

# HATS OFF

AS MOST would know, I'm a bit of a traditionalist.

When I first heard that the McKenna Memorial was being switched from 715 metres to 595 metres I was quite annoyed.

I love staying races, so to see a Group 2 staying race "bite the dust" doubled my annoyance.

But when the fields came out and I saw five heats, my annoyance eased.

And when I saw the quality of the entrants, all of a sudden I felt a lot better about it.

Finally, when I saw the make-up of the final, I reckoned it turned out to be a great race.

So it's definitely hats off on this one!

## Debutantes

AN ITEM came up in a 'Letter to the Editor' last week about first starters running in these new Tier 3 races.

Yes, it's interesting how you can work out that a first starter is slow enough to compete at that level.

There is a simple answer though, qualifying trials.

I'm in favour of having qualifying trials for Maidens, and I do believe that possibly a dog's first racetrack appearance should be in a "qualy", or at worst in a race at a non-TAB meeting.

Gone are the days of keeping your first starter 'on ice' then putting him in somewhere to make a big 'kill' on the punt.

We don't need to do that anymore.

Stakemoney is probably good enough to allow you to recoup a fair portion of your outlay just by winning.

By having a dog perform at a non-TAB or in a "qualy" first-up you get a formline on the dog.

One of the things that punters like and need is exposed form, so that way they can assess a greyhound's ability before placing a bet.

And remember, we need as many people placing a bet as we can get, otherwise we might end up racing for peanuts!

And at least if a dog runs in a "qualy" you can assess whether he/she should be eligible for a Tier 3 race.

## Coincidences

COINCIDENCES or quirky happenings, you just got to love them, right?

Cranbourne is the setting and on July 12 when litter sisters Miss Cherrelle and Miss Bel Air both scored.

They are daughters of Brett Lee and Casey's Angel, owned and trained by Judy Hayley.

Both of these youngsters contested 520 metres events and both came from second in the run to win by six and a quarter lengths.

Miss Cherrelle had won at Cranbourne a week earlier, and do you know what, her winning margin was six and a quarter lengths there too!

Miss Bel Air had also won at the July 7 meeting, giving the littermates back to back doubles.

Now I wish I was able to tell you that Miss Bel Air had won by six and a quarter lengths at the July 5 meeting, but I can't.

Well I could tell you that... but it wouldn't be true, as she only won by five and a quarter lengths.

## Blondie

HANDS UP if you prefer blondes.

Well if you do, you should be a bit wealthier than those people who prefer the dark-haired variety.

Is this becoming all too cryptic for you?

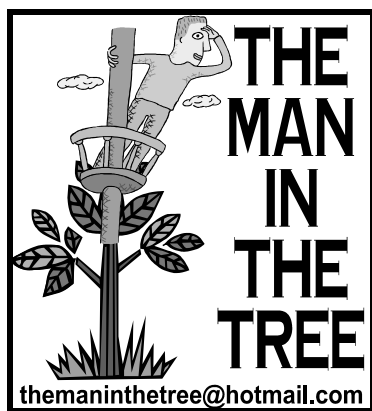
Let me explain.

At Sandown on July 8, the Mantra Lad Damsels Dash Final saw a very good field of bitches qualify for the \$10,000 to the winner event.

In the line-up were seven black bitches and just one fawn one.

Okay, so you twigged, the fawn bitch won.

Bendigo Cup winner, Latifi Jiam was



that bitch, and looking beautifully boxed in strangely the black vest she continued her affinity for the Lightwood Road track with a strong win.

Trained by Ron Giles for Jim Arthur, the daughter of Pure Octane and Prodigal Gal made it five from 11 on the track when she took her career tally to 11 wins in 27 starts to date.

Anyhow, on top of the 10-grand first prizemoney, there was a free service to Mantra Lad up for grabs.

Every bitch bar one could have used that service.

Yes, Latifi Jiam can't, as she's by the same sire as Mantra Lad, so I guess connections will have to find another bitch to use.

Back to the race, and the winner started at \$3.80 on the TAB, and in my view that was probably over the odds.

## What do you think?

HOPEFULLY you noticed in last week's paper the plans for the new Geelong tracks.

Looks pretty impressive to me... however, I honestly would have preferred the outer track to have a 457 metres start, instead of 460 metres.

Yeah, I know it's only three metres, but 457 metres is 500 yards, and that's a distance that was at Corio Oval before coming to Beckley Park.

And I was kind of hoping that there'd be a 732 metres start as well, that's 800 yards in the old lingo.

But guess we can't have everything. Hey, I love the idea of a dam in the middle (wonder where I heard that before), and obviously they'll be collecting the rainwater so that it can be utilised.

Now I'm wondering about racing schedules.

Are we going to have Geelong racing twice a week, once on each track, at a full provincial level?

Honestly, it'd be a waste if it (either one) was only used for non-penalty meetings.

I would presume that Geelong would want their Friday night spot back, so when would the other track race?

## First leg

SLICK chaser, Kynan's Express took out the first leg of the TriStar series by landing the Bendigo Young Star Classic.

Trained by John Weir-Smith, the son of Big Time Max and Jorja James looked a good thing in the 430 metres final, as he's considered a Lord's Raceway specialist.

The win in the \$7000 to the winner race took the light brindle galloper's tally on the track to six wins with two placings from all eight starts, whilst overall he has the great strike rated of 15 wins in just 26 attempts.

I see Kynan's Express is booked for a start in the Group 1 Maturity next, whilst on July 21, leg two of the TriStar Series commences when heats of the Ballarat Young Star Classic are run.

And then on August 7 the third leg kicks-off, and that's the heats of the Warrnambool Young Star Classic.

If any greyhound can win two of the finals, there's a \$10,000 bonus up for grabs, and if the same dog can win all three, then \$20,000 is the bonus.

On top of that there's an additional bonus valued at \$4400 by way of a ser-

vice to Bombastic Shiraz to the most consistent greyhound throughout the series.

## Encore

AT WARRAGUL on June 29 in a 460 metres Mixed 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Mid Levels came from box eight to lead until the dying stages, where he was run down by Game Hunter.

Game Hunter wore the red vest in that race, and after being third early, he finished best to steal the winner's prize from Mid Levels.

Now both these chasers never raced again until June 8 at Sandown, where they were engaged in the 515 metres Free For All.

Mid Levels had drawn box two and was out fast and led.

Game Hunter had the pink vest on and got back to third in the run.

But in an encore performance, Game Hunter finished the best to run down Mid Levels and make it two-zip over his rival.

The white and brindle galloper is a son of Where's Pedro and Miss Match, who's trained by Stuart Mills for the North And South Syndicate, and has now won 12 of his 29 starts.

The Moe Maestro, Peter Giles puts the polish on Mid Levels for Arthur Cooper.

Mid Levels, a son of Pure Octane and Black Chantilly, has career stats of 12 wins in 35 outings.

## Aw, Nellie

THE AWM Distance Title is just around the corner, with the heats of the 725 metres Group 2 event kicking-off at The Meadows on July 24.

You'd almost think that barring bad luck, Nellie Noodles would have a mortgage on the race.

Apart from being the record holder there with a mind-blowing 42.03, she showed she is right on track after her little foray to New Zealand, with a win there on July 10.

Okay, she only posted 42.88... but she did win by six and three quarter lengths.

Looking around the traps for a likely danger, and that could be South Aussie star, Satanic Cash.

He's a top class stayer, but lately has been running over middle distances.

In fact, he was at The Meadows the same night as Nellie Noodles and won a 600 metres race in 34.67.

When I saw him running in 600 odd metres races I thought he may have come to Victoria for the McKenna.

I'm assuming he'll be making his way back over to Victoria for the AWM, as he does race well at the Northcorp Boulevard circuit.

## Bit stiff

FOLLOWING-UP on Regal Thyme gaining a start and winning the TOPGUN, I cited that as part of the reason why I felt that race shouldn't be a Group 1 event.

Let's look at this: A Selection Panel selects a whole heap of dogs then rates those dogs from one to eight to have a crack at \$100,000.

Regal Thyme was the only dog left in contention for a TOPGUN berth that had a Group 1 win on the track against his name.

Nearly everyone you spoke to thought he should have been in the eight, and he vindicated everyone's thoughts by gaining a run and winning, albeit due to the disqualification, but that is not really relevant.

It's the fact that the winner could have been going around in another race or sitting at home in his kennel.

Some people disagree with my view, but I guess those same people thought it was fine giving a walk-up start to the best chasers (in the grader's opinion) in the Paws Of Thunder.

Ge, wasn't that a nice sore point, giving the dogs that didn't need it a head start in a Group 1, 100-odd grand race.

Can anyone see the difference there?

## How did we

HOW did we ever survive before the Internet came along?

The other morning I woke up and was thinking about a certain greyhound race (sort of tells you everything you need to know about how boring my life must be).

But for the life of me, I just couldn't think which dog had won it (and that's one of the great things of growing old, the memory is the first thing to go).

Anyhow, who do you ring at seven in the morning to find out (and you know you've got to find out, as it'll bug you until you do).

Ah, the Internet.

Got online and within one minute had the answer to my problem (and I didn't even have to Google it).

And here's the worst part, this race was only a few months back (funny, I can rattle off most of the winners from 1960 - 2000 in a breeze).

## Your Say

"Phil O Sophical" said, "That was a great letter in last week's paper, and I'd agree with everything there."

**Yes it was, and I agree with most of what was said, so I'll agree with you and say it was a great letter, agreed... hehe.**

"Armchair Expert" with, "I read your story on Group races, and I see that you think

races like the TOPGUN should not be Group 1."

"And on a greyhound racing website, I see they have a poll going asking "Should Invitation Only or Expert Panel selected races ever be considered Group races", and 49% think that greyhounds should always have to win their way to a Group final, and only 20% are in favour of them."

**Obviously 80% of those that voted agree with me... either fully or partially.**

"The Goog" asked, "Read your bit on Regal Thyme landing the TOPGUN after only being rated ninth, do you think they should pick just eight, no reserves, to save this sort of embarrassment?"

**Yeah, maybe, but 16 or 32 would be better in my view.**

**Actually, there's no real embarrassment if the first reserve wins it, because after a scratching he's actually rated eighth, but the point was that if it can happen once, it can happen again. And of course, if there hadn't been reserves, then Regal Thyme wouldn't have won, would he?**

## This week's Teaser

AN INTERESTING thing about The Melbourne Cup is the number of greyhounds that have reached the podium with names that begin with consecutive letters, either the right way around or back to front.

See if you can work out who these eight chasers are. There's also a cryptic clue to help you.

1. He fired and flashed in the 1964 Cup (RS)
2. This sailor 'knew' what he was doing in the Cup of 1973 (NM)
3. Metropolitan Cup winner bombed them in 1995 (CB)
4. Short Elizabeth's champion bitch had wings in the 2006 Cup (BA)
5. NSW fop who starred before Christmas to land the Cup in 1970 (CD)
6. This young legend won the Cup in 1986 (LK)
7. Short William sailed around in the 1998 Cup (BC)
8. This dark NSW chaser successful in the 1980 Cup may have originated in South America (BA)

## ANSWERS NEXT WEEK

## Last week's answer

THE ANSWERS to last week's "middle letters" were:

1. Go Wild Teddy
2. Classic Capri
3. Excite Ability
4. Bombastic Shiraz
5. Hallucinate
6. Closing Argument
7. Betty's Angel
8. Shanlyn Prince

## Test your meat

Preservatives used in dog meat often include the chemical compounds that liberate sulphur dioxide.

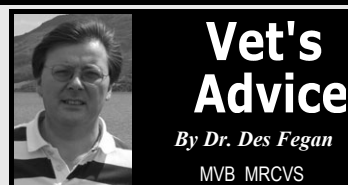
Examples are sodium sulphite E221, sodium bisulphite E222, sodium metabisulphite E223, potassium metabisulphite E224, potassium sulphite E225 and potassium bisulphite E228.

**Sodium metabisulphite:** Although this has the beneficial effect of preventing harmful bacterial growth within the meat it has a negative side effect of destroying the important Vitamin Thiamine, also known as Vitamin B1.

Rapid destruction of Vitamin B1 leads to a syndrome known as "Chasteks Paralysis", whereby animals lose the power of their hind limbs and then progress to epileptic type fits.

Chronic depletion of Vitamin B1 is often seen in long-term drinkers and leads to a psychosis and illness sometimes called Beri Beri.

It is not documented whether chronic exposure to sodium



metabisulphite has negative effects on racing greyhounds. It is, however, widely reported in humans as a cause of child asthma.

The paralysis syndrome is more often seen in puppies and young dogs, and could easily be confused with the paralysis seen with acute Neospora or Toxoplasma infections.

It is important to note that an animal with apparent symptoms of Neospora must have that diagnosis confirmed by a blood test.

It is almost impossible for a dog with a negative blood test for Neospora to have the parasite.

We can test meat for the presence of sodium metabisulphite with the use of a chemical dye called Malachite Green.

Malachite Green is rendered colourless in the presence of sodium

metabisulphite.

To test meat the procedure is as follows:

- 1) Take a small amount of the suspect meat and create a small concave depression.
- 2) Add 1ml of Malachite Green to this concave depression.
- 3) The speed at which the green colour disappears indicates the level of metabisulphite preservative in the meat.

If the Malachite Green remains green then the meat is preservative free.

Remember, for protection against Neospora parasite it is important to freeze all raw meat for a minimum of 24 hours to kill the parasite in the meat.

Dogs exhibiting symptoms of unexplained paralysis or even vague nervous signs should always be supplemented with Vitamin B1 until a definite cause for the syndrome is established.

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