

AMANDA'S

forging her own path to victory

FROM WINNING OFF THE TRACK SERIES WITH HER THOROUGHBRED TO ESTABLISHING HERSELF AS A FEMALE TRAINER, RACING IS WELL AND TRULY INGRAINED IN AMANDA DAVIS-WILLIAMS' DNA

WORDS: ABBY DELUCYK

Amanda with Last Bid Liam who won at Dubbo for the fledgling trainer

Amanda Davis-Williams is leading the way for other females within the industry.

She is following in the footsteps of her mother Tina Williams, who is a small Wyong-based trainer by creating her own stable of winners.

"Being a female and a small trainer in this industry is quite special as I get to prove that we are just as capable as men and are strong enough to do it without a man," she said.

Davis's passion for female inclusion in racing has been influenced by the strong females she is surrounded by.

Such females include popular Wyong trainer Kim Waugh, who Amanda is employed with full-time as a work runner.

"I really love working with Kim as she is always very good with giving advice and great to talk to. I really take in what she does and try to reflect it in my own training," Amanda said.

Amanda's love for horses was established from a young age as she says she was "born straight into a saddle and was sitting on a horse before she could walk."

This passion intensified when she participated in Pony Clubs up until she was 15. During this time, she became captivated by the beauty of the show ring which led to her venturing into the show world.

Through finding her talent in this discipline, Amanda grew her competition team by collecting off the track Thoroughbreds who helped her secure ribbon after ribbon at competitions around NSW.

"I loved how showing was something mum and I could do together," Davis said.

Having the luxury of witnessing her mother become a racehorse trainer, Amanda made the decision to transition from the showing to the racetrack.

"I always dreamt of becoming a trainer but was always happy and content just riding trackwork.

"This all changed when I got badly injured four years ago which forced me to think hard about what I wanted to do in the future.

"It gave me the push needed to become a trainer," Amanda said.

"It is pretty good to have a mum as a trainer as it provides me with a lot more encouragement and I think being a daughter of a female trainer is very important in this sport.

"We are very competitive so I want to beat her in races, but I also know I can turn to her if I need help or guidance," Davis said.

Typically, some people may feel the pressure associated with following in a family member's footsteps in the same industry, but Amanda admits she's never experienced this.

"I never felt that pressure with mum but instead look to her for advice. The best thing she ever told me was, if you want to keep a level head in the racing game you need to be realistic with where you are at with your training and prep."

With this advice in the back of Amanda's mind she made the leap and applied for her trainer's licence



Amanda riding Recife Beach at the Thoroughbred Spring Fair

which she received within five months.

Just two weeks later Amanda had her first taste of success when her horse G'day Poopsie ran first at Wellington in March 2021.

This horse has continued to provide Amanda with success after running first at Taree in January of this year.

Balancing this, Davis also doesn't sugar-coat the life of a trainer and instead shines light on the challenges that trainers face.

"I think a big challenge is owners coming and going. As a small trainer starting from the ground up, it can be hard to attract big owners and gain connections within the industry," she said.

Despite being a full-time trainer, Amanda is still very much active in the equestrian world.

Her proudest achievement was when she was crowned Off the Track series winner at the Thoroughbred Spring Fair in 2021 on her OTTB, Recife Beach who was formally trained by Kim Waugh.

As Amanda's life revolves around racing, organisation has become a top priority as her raceday preparation looks a little different to others.

"I always get ready the day before, so I get all the gear and equipment packed and make sure to iron the silks.

"I then check the horses but as I have to work in the stables in the morning, I have to make the call early before scratchings.

"It's so busy that I usually don't have time to stress and instead trust that the horses are ready," she says.

Amanda's dream would be to train a city winner but in the meantime she narrows her sights on having a stable with more than 20 horses in work.

"I am also huge on rehoming and would love to be able to help make sure that when her horses retire, they get a good life after racing," Amanda concluded. **RNSW**