



MEDIA RELEASE

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“You could be “Excused” for thinking it was a one act affair in the Association Cup”

Young up and coming stayer Excused impressively scored a brilliant win in the Greyhound Leader Group 1 Association Cup final at Wentworth Park on Saturday night.

Starting a \$10.70 chance, Excused trailed Romantic Diva with a lap to run and had Dosses Angel and the well fancied Kibble Kruncha (\$3.00) a kennel mate to Excused close behind fourth.

Supporters of Kibble Kruncha’s were happy punters as she is never that close early, and considered her a giant chance at that stage. However their joy was short lived, by the time the field came to the home turn, Excused made her move and shot three lengths clear and the first Group 1 of the year was a matter of times and margins.

Trainer Darren Sultana had the pleasure of watching the only real challenge to his front runner proven to be a kennelmate. Excused prevailed by 3-1/2 lengths in 42.73 while the well supported Kulu Spirit (\$3.80) made good ground late snare the minor end of the prize.

Sky Channel’s Michael Radley spoke with the victorious trainer Darren Sultana after the race and asked how it felt to win a Group 1.

Great it doesn’t happen all that often so it is great if it can. A lot of people were saying before the series that we had a good chance but it is not that easy you need luck in this company. Excused needs her own way and that’s exactly what she got tonight and went on and won. It would be my biggest thrill in greyhound racing not only to win but to train the quinella as well it was a great result.” Sultana said.

The win further enhanced the reputation of Queensland sire Elite State he has steadily produced an outstanding crop of talented greyhounds that have raced well in all states over the last 12 months. Excused was his first Group 1 winner and considering it was over 720 metres some may have expected it to be a sprinter and not a stayer.

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AUSTRALIAN GREYHOUND RACING ASSOCIATION

Sultana has a number of options with his two pronged attack most of which are in Melbourne both stayers take their places in this Thursday nights heats of the Group 2 Maidment Memorial at Sandown. Following that two weeks series it will be back to Wentworth Park for a crack at the Group 2 NCA Gold Cup then back to Melbourne and the Meadows for a possible start in the Group 2 Zoom Top followed by the Group 1 Australian Stayers Cup at the same venue.

After the placed runners the field finished in the following order 4th Tarawi Strides (\$57.10), 5th Romantic Diva (\$16.60), 6th Dosses Angel (\$16.80) 7th Glen Abbey Doll (\$9.00) and Berridale Miss (\$4.10).

Excused is raced by Mario Xuereb and trained by Darren Sultana she is a White & Fawn bitch whelped July '04 by Elite State from Accused Suspect (Golden Currency x Savannah Belle). She has career stats of 25 starts for nine wins and six placings and with the first prize of \$50,000 for the Association Cup her prizemoney earnings went to \$66,615.

The GBOTA conducted a very popular and successful industry auction on Association Cup Final night. Auctioneer Ron Arnold did a sterling job with the highlight item a greyhound pup donated by John Staines. The pup 3 months old, by Collide from Cut Fine was purchased by new people to the sport for the sum of \$3000. Other items to go under the hammer Included Ian Thorpe's swimming cap, a Steve Irwin tribute item, Peter Brock Tribute item, Andrew Johns Memorabilia and Shane Warne 700 test wickets item. The Auction raised a total of \$11,000.

A happy team at the presentation after the Association Cup

(Photo Craig Youll)



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The History of the Association Cup

The Association Cup over 720m is the first Group 1 event of the calendar year for the NSW GBOTA at Wentworth Park. A time honoured event the Association Cup was first run in 1965 the race was first conducted at Harold Park on a grass circuit over 732m. The first event at Wentworth Park over 720m was held in 1988. The Association Cup has been won by the house hold names of the Australian staying ranks. Greyhounds like Rose Moss, Zoom Top, Travel Rev, Ragsie, Ascapella Miss, Bay Road Queen, Quick Pulse, Bold Trease, Whip Tip, Worthy Reward, Northern Legend, Many Tricks and Classy Customer. The Cup has always been the yard stick of the best and listed below is the full honour roll.

The past winners of this great staying race are as follows:

Harold Park – 732m – Grass Track:

1965	BLUE AUTUMN	44.00
1966	ROSE MOSS	44.20
1967	GLOAVON	44.00
1968	ZOOM TOP	43.70
1969	ZOOM TOP	43.80
1970	HEATHER REV	43.80
1971	TRAVEL REV	43.60
1972	RAGSIE (VIC)	43.60
1973	PLUNDEROLA (VIC)	43.26
1974	ASCAPELLA MISS	43.39
1975	DOTIE WILSON	43.33
1976	WOOLLEY WONG	43.51
1977	TE ROPA LEE	43.81
1978	CYCLONE CORSICA	43.44
1979	LITTLE VOGUE	43.50
1980	GINI'S CHOICE	43.57
1981	BLACK AZTEC	43.27
1982	BAYROAD QUEEN	43.47
1983	QUICK PULSE (VIC)	43.40
1984	LEASE OF LIFE	43.21
1985	QUEEN'S CROSS	44.18
1986	CLOVER PARK	43.04
1987	BOLD TREASE (VIC)	43.62

Wentworth Park – 720m – Grass Track:

1988	WHIP TIP	42.97
1989	FROSTY ZULU	44.03
1990	VALLEY MAIL	43.59
1991	FAST APPEAL	42.96
1992	EQUABILITY	42.40

Wentworth Park – 720m – Loam Track:

1993	CALL ME CASEY	43.45	Group 1
1994	WORTHY REWARD	42.67	Group 1
1995	ROB'S REBEL	43.54	Group 1
1996	GROOVEY DANCER	42.89	Group 1
1997	NORTHERN LEGEND	43.22	Group 1
1998	THOMA DI	42.94	Group 2
1999	MOE'S TAVERN	43.17	Group 2
2000	MANY TRICKS	42.55	Group 2
2001	FLASH JOAN	43.11	Group 2
2002	NIMUAY	42.96	Group 1
2003	BIG SAM BANNER	42.77	Group 1
2004	IRINKA BARBIE	42.54	Group 1
2005	CLASSY CUSTOMER	42.65	Group 1
2006	ENDLESS PIT	42.99	Group 1



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