

## Media Release

18 October 2012

### Brothers-in-Arms Drivers Series at the Oamaru Christmas at the Races

The annual Brothers-In-Arms Driver Series, featuring some of NZ's top class drivers, will be held at the Oamaru Christmas at the Races meeting on Saturday 24th November. The event is in its fourth year and has been won in successive years by the Butcher boys, albeit the first year was a father & son pairing that saw David & Zac lift the trophy.

New to the competition this year are the Purdon brothers who line up against a veritable 'who's who' of NZ harness racing with over 8,000 winning drives between the 12 drivers in what looks to be a gladiatorial contest of state-of-origin proportions!

- Barry & Mark Purdon
- David & Phillip Butcher
- Dexter & John Dunn
- Gerard & Leo O'Reilly
- Clark & Ken Barron
- Nathan & Matthew Williamson

Barry and Mark Purdon are both accomplished horsemen with the brothers, alongside their father Roy, currently sitting as the top three most successful trainers in NZ. The brothers are also highly regarded drivers with Mark winning over 1,200 races and Barry nearing 600 wins.

David and Philip Butcher are the defending champions and are yet to let anyone else get their engraving on the trophy, having won the series since inception in 2009. David Butcher is one of NZ's most prominent drivers with over 1800 wins to his name.

Dexter Dunn has broken numerous records over his career of almost 1000 wins. He has won the NZ Drivers Premiership five times and was the first driver (or jockey) to reach 200 wins in a season. Older brother John was the 2007 NZ Junior Driver Championship and has won over 400 races.

Both Clark and Ken Barron have won over 900 races each and are both successful trainers. In 1999 younger brother Ken finished fourth in the World Drivers Championship.

Hailing from Oamaru, Nathan and Matthew Williamson are always the local favourites. Both won their first Group 1 race as 18-year-olds and have gone on to win over 500 races between them. Nathan has followed in their father Phil's footsteps and is now training his own team.

Between them, Canterbury brothers Gerard and Leo O'Reilly have won 700 races in the sulky while both also train from Rakaia with over 100 wins as trainers each.

Five penalty free races make up the Series ensuring tremendous interest in fixed odd betting options. Once again the principal sponsor is Fat Sally's Pub & Restaurant which again is putting up \$1000 cash to the winning driver teams (\$500/\$300/\$200).

The Christmas at the Races meeting is not only a great day of racing and entertainment for the adults, the kids will be well catered for too with an entertainment area including ride-on cars, merry-go-round, bouncy castles, high-ride plane, candy floss, hot dogs and more.

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