

# Tuncurry provides Irish flavour

**IRISH LASS LOUISE DAY LANDED A WINNER ON HER FIRST DAY AS A JOCKEY WHEN SUCCESSFUL IN THE FINAL EVENT AT TUNCURRY**

WORDS: TONY MEGAHEY PICTURE: STEVE WHITE

**W**ith her charming Irish brogue and advantaged by some of the finest racing advisors imaginable, Louise Day made her long-awaited race riding debut on four of Kris Lees's runners at the Tuncurry-Forster TAB Ladies' Day meeting last month.

The 22-year-old apprentice is from the tiny village of Strokestown in Roscommon County in Western Ireland, where she was educated in a traditional equine and farming family.

And the Irish links led to her making contact with profile Victorian trainer Ciaron Maher and also champion jockey Hugh Bowman when he was on an overseas riding stint.

"I've been so lucky the way it's worked out that from back home I was able to get in touch with Ciaron Maher and Hugh Bowman, and it led to an opportunity in Australia," Louise enthused after dawn trackwork on Lees's runners at Newcastle's Beaumont Track.

"I've spent a lifetime in equestrian and show jumping but my goal was always to be a career jockey, so it's fantastic to get my start over here.

"After initial contact with Ciaron Maher, the emails were regular with him and Hugh Bowman. They were both fantastic steering me in the right direction.

"So eventually I got the chance to make the big move from home to Melbourne and work for the Maher stable. And they eventually recommended me to the Lees organisation.

"I rode trackwork in Melbourne but didn't get an opportunity to ride in a race, because the rules are different



*When Irish eyes are smiling – Louise Day after her Tuncurry win*

down there. So it was exciting to have my first official race riding day – and I rode a winner!"

Louise claimed four kilos on her four rides with her first mount, the favourite Remodify (\$1.90), finishing in fifth position. She then came in eighth on Weavered (\$4) and was runner-up on Maputo Express (\$6) before guiding Face Like Thunder (\$1.90 fav) to victory in the last race.

All are progressive types for the Group-winning Lees who makes a habit of dominating country meetings in proximity to his Newcastle base.

"I've ridden them in trackwork and they're nice horses. Face Like Thunder went up in trip to 2100m

and she's also a filly with plenty of upside.

"I really enjoyed the day at Tuncurry day and it's a lovely track and environment."

Kris Lees heaped praise on Louise after her win: "Louise came halfway around the world to chase her dream of being a jockey," Lees said.

"She is a very accomplished horsewoman and a tireless worker. And she will only get better in the saddle with the more races she competes in.

"At present, because of visa restrictions, she can ride only my horses." **RNSW**