



Wade tops Toft



The loneliness of the long distance rider: Meg Wade on her way to another Masters success

From Gilly Wheeler

Antipodean endurance stars Meg Wade and Peter Toft rose to the top of the pile yet again while fighting out a thrilling finish to the Tasmania Masters.

For the third year running Dungrove, a 50,000 acre sheep and cattle station, was venue for Tasmanian State Championship. This year Dungrove also hosted the first Masters ride in Tasmania. Unfortunately, this event taking place one day before the State Championship, the Masters entry was small and just nine went to post.

The majority of the route was over Dungrove property with sections passing through land on neighbouring farms. The major hazards on course were the numerous cattle grids, 14 in total but all were marked with warnings and manned by stewards during darkness.

MASTERS

The Masters ride commenced just as dawn broke. Pace setters over the opening loop of 44 kilometers were Karen Holden on Tierview Fire Danzer and Tammy Lockhart riding Peter Toft's Blake who was vetted lame at the first vet gate.

Two minutes behind the leading pair were Meg Wade on Little Joe and Peter Toft astride Electra BBP Murdoch. The stars had ridden much of this loop together. Tailing them were two more horses from Toft's Queensland stable. His wife Penny on the mare Harriet, riding alongside Jennifer Gilbertson on part Arab, Arcadian Rose.

Then came Corey Nix riding the Wade trained Magic Glenn Tulgar, bred and owned by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al

Masters result

1	Meg Wade	Little Joe	6.40.39
2	Peter Toft	Electra BBP Murdoch	6.40.40
3	Karyn Holden	Tierview Fire Danzer	6.46.36
4	Corey Nix	Magic Glenn Tulgar	7.27.35
5	Penny Toft	AHarriet	7.32.15
6	Julie Woods	Carradine Kincade	10.17.10
7	Diane Costello	McKenlyn Park Kahns	10.17.11
(9 starters, 7 finishers)			

Maktoum. The tailenders were Julie Woods and Diana Costello, a place they very happily maintained throughout the ride on two horses also owned by Sheikh Mohammed, 12-year-old Arab Carradine Kincade and the nine-year-old Anglo Arab gelding McKenlyn Park Kahn.

Toft was first away on the second leg and immediately pushed up the pace, not his usual tactic at this stage.

"Meg was my most serious competition so I went on the second leg knowing Meg might think I would go on the third. I rode to beat a competitor," he explained afterwards.

Over the first five kilometers he forged a lead of 2.5 minutes and pressed on extending his advantage. But Toft could not add to his advantage at the end of this loop of 38 kilometers. Wade picked up time in the second vet gate as Little Joe took just over five minutes to vet in compared with Toft's nine.

Toft continued to push over the next 26 kilometers, still tracked by Wade and Holden who rode this entire loop together. Nix was not far adrift in fourth place.

Toft was first to vet, almost five minutes ahead of Wade and