

# DANCING THEIR WAY

## *to Royal Randwick*

NEW SOUTH WALES – AND BEYOND – WENT CRAZY FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A \$2 MILLION RACE AT ROYAL RANDWICK ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF NOVEMBER

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PICTURES: BRADLEY PHOTOGRAPHERS



Al Mah Haha (Jordan Mallyon; red colours) becomes the first horse eligible for The Big Dance by winning the 2021 Goulburn Cup





Rustic Steel (Kerrin McEvoy; Wanless tartan & yellow pom pom) heads for home in the Scone Cup with fourth placegetter Fender (Grant Buckley) chasing in vain

**W**hen the \$2m The Big Dance was announced in February, a buzz developed throughout the state with owners and trainers looking to grab a coveted spot for their horses.

Once the terms and conditions were released weeks later, the Goulburn-trained Al Mah Haha was the first horse to be eligible for The Big Dance after his Goulburn Cup victory last December. It was his second straight win in the race.

"This is fantastic news," said one of Al Mah Haha's part-owners, Chris Terry. "We weren't sure if he would get in as the Goulburn Cup is run just two days before The Big Dance and it makes it near impossible to back-up.

"But Racing NSW in its wisdom saw that anomaly and went back to the previous year's winner.

"Our entire syndicate went crazy when we found out 'Al' will be given entry into a \$2 million race.

"He's has been such a great horse to us winning nearly \$600,00 in prizemoney and he could bow out a big winner as he's likely to be retired after this year.

"It also gives clarity and plenty of time for Tash [Burleigh, trainer] to set him for The Big Dance."

The latest two horses to become eligible for The Big Dance were Rustic Steel and Dr Drill who finished one-two in the Scone Cup on May 14.

Rustic Steel showed his toughness, having taken out The Coast at Gosford just six days earlier.

The Scone pair was preceded by Aleas and Dream Runner who filled the quinella in the Wagga Wagga Cup in the first week of May.

The \$2 million The Big Dance will be held at Royal Randwick on Tuesday, 1 November 2022.

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The field for The Big Dance will be drawn from the winners and second placed horses of 25 Country Cup races from across NSW.

A Big Dance Wild Card race will also be run at Royal Randwick on 8 October, with the winner and second-placed horse from the Wild Card becoming eligible for The Big Dance and exempt from the ballot.

Benchmark rating at the time of final acceptances will then be used to determine the final field from the pool of eligible horses, with the winners of eligible Country Cups receiving preference over any second placegetters.

The winners and second placed horses of those races already run will be eligible for the 2022 Big Dance, starting with the Goulburn Cup which was run on 31 October 2021. The Big Dance will be run at a distance of 1600m under quality handicap conditions.

A headline musical act performing after the races, combined with the new Winx Stand for General Admission racegoers, will ensure a premium raceday experience to attract new customers to racing. *RNSW*





**ABOVE:** The Barbara Joseph, Paul & Matt Jones-trained Room Number (Quayde Krogh) powers home to take out the Bega Cup at Sapphire Coast Racecourse. **BELOW:** Owners of Room Number celebrate with Barbara & Peter Joseph proudly holding the trophy





# THE BIG DANCE CUP RESULTS

WINNER	RUNNER UP	RACE
<b>Al Mah Haha</b>	Steely	Goulburn Cup
<b>Ready To Humble</b>	Upper House	Snake Gully Cup (at Gundagai)
<b>Charmmebaby</b>	Battle Guardian	Taree Cup
<b>Not Negotiating</b>	One Aye	Mudgee Cup
<b>She's All In</b>	Invincible Dash	Nowra Cup
<b>Beckford</b>	Point Counterpoint	Armidale Cup (at Tamworth)
<b>Peyton Place</b>	Girls Are Ready	Moruya Cup
<b>Kedah</b>	Jacksprat	Ballina Cup
<b>Room Number</b>	The Guru	Bega Cup (at Sapphire Coast)
<b>Harmony Rose</b>	Five Kingdom	Albury Gold Cup
<b>Regal Stage</b>	Miss Redoble	Muswellbrook Gold Cup
<b>Shameonus</b>	Ita	Orange Gold Cup
<b>Bandersnatch</b>	Constant Flight	Tamworth Cup
<b>Aleas</b>	Dream Runner	Wagga Wagga Gold Cup
<b>Rustic Steel</b>	Dr Drill	Scone Cup
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Wellington Cup (run May)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	South Grafton Cup (run July)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Forbes Cup (run July)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Coffs Harbour Cup (run Aug)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Murwillumbah Cup (run Aug)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Dubbo Cup (run Sept)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Lismore Cup (run Sept)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Bathurst Cup (run Sept)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Port Macquarie Cup (run Oct)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Big Dance Wildcard (R'wick Oct)
<b>TBD</b>	TBD	Coonamble Cup (run Oct)

To be eligible for the Big Dance, horses must be the official winners or second placed horse in any of the races listed above.