
"I was sweating on him getting a run through them," he said.
The runs came ... and so did the Derby victory.

Phantom Flash	Flashy Sir
Southern Champ*	Westmead Seal
Wise Flyer	HB's Commander
ART MANN	Wise Memory
Light Of Fire	New Tears
Lucky Penna	Centrefire
Paris Match	Brother Fox
	Osti's Shadow