



Cody (left) and brother Luke Morgan on the farm

# Cody reveals his SECRET WEAPON

It's no fluke, the impact that his younger sibling has on Cody Morgan's second coming as a trainer. In a word, he'd say it's priceless.

The brothers are in competition as trainers but Cody, 33, says 29-year-old Luke is the secret weapon that's behind his ability to get the best out of tried horses like his Country Championships Final runners, Unbiased and Pelerin.

"He likes to keep a small number of racehorses and do more of the breaking in and pre-training whereas I prefer more the training side of it," Cody said.

"A lot of the horses that I get are tried horses and many of them are barrier rogues, horses that have come from bigger stables in Sydney and Melbourne.

"When I first got Moobi he wanted to buck so I gave him to Luke for six weeks.

"Not many people have been a

**IT'S A COINCIDENCE  
THAT CODY  
MORGAN'S PROPERTY  
JUST OUTSIDE  
TAMWORTH BACKS  
ONTO ONE OWNED  
BY HIS BROTHER LUKE**

WORDS: RAY HICKSON

jockey, a world champion saddle bronc rider (in 2015) and a trainer, so he's quite rounded to be able to break in and try to fix a lot of those problem horses.

"That's a great asset for myself. And it brings us closer together. He's younger but he's the boss, he has his finger on the pulse."

It's common knowledge that the Morgan family is close; Cody and Luke have stables in their own name but their parents Glenn and Mary, as well as owning a number of horses,

are regular contributors.

How close was there for everyone to see after Unbiased won the Country Championships Qualifier at Tamworth in March – the emotion of repaying his parents, who part-own the horse, for years of support through the toughest period of his life spilled out.

That part of Morgan's life has been well documented – he was outed for 15 months on raceday treatment charges dating back to 2013 and the effects ran deep through the family.

He's spent the past two years or so on rebuilding and redemption and training as many winners as his limited numbers allow.

Few would know that while Cody was busy dealing with his team at that Country Championships meeting, Luke was there working behind the scenes with Moobi.

"Because he's so naughty and Luke knows him, he helped out with



Cody Morgan leads away Rostam, a recent winner at Dubbo. Picture by Janian McMillan

him," Cody said.

"I was busy because I had so many runners that day and nobody else can handle him because he's so highly strung.

"There's no rivalry. Racing is so tough, it's hard enough to win a race so to be able to lean on him for that side is really helpful."

Almost two decades ago the Morgan boys would ride horses in the local pony club and as soon as Cody became an apprentice it fired Luke up to do the same.

"Luke could see how much fun I was having doing it and I think he liked the fact I was able to leave school in year nine," he said.

"He was just a tiny bit bigger than me but not much. I was lucky, when I started I was 45kg and when Luke started he was 7 or 8kg heavier so he had to get in the sauna from the get go.

"I rode 150 winners and we are competitive brothers, so he didn't quit until he rode more than me."

Cody freely admits Luke is a better jockey than he ever was. At the same time, he believes his best

asset is in placing his horses where they can win.

And that's why Luke is a secret weapon – he's a second opinion that can be trusted. It's usually right too.

A horse called Keighley Sun is a very recent case in point.

The three-year-old broke his maiden status at Quirindi in June a few weeks after he'd been a beaten favourite in a 950m maiden at Moree.

It was Luke's view that Cody had the horse a bit too screwed down for a first-up run and that was taken on board as Keighley Sun headed to Quirindi.

"We'd given the horse a jump out and Luke's advice was that he thought I'd given him too hard a jump out and that was why it was beaten," he said.

"He said 'I think you stuffed up there, you had him wound up for 950m and that's why he was getting going late'.

"So, I backed off him going into his next run and, while it wasn't a strong race, he bolted in.

"We have good banter. Sometimes I think he'll put them

in the wrong races and I'll let him know, but he laughs at me when I'm riding one who wants to buck.

"To him it's a day off but I'm just thinking I'm too old to fall off. It's great to be able to help each other but in saying that he does most of the helping."

Morgan is keen to again target the Country Championships series in 2020 – a series that has fast become the grand final for a country trainer – and it's likely a few newly acquired tried horses will be among that team.

There's little doubt Luke's impact will be vital. So much so, Cody is more than happy to remain planted in Tamworth for the foreseeable future.

"I had floated the idea of training in different areas, closer to the city, and only recently but having my brother there is such a big asset," he said.

"He'll come in and gallop horses for me and give me a second opinion. You can't put a price on what he does for me.

"I wouldn't be where I am without him." **RNSW**