

# *Ron has a ball when it comes to Cup time*



***Gold Coast club hostesses fuss over trainer Ron Ball and his Gold Coast Cup winner Lethal Weapon.***

**LATE** last year Victorian Nick Janic was riding the crest of a wave. His champion galloper Big Daddy Cool (Just The Best-Sobbing Sal) had smashed The Meadows track record, won the Silver Chief, been placed in the Adelaide Cup and then looked to have the National Derby at his mercy. Then it all crashed about him. Big Daddy Cool broke his hock and was retired to stud. But that wasn't Nick's only headache. Nick also owned a litter brother to Big Daddy Cool called Lethal Weapon who was just a couple of lengths off his illustrious brother, and half brother Brett Lee. Lethal Weapon had already won at Traralgon, Sale and a couple of times at The Meadows. That, too, came crashing down around Nick. "He fell at The Meadows in August last year

(2003) and injured a tendon so badly that four vets who looked at the injury advised us he would not race again," Nick told TheJournal. "One vet said that in 25 years he had never seen a dog come back from that injury." But Nick knew just how good Lethal Weapon is and was not about to give up on his dog. "We worked on it all the time and after seven months off the racetrack we finally got him to the races," he said. "But it wasn't the end of the problems. He cannot handle two turn tracks now, the tendon problem forces him off the track on the turns.

Credibility	Worth Doing
Just The Best	No Liability
Flying Amy	Amerigo Man
<b>LETHAL WEAPON</b>	Tenthill Flyer
New Tears	Pretty Short
Sobbing Sal	Starfire Lady
Wee Sal	Chariot Supreme
	I'm Blessed

"In fact, in the first 10 runs we gave him when he got back to the track, he pulled up lame every time," said Nick. So Nick restricted the dog to one-turn tracks winning races at Horsham, Warragul, Traralgon, Warrnambool and Ballarat with him before contacting Queensland legend Ron Ball to take on the dog with a couple of big sprints his target. "We sent him north to Ron for the Galaxy at Tweed but specifically for the Gold Coast Cup," he said. "In hindsight the Tweed was too tight for him with his tendon problem, but the Gold Coast was just right."



*Warren Alley and Cup runner-up Where's Indy.*

Ball knows how to prepare a dog for the Gold Coast Cup. He trained the legendary sprinter Flying Amy to win it twice.

And when Lethal Weapon led throughout and held off the challenge of Where's Indy and track record holder Pororooca to win the final no man was more emotional than Ron Ball.

"Only a few people know just how much this win means to me," said Ball at the time.

"I've done it tough lately and it's a bigger thrill to win this cup than the two I won with Amy." Lethal Weapon, to the time of writing, has won five of six runs at the Gold Coast. He was on target to head to New Zealand for the \$40,000 to the winner Aust/NZ Challenge at Cambridge over 457m.

Nick Janic reckons that will about be the end of the dog's career. "He's three and he still can't go around two turns, so we are tempted to retire him to stud," he said.

"He's a flying machine early, a litter brother to Big Daddy Cool and a half brother to Brett Lee. "He's by the best sire in the land out of a Tweed Galaxy winner and champion broodbitch in Sobbing Sal.

"He's got the credentials to make it at stud."

### ***Gold Coast Cup (457m)***

**1 LETHAL WEAPON** \$7.80

(Just The Best-Sobbing Sal)

Owner: Ready To Run Syndicate

Trainer: Ron Ball

**2 WHERE'S INDY** \$12.10

(Awesome McLaren-By Design)

**3 POROROCA** \$2.10

(Token Prince-Local News)

**Others:** 4 Ascot One \$4.10,

5 Mrs King \$13.90,

6 Farmor Faithful \$10.50,

7 Gabriella Bale \$26.70,

8 Cawbourne Mim \$20.30.

***Time: 25.82.***