



Derby Day jumps out of the gates for huge Melbourne Cup Carnival on Seven

The Melbourne Cup Carnival starts this Saturday with the finest day of thoroughbred racing for the purists, Derby Day, LIVE on Channel 7.

This year the \$1.5m Victoria Derby (2500m) has become a very open race with many contenders after the favourites Savvy Nature and Complacent drew wide barriers.

Polanski, bought for only \$4000 as a yearling, has drawn a rails barrier and will be a popular and romantic winner if he can follow up his recent win at Caulfield.

The Victoria Derby, Crown Oaks, Emirates Stakes and, of course, the 153rd running of the Melbourne Cup are the feature races over the four days of the Carnival that once again promises to deliver agony, ecstasy and all the emotions in between for punters, trainers, jockeys, owners and all of the colourful characters from in and around the world of racing, fashion and entertainment.

Seven's coverage will be hosted by **Bruce McAvaney** alongside **Francesca Cumani**, **Richard Freedman** and **Simon Marshall**.

Giaan Rooney, **Rebecca Maddern**, **Neil Kearney** and **Edwina Bartholomew** will keep viewers up to date with all the news and festivities from around the track while Seven's horseback interviewer **John Letts** saddles up with Banjo again – for what marks the 20th anniversary of their first Melbourne Cup together, when Vintage Crop was the first foreign raider to win the Cup in 1993.

Also joining the team for the Carnival broadcast will be **Hamish McLachlan**, **Peter Donegan** in the mounting yard, **Pat Welsh** in the betting ring, **Joh Griggs** in the Emirates Marquee, as well as **Rachael Finch**, **Melanie Vallejo** and **Scherri-Lee Biggs**.

Australia's premier racecaller **Greg Miles** will again be in the tower calling all the action. TVN's **Richie Callander** will also join the coverage as guest expert throughout the carnival.

They are the public faces of what is a huge production unit, involving hundreds of personnel and up to 50 cameras – around the courses, in tracking vehicles, in the air, in the jockeys' and stewards' rooms and also at times mounted on a jockey's helmet to drop viewers into the saddle during the race itself.

Broadcast schedule

Saturday November 3

Victoria Derby Day

Sydney	11am LIVE on Ch7
Melbourne	11am LIVE on Ch7
Brisbane	10am LIVE on Ch7
Adelaide	10.30am LIVE on Ch7
Perth	8am LIVE on Ch7

Tuesday November 5

Melbourne Cup Day

Sydney	10am LIVE on Ch7
Melbourne	10am LIVE on Ch7
Brisbane	9am LIVE on Ch7
Adelaide	9.30am LIVE on Ch7
Perth	7am LIVE on Ch7

Thursday November 7

Crown Oaks Day

Sydney	12pm LIVE on Ch7
Melbourne	12pm LIVE on Ch7
Brisbane	11am LIVE on Ch7
Adelaide	11.30am LIVE on Ch7
Perth	9am LIVE on Ch7

Saturday November 9

Emirates Stakes Day

Sydney	11am LIVE on Ch7
Melbourne	11am LIVE on Ch7
Brisbane	10am LIVE on Ch7
Adelaide	10.30am LIVE on Ch7
Perth	8am LIVE on Ch7

Commentary team

Bruce McAvaney

Host

The doyen of sports broadcasting in Australia, Bruce McAvaney will host Seven's expanded coverage of the Spring Racing Carnival, including the Caulfield Cup Carnival, the Cox Plate and the Melbourne Cup Carnival. Bruce began his career as a race caller, and he has called the Melbourne Cup four times and hosted Seven's Cup Carnival coverage 12 times, and throughout his decorated career he has retained an infectious enthusiasm for the so-called Sport of Kings.

Simon Marshall

Co-Host

Simon Marshall enjoyed a decorated career as a jockey, winning 15 Group one races and piloting superstars including Super Impose, Naturalism, Better Loosen Up, Mahogany and Mannerism. A sales and industry liaison manager with BC3 Thoroughbreds, Simon saddles up with Seven to help dissect the form. Also a regular on Seven's AFL Game Day, Simon brings a unique combination of racing insight and a sense of fun.

John Letts

Horseback Interviewer

Dual Melbourne Cup winning jockey John Letts saddles up again on Banjo to interview the winning hoops on course. Having ridden more than 2500 winners throughout his stellar 30-year career, John is more than familiar with the emotions of the jockeys after passing the winning post.

Giaan Rooney

Presenter

Olympic gold medalist Giaan Rooney joined Seven in 2012 to present the weather for Seven News Melbourne, as well as joining the commentary team on major sporting events. Giaan will be reporting on all the action and colour trackside at Caulfield, Moonee Valley and Flemington throughout the Spring.

Francesca Cumani

Co-Host

The daughter of English trainer Luca Cumani, Francesca joins the panel on-course throughout the Spring Racing Carnival. Francesca made her TV debut on Seven's horseracing coverage in 2009, and now also hosts CNN's Winning Post program and covers some of the biggest races in the world including the Kentucky Derby, Royal Ascot and the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe. The Cumani stable is this year pinning its Melbourne Cup hopes on Mount Athos, which finished 5th last year.

Richard Freedman

Co-Host

The name Freedman is synonymous with racing success in this country and once again Richard Freedman will work alongside Bruce McAvaney, Francesca Cumani and Simon Marshall on the trackside panel. The Freedman brothers boast five Melbourne Cup winners, along with four Caulfield Cups, four consecutive Golden Slippers and two Cox Plates.

Neil Kearney

Reporter

A journalist for more than 35 years and over 20 years on television, Neil is one of Australia's great storytellers, plying his craft on almost every major sport there is from the Olympics and AFL, to the Australian Open tennis, the Commonwealth Games and of course, horse racing.

Rebecca Maddern

Presenter

Seven News presenter and journalist Rebecca Maddern is also an experienced race-goer and a regular on Seven's racing coverage who has co-hosted the Melbourne Cup Carnival Myer Fashions on the Field. Born and bred in Geelong, Bec is also an avid fan of AFL football and the Cats' number one female ticket holder.

Edwina Bartholomew

Presenter

Edwina's star is shining brightly in 2013. A journalist for Sunrise, Eddy took over presenting the weather for Sunrise this year before earning the role of co-host on the new season of Dancing with the Stars. She will be a roving reporter for the racing coverage on Cox Plate Day as well as throughout the Melbourne Cup Carnival.

Pat Welsh

Betting Ring Presenter

Being the son of a bookmaker meant it was almost inevitable Pat Welsh would end up involved in racing and sports. The Seven News sport presenter and reporter in Brisbane with more than 30 years' experience, Pat will present viewers with all the happenings, movements and plunges from the Flemington betting ring.

Johanna Griggs

Presenter

After a career as a world-class swimmer, Joh Griggs has developed an outstanding resume in TV with Seven, hosting Better Homes and Gardens as well as Seven's hit new reality renovation show House Rules. Joh will again work on the Melbourne Cup Carnival, catching up with all the celebrities in the Emirates Marquee.

Rachael Finch

Roving fashion reporter

A vibrant personality and a former Miss Universe Australia, Rachael is a regular TV presenter for Seven who returns to Flemington as a roving fashion reporter for the coverage of the 2013 Melbourne Cup Carnival.

Hamish McLachlan

Presenter

An accomplished horseman who grew up next to Lindsay Park Stud, one of Australia's most successful racing and breeding establishments, Hamish is a feature of Seven's Melbourne Cup Carnival coverage as well as being an AFL commentator and host of AFL Game Day, and a regular on Seven's Australian Open coverage.

Peter Donegan

Mounting Yard Presenter

Peter is one of the most respected sports broadcasters in the country, having covered athletics, golf, AFL, horseracing and tennis among many sports for radio and TV. Pete will be in the mounting yard where he has earned the respect of jockeys, trainers, owners and stewards over a Melbourne Cup broadcasting career stretching back to 1989.

Melanie Vallejo

Celebrity tips / interviews

The star of Seven's drama Winners and Losers, Melanie has co-hosted the red carpet fashion special for the 2013 Brownlow Medal, as well as reporting on all the colour from around the MCG on AFL Grand Final day. She joins the racing broadcast for the first time.

Scherri-Lee Biggs

Presenter

A presenter with Coxy's Big Break and a former Miss Universe Australia, Scherri-Lee debuted on the racing coverage last year and returns to report on all the fun and frivolity on course during the carnival.