

# *Qld Group comes on board for exciting new series*



General Manager

**Darren Beavis**

**IT'S** great to have the Qld Group on board as sponsors of an exciting new race series about to get underway. The Qld Group Fifth Grade Statewide Challenge will be run in the format of the Johnnie Walker Series made so popular during the days of racing at the Gabba. The GRA is thankful to Qld Group Director George Cheihk and his company for the three-year backing of greyhound racing in this state. The Qld Group is in the process of helping shape the homelife of so many Queenslanders with building projects at Collingwood Park Estate, Havens Hill Estate, Bellbowrie and Hamilton Towers which neighbours Albion Park. See Page 6 for full details of the new series. Briefly, the Gold Coast,

Ipswich, Townsville and Albion Park will run heats and finals with a grand final at Albion Park on June 3 worth \$25,000 to the winner.

**THE** introduction of the Qld Group Statewide Challenge is just another example of the renewed interest in greyhound racing.

This is also evident by the increase in turnover on 11.2% on the TAB to the end of December, 2003 compared with the previous year.

The Qld Group sponsorship adds to the recent prizemoney hike of \$300,000 in July 2003, and then \$300,000 in February 2004 committed to the end of June.

The Board of the GRA has implemented a number of cost savings for licensees and

potential licensees.

These have included free marking and ear-branding, no owners or syndicate registration fees, telephone nominations through a toll free number and reduced naming fee costs.

And to ensure the welfare of greyhounds, the Board recently approved funding for the installation of air-conditioning for a number of northern club kennel blocks.

The Authority is always looking at ways to entice people into the industry, but always at the same time trying to minimise costs for those currently involved.

**GREYHOUNDS** Australasia is once again reviewing the National Racing Rules.

I attended a recent meeting which looked at the possibility of reducing the number of state

local rules and incorporate them as a national rule.

The idea behind this is to provide consistency across the states which would make it easier for trainers travelling interstate.

Each state will still have its own registration rules i.e. persons, clubs, trial tracks etc.

**THERE** seems to be some confusion within the industry in recent months regarding the number of services a stud dog is permitted to do in a calendar month.

While Greyhounds Australasia is currently reviewing the breeding regulations for entry into the Stud Book, no amendments have been adopted to this stage.

The current rule stipulates that a stud dog is permitted to serve 14 registered bitches per calendar month. The 14 includes the collection of semen to be utilised at a later date.

Each semen draw is only allowed to be used on ONE bitch. Splitting of semen is not permitted.

**THE** GRA's website continues to win high praise, specially from within the industry.

Further improvements are on the way, as previously mentioned, including on-line nominations, greyhound performances and even the introduction of web polls.

We are hopeful these three valuable services will be available by the end of April, or early May.

A new format has been developed for the layout of fields and form etc and will be up and running by the start of April.