

# FROM TRACK TO TURF

## DIXIE'S WINNING SECOND LIFE

AN INSTAGRAM IMAGE OF A RETIRED RACEHORSE, LED POLO PLAYER JACK ARCHIBALD TO CONTACT TEAM THOROUGHBRED AND HIS MARE IS NOW CONSIDERED A 'FUTURE STAR' WORDS: PARIS INGEGNERI IMAGES: SUPPLIED



Neele Bolchowski (groom), Jack Archibald and Bridget Bower (groom)

Four years ago, Jack Archibald spotted a striking retired racehorse advertised on Instagram through Racing NSW's Team Thoroughbred Welfare program.

Drawn in by her athletic build and calm expression, Jack saw potential in the retired bay mare Mikkeyday, as a future star on the polo field.

"I loved her type," Jack said. "I thought she was going to suit polo perfectly and the process with Team Thoroughbred was really straight forward.

"After seeing the mare advertised for rehoming, I made contact with Racing NSW and the rest is history."

Since then, Jack has given the mare her new name after racing,

Dixie, and she has continued to grow and blossom in her new career, seamlessly transitioning from the racetrack to the high-speed, high-skill world of polo.

"Her temperament is probably her best asset," Jack explained. "That made the transition easy.

"Within two or three weeks she was already getting the hang of it.

"Of course, we take things



Jack Archibald, Bridget Bower, Hepzibah Horn and Neele Bolchowski

“

**She's my best horse, so she'll continue playing in the two polo seasons each year.**

slower than racing, so it took about 18 months until she was competing at a really high level.”

Her progress has been nothing short of impressive. In 2024, Dixie was awarded Best Playing Pony at the prestigious Ellerston Polo Tournament, one of Australia's premier polo events.

“That was a huge highlight for me,” Jack said proudly. “To have a horse that I purchased and trained be deemed the best in the

tournament, it was pretty special.”

Currently based at Scone Polo Club, Jack and Dixie have been active on the polo circuit this season with a string of strong performances.

Most recently they were part of the winning team for the MK Milne Trophy, further proving that this retired racehorse still has plenty to give.

Looking ahead, Jack hopes to extend Dixie's legacy beyond the field.

“She's my best horse, so she'll continue playing in the two polo seasons each year.

“And hopefully I'll be able to take embryos and breed from her, to produce something just like her.”

Team Thoroughbred NSW operates out of six properties where Racing NSW staff care for, retrain, and rehome retired Thoroughbred racehorses for a variety of career pathways after racing.

Horses trained by Team Thoroughbred are provided with

a foundation level of training in equestrian sports to provide them with the best possible prospects of being successfully rehomed.

Dixie's story is a shining example of the life and success retired racehorses can find through the Team Thoroughbred rehoming and retraining program.

With the right care, environment and a bit of patience, life after racing can be just as thrilling.

For those horses who are unsuitable to be equestrian athletes, the team will look at other suitable rehoming options, including many horses each year who are rehomed as paddock mates and companions or non-ridden pleasure horses.

If you are considering the purchase of a retired Thoroughbred contact [teamthoroughbred@racingsw.com.au](mailto:teamthoroughbred@racingsw.com.au) to talk through the type of horse you are looking for or visit – [teamthoroughbred.com.au/welfare](http://teamthoroughbred.com.au/welfare) **RNSW**