Gundary Flyer

By Jason Moroney

Few followers of pacing will ever forget the 1982 Miracle Mile at Harold Park when
the 'Flyer' overcoming two false starts, and then tailing the field in the middle stages of the race, beat Frosty Imp and Double Agent in a thrilling finish. The time of 1:56.9 was at that stage a race record.

The race was notorious for the two false starts caused by Gundary Flyer, with the horse threatened with being withdrawn from the field if he failed after a third attempt. In an eventful night Gundary Flyer won after giving the field 20 metres start. Sections of the crowd gave the horse a 'mixed reception' as he returned to the mounting area. Still, the four year-old gave all of his rivals a start, and a beating.

A crowd of over 20 000 watched the 'Flyer' become only the second four year-old horse to win the feature sprint.

Gundary Flyer's dam, Siletta, was purchased by Ray Moroney (with wife Gail, later owners of Gundary Flyer) at the Parramatta Bloodstock sales for the sum of $600. She produced 8 foals that did not win a race, until Siletta was sent to Good Flyer, an imported stallion standing at Temora (for the princely service fee of $400).

Gundary Flyer, so named because he was foaled on the Gundary plains, a few kilometres south of Goulburn, was born on 27th November 1977. A striking black colt with three white feet, he had his first race in September 1980, beaten into second place at Penrith.

From what some experts called a 'breeding fluke' the horse then went on to win his next nine starts, and fifteen races in sixteen starts in his first year of racing.

A bowed tendon as a four year old required Gundary Flyer to be sent for a spell; this injury was later found to involve a cracked sesamoid bone. Hours of treatment involving leg wrapping and poultices by his owner, Ray Moroney, meant that the 'Flyer' was able to resume work relatively quickly.

A further bout of injury was followed by a first-up win in a Canberra Free-For-All.
However, it was evident that the injury had not healed as well as expected, with the difficult decision made to retire the tenacious pacer soon after. He retired from racing in November 1984 as a seven year-old

The Day family, along with staff at their Goulburn stables, was involved from the start of Gundary Flyer's career. It was Frank Day who suggested that Ray purchase Siletta, and to later send her to Good Flyer. Michael Day, Frank's son, was responsible for breaking in the black colt, and later trained and drove him to most of his victories. Frank, and later Frank's brother Kevin, went onto become Gundary Flyer's Studmasters.

Gundary Flyer finished his career as a seven year-old, having started 50 times for 28 wins and nine placings. Lifetime earnings were $215 000.

Included in his 28 wins were memorable races such as:
- · 1982 Miracle Mile, Harold Park (1:56.9)
- · Australian Derby, Perth
- · Victorian Derby, Moonee Valley
- · Bankstown National Panasonic Guineas
- · Australian Four Year-old Championship, Harold Park
- · NSW Sires Produce, Harold Park
- · Penrith and Canberra Derbies
- · Canberra Flying Mile – 1:58.6 (Track record)
- · Goulburn Time Trial –1:57.7 (Track record)
- · Ardath Three Year-old Classic, Penrith

Although running third, another courageous performance was to finish behind Popular Alm in the Kilmore Cup in 1982. After losing considerable ground at the start (75 metres) Gundary Flyer gained ground on the winner to lose by only 15 metres.

Due to his indiscretions before the mobile on Miracle Mile night, the horse received a one-month ban from mobile race starts. This nearly cost him a start in the Golden Nugget series in Perth. However a satisfactory trial in Perth was followed by entry into that series where he ran third in the final. (The ban was later served after the Nugget series).

A previous trip to Perth, however, met with better results, with the Flyer winning the Australian Derby there in 1981. The horse ran a mile rate of 2:2.4 for the 2625 metre trip, beating the best 3 year-olds in the country at that time.

After winning the heat of the NSW Derby in scintillating fashion, a bout of colic forced the horse from the Derby final field, which was won in a time three seconds slower than Gundary Flyer's Derby heat winning time.

Regular racing, requiring spelling, and injury, conspired to prevent Gundary Flyer from taking part in the InterDominion carnivals held during his career, a prestigious race series on an equal footing with the Miracle Mile.

As a five-year old in September 1982, Gundary Flyer was invited to time trial at Harold Park in an attempt to better Copper Way's Australian record time of 1:55.4. After a false start due to a photographer's flash, Gundary Flyer steamed home during the second attempt to record 1:56.1 (although the infield timer had recorded 1:55.5, which was later amended by the three manual timekeepers). The official time was still the equal third fastest mile in Australia to that date.

Gundary Flyer was named the NSW Harness Horse of the Year in 1981, and the Australian Three Year-old Harness Horse of the Year, also in 1981.

Evidence of Gundary Flyer's ability was further shown by an official invite to the 'World Cup of Pacing' to be held at the prestigious Meadowlands racetrack in New Jersey, USA in May 1982. A tough home campaign however, meant that the invite was declined.

Gundary Flyer was able to claim wins in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth, but was not able to claim a victory in Brisbane despite several starts. He did not race in South Australia.

Standing at Stud at 'Gundary Park' south of Goulburn, Gundary Flyer served 57 mares in his first season and went on to produce numerous winners during a stud career spanning several seasons.

A notoriously uncertain starter, invariably missing the start, the 'Flyer' was capable of exciting fans with a wide sweeping run from the tail of the field; his stretched long black neck and white nose roll distinctive features as the 'Flyer made a charge. He certainly created much interest and a strong following developed among pacing fans, especially in his hometown of Goulburn.

Out of a $600 mare and a $400 stallion service fee, Gundary Flyer went onto become a pacer good enough to win more than $200 000 from 50 starts.

Gundary Flyer passed away in 1998 as a 21 year old.

Gundary Flyer

Pedigree:

GUNDARY FLYER Black colt foaled 1977	Good Flyer	Good Time	Hal Dale	Abbedale
				Margaret Hal
			On Time	Volomite
				Nedda Guy
		Flying Dream	Knight Dream	Nibble Hanover
				Lydia Knight
			Flying High	Blackhawk
				Dierker Direct
	Siletta	Jocose	Grattan Loyal	Grattan Royal
				Gwita
			Trusty Friend	U.Scott
				Trusty Maid
		Silendy	Silver Peak	Peak Hill
				Silver Heel
			Wendy Spring	Spring Command
				Wendy Lass

Gundary Flyer