

Pete and the Pest

THIRTY years ago Peter Wilson knocked around the Brisbane suburb of The Gap with a mate named Errol Murdoch. It changed his life.

“Errol was training a greyhound bitch called Jillaura at the time and she was one of the best in Queensland,” said Wilson.

He also was friends with Jack Delahunty who owned the bitch. Jack gave Peter a greyhound of his own to train. “It was called Jillaura Boy and won five or six races,” he said. “He broke down but like most of us, he did enough to get me hooked on the game and her I am today.”

“Here I am today” describes one of the state’s least heralded but most astute trainers, who in combination with partner Elaine Klasson, never fails to find a smart galloper. “I was 29 back then, in the tow truck business, but training a couple of dogs as a hobby.”

Murwillumbah breeder Hughie O’Keeffe gave Peter a few dogs in those days, like Avondale Mac and Exorbitant, and while Peter is the first to admit “they were no superstars” he did well enough and “cut his teeth” on them.

A car accident in 1983 forced Wilson out of greyhound racing for a couple of years. His left arm was pretty banged up but it was about the time he and Elaine linked up.

“Greyhounds helped keep me going about that time,” he said.

It wasn’t long after that the pair moved into a two and a half acre property at Bundamba.

“Dogs were the only reason we moved up here,” he said. “We looked everywhere for a property and settled on this place. We have our own straight track, a rearing yard for pups and kennel block. “It is a big dog area and handy to most of the tracks.”

Much-travelled trainer Les Merry gave the Wilson-Klasson partnership their biggest break in the late 80s when he sent Elaine a bitch called Busy Wings.

“She was a daughter of Busy Vintage and had won to Invitation class at Olympic Park,” said Peter. “She was in pup to Eureka Man and a couple of them won races.”

But it was her second litter that really put Busy Wings and Peter and Elaine on the map.

“Robbie Nelms was up at our place doing some work. We had tried to get the bitch in to West Cape but couldn’t,” said Peter. “Robbie suggested we use his dog Dancing Destiny. Elaine looked through the pedigree and liked what she saw.

“The bitch was full of Temlee and Elaine thought it best to get away from him a bit with the pups.”

So Dancing Destiny it was and the result was a fantastic



Peter Wilson with star galloper Serial Pest.

litter which included Busy Today, Busy Karma, Mortgage Saver, Ma Bacon, John Maurice and Busy Destiny.

“From the first day they raced they were something special,” said Peter. “Five of them won Maidens on the same day at Capalaba. It is still a record.

“Three of them, Busy Karma, Busy Today and Mortgage Saver, got to top grade at Albion Park.

“They really put us on the map and knocked up winning city races.”

But it didn’t end there.

Busy Today’s litter to Awesome McLaren has provided Serial Pest and Today’s Payday. The former has made numerous big race finals without any luck.

He was a great third to Bogie Leigh in the Group 1 Brisbane Cup late last year.

Peter and Elaine have kept a bitch, Today’s Easy, from the litter and will breed with her in the future to continue the line.

Six racing dogs are in the kennel now and three new pups, two by Carlisle Jack and one by Magnanamize. Peter puts the kennel success down to Elaine’s pup rearing. “She spoils them,” he said. “They get nothing but the best and it is shown when the dogs stand up to racing for long careers.”

Of the kennel stars, Peter says Serial Pest is just a

couple of lengths off being a top dog, while Today's Payday has finally overcome a tying up problem. "Serial Pest started racing in January last year and has won 16 races," he said. "He is a real favourite of the 'Table of Knowledge' at Albion Park. When they all back him, he doesn't win ... but when they don't back him, he invariably knocks them off."

Peter and Elaine still enjoy greyhound racing ... their success over 30 years is testament to their dedication.