

# *Les was the trailblazer for Qld breeding*

By **DAVID BRASCH**

**WHEN** Les Robins moved to the sunshine of Queensland in 1979, he thought he had got out of greyhound racing.

He moved to the northern Brisbane suburb of Banyo right next door to Ray Knudsen who had a backyard full of dogs at the time. There was no chance Les would resist the temptation from that moment.

Les had grown up a street kid in the Melbourne suburb of Fitzroy and had spent much of his younger days living greyhound racing with some of the greats of the sport in Victoria.

But the cold and damp of Victoria was causing his health to suffer and he and wife Jeannie headed north in 1979.

“I had some problems with my lungs and needed a summer climate,” Les told *The Journal*. “Living next door to Ray Knudsen got me interested in dogs again, and I got to know a lot of greyhound people up here through him.”

It wasn't long before those people were tapping into Les' wealth of greyhound pedigree knowledge.

“I started the Banyo Pedigree service soon after because more and more people were asking me to analyse pedigrees and help with sire selection,” he said.

Indirectly that pushed Les into the stud dog business.

“The more I looked at the pedigrees of local bitches, the more I saw the need for the Temlee influence at stud in Queensland,” he said. “The Gabba was producing 600 yard dogs, and there was never any chances those best Gabba dogs were going to be prepotent for speed, because that's not what they were.

“The bitches on the other hand were ideal. They already had the heart and lung structure and were ready, ideal actually, for the infusion of Temlee-type early pace.

“It didn't take me long to recognize the total lack in the gene pool of the greatest greyhound sire in Australia for 20 years ... Temlee.”

Les had picked out the smart Melbourne galloper Tashina Boy (Temlee-Shane Maree) as an ideal type to come to Queensland and introduce speed to the local bloodlines.

“I always knew it was not going to be an easy task, because the local breeders didn't know me and it was



*Les and Jeannie Robins ... analysing today's Stud Book.*

obvious they didn't really know the worth of Temlee,” he said.

Tashina Boy was a “great all-round dog” starting 72 times for 18 wins and 28 placings.

“He was a fantastic chaser, exceptionally aggressive and had superb muscle fibre,” said Les. “His Olympic Park times were as good when he was over four as they were when he was 18 months old.

“He had fantastic early pace but had the misfortune of being an out of season pup so he missed the classics.

“Tashina Boy was not a champion, not a record holder and not a classic winner, but he was just a yard off all of them. He won on six tracks and it was a fact of the time that the great sires came from Olympic Park and Harold Park. That's the dog he was.”

Les turned Tashina Boy into a champion local sire.

He was top Queensland-based sire for five years and led the Gabba sires title three times.

“He stood for a \$150 service fee,” said Les. “I gave away form cards with his details on it and found that a great help. We raffled pups etc. Of the first 26 bitches he mated, 13 were maidens.”

From the moment his pups hit the ground Tashina Boy was off and running.

“I remember the night his first progeny raced. It was a series of maiden qualifyings at Lawnton,” said Les. “There was 13 heats and Tashina Boy progeny won nine. He was away.”

Such stars as Madonna Lee, Payco, Waylon Blondie, Warvan, Wizardry, Tashina’s Image, Lawanimate, Tashina Martina etc etc, pushed him to the top.

Eventually Les brought Swagman and Lebinski to Queensland and both proved successful.

Tashina Boy was at his peak when cancer struck. His fertility dwindled during treatment. Just when he was getting right, he was poisoned and Les was forced to take him off the stud scene.

“He lived until he was 13 and is buried in a rainforest we built around our pool at that Banyo home,” he said.

Les, too, drifted out of the industry. A bout of cancer some years ago saw he and Jeannie moved to Maclay Island. A desire to be closer to their grandchildren saw the couple move to Mt Cotton eight months ago. Les is retired and fills his time with writing his life story and concentrating of this grandkids.

He admits to not having taken much interest in greyhound racing since the late 80s. He’s never even been to Albion Park.

But the man is a wealth of knowledge and foresight in the greyhound racing industry.

He took one look at the pedigree of Head Honcho while this interview was being done and suggested the only place the dog’s sons could be an influence was overseas “maybe the US or Ireland”.

He took one look at the pedigree of Wee Sal and suggested she would be ideal for a mating with Just The Best ... unaware of the existence of Big Daddy Cool (by Just The Best from a daughter of Wee Sal). And tips for the future.

He says Just The Best’s sons and grandsons will revolutionise the industry.

“Looking at his pedigree I can see it dominating for years to come,” he said.

He is as adamant as ever that no Waverly Supreme line son can continue the line as a sire. He points to the lack of a sireline from Chariot Supreme.

“Waverly Supreme was a 600 yard dog and consequently prepotent for heart and lung structure, not for speed. The breed will always go back to what it was ... a strength line. That’s why Chariot Supreme sons did not succeed, because Chariot Supreme’s real gene pool is for stamina.

“But obviously they are outstanding broodbitches.

Just look at the double cross of Waverly Supreme in Bogie Leigh’s dam into the Temlee saturated male line of Just The Best,” he said.

Les says there has never been a sire prepotent for early speed that didn’t come from an early pace line.

“The name of the game is early pace ... the co-ordination of muscle reflex action,” he says. “A great sire is one who has the ability to get himself within the majority of his progeny with some better than himself.”

	Tivoli Chief	Tivoli Dreamer
		Heather’s Ile
Temlee		Mister Moss
	Temora Lee	Venetian Babe
TASHINA BOY		Chief Zephyr
	Worthing	Mee Doo
	Shane Maree	Black Top
	Della Maree	Shan’s Imp