ROLL UP

FOR THE ROCKINGHAM BEACH CUP

Western Australia's Rockingham Beach Cup carnival will be bigger and better than ever this year, with a long weekend of golf, art, running, cycling and horse racing planned.

The 2017 Rockingham Beach Cup will grow from two days to three – November 10, 11 and 12 – starting with a golfing tournament on the Friday.

The waterfront community fair and art show will run over the Saturday and Sunday. The lavish gala dinner will again be a feature on the Saturday night and the horse races will climax the big weekend on the Sunday.

Just three horse trainers were involved last year – for safety reasons and while the festival committee found its feet.

But 30 trainers have said they wish to be invited this year. Not all could be involved, but Beach Cup committee chairman Mike McCafferty, a past president of the Rotary Club of Palm Beach, WA, now has six trainers providing horses and services.

The festival foot race, which began as a filler event last year, "could become another Stawell Gift", Mike believes. It will be run by the Rockingham Triathlon Club, which has contacts with all sorts of athletic groups.

The Peel Cycling Club – "the number one cycling club in the state" – will run a criterium event on the Saturday. A criterium consists of several laps around a closed circuit, the length of each lap or circuit ranging from one to two kilometres. This is a tightly packed road race, with tight corners and high speed, which can result in spills and blood – but that is part of the attraction for the adrenaline-fuelled cyclists, Mike said.

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The men's criterium will start at 9am and the women's at 10am.

Mike initially had some concern that the men's race might be starting too early, but was reassured that it would be a good idea to get crowds out to breakfast on the foreshore, watch the bike races, then stay for the community carnival.

Two marquees with differential pricing will be erected near the horse race finishing line. They will accommodate 450 people in the general admission marquee and 200 in the separate VIP area.

Pricing is $165 for the gala dinner ($150 plus GST) and $165 for the VIP marquee on the Sunday. Tickets to the general admission marquee will be $65. Wristbands will be used this year to avoid non-payers sneaking in by swapping lanyards.

Fashions on the Sand will again be run by personal fashion stylist and colour consultant Robyn Patterson, and sponsored by the Rockingham City Shopping Centre.

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Much of the work of this huge weekend will be run by specialists and not the Rotary club, Mike said. Experts will run the horse, foot and cycle races. But, "there will be a lot of work for Rotarians to do, with the festival going up to three days," Mike promised. •

ABOVE: Nola Smith with friends Francine and Noah. **ABOVE RIGHT:** AFL playing and coaching legend Kevin Sheedy with local photographer Kingsley Klau. **RIGHT:** Rockingham Beach Cup horses cooling down after their run. **BELOW:** Lady in Red – Rotary Club of Palm Beach's then president elect Teresa Carlson enjoyed the shade provided by her race day hat.

ABOVE: Two AFL legends met in the Rockingham Beach Cup's VIP tent last November. John Cameron "Jack" Sheedy, left, born September 28, 1926, is a former player and coach. He played for East Fremantle and East Perth in the Western Australian National Football League (WANFL) and South Melbourne in the Victorian Football League (VFL). He is considered one of the greatest ever footballers from WA, and is a member of both the Australian and West Australian Football Halls of Fame. Kevin John Sheedy AM, right, born December 24, 1947, is also a former player and coach. He played and coached in a combined total of 929 games over 47 years from 1967 until 2013, a VFL/AFL record. Sheedy was inducted into the Australian Football Hall of Fame in 2008. On the field, Sheedy represented Richmond in the Victorian Football League during the 1960s and 1970s, captaining the side in 1978 and winning three premierships. He then coached Essendon in the VFL/AFL from 1981 until 2007.