

An interesting month for our industry



GRA Chair

Phil Bennett

IT has been an interesting month with the announcement of two events which could have a major impact on greyhound racing in Queensland. The first was the withdrawal of UNiTAB from the takeover battle for Tab Limited.

The projected boost in distributions to the Queensland racing industry that were anticipated from the takeover, will not eventuate. We will have to rely on a more steady growth in income.

The second was the surprise announcement of an Integrity Inquiry into the Queensland racing industry. In the long term, this will have positive effect on the way the industry is perceived by the participants and general public. However, in the short term, it has the potential to create bad publicity which may impact on the industry.

The staff of the Authority have the confidence of the Board. In the four years I have been on the Board, I have found them to be people of high integrity and dedicated to the greyhound racing industry. The GRA will co-operate fully with the inquiry and will submit a proposal for the future regulation of the industry.

I said last month I didn't think things on the racetrack could get any better. They did. Fool's State took further steps toward greatness with wins in the Highlands Smash Repairs Auction Series at Ipswich and the Ladies Bracelet at Wentworth Park.

Congratulations to the Osborn/Kay partnership.

Furthermore, Tropical One rewrote the Australian record books with the most number of consecutive

wins. Good on you Stan Montague.

I encourage participants to read a copy of the Greyhound Racing NSW report on the industry in that state which is entitled A Better Future. It considers many of the problems we experience; decreases in participants and on-course attendances, receipt of considerably less distribution than the revenue derived, aging facilities, flat prizemoney levels, and so on.

On a sour note, the Board has disqualified a licensee for three months following his conviction in the Magistrates Court for keeping a fowl for the purpose of being used as a lure for the bleeding of a greyhound. This was on top of the \$2000 fine the Court handed down.

The Board was pleased to announce significant prizemoney increases for the 2004- 5 financial year. We were particularly pleased to announce that Queensland-bred

bonus payments totalling \$46,000 will be paid to the owners and breeders of the winners of a number of the major races throughout the state in the next year. If the greyhound was whelped and registered in Queensland the bonus will be paid.

There are no entry fees or registration required to be eligible for these bonuses.