



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**31st March 2007**



### **Betty's Angel wins the AGRA 2006 Australian Greyhound Of The Year Award**

At a gala AGRA Awards night at the Meadows the Australian Greyhound Racing Association last night announced Betty's Angel the winner of the 2006 AGRA Australian Greyhound of the Year.

It was a night of highs on the National scene with Delegates and club members coming together from all over Australia to celebrate the inaugural AGRA Awards night.

Hosted by the MGRA the club's team led by General Manager Marg Long and Chairman Eddie Caruana staged a glittering affair and have set the bench mark for the other states to follow in the years to come.

Victorian sprint dynamo Betty's Angel won the Greyhound the Year from fellow Victorians Superman and Jaimandy Coops.

The winner was selected by panel of judges consisted of administrators and media representatives from each state and a group of national media representatives from Print, Radio and Television. The panel was asked to allocate votes 3, 2 and 1 to the three finalists in order of each judge's preference in a secret vote.

Accepting the award from AGRA President Pam Cassidy owners Paul and Dianne Bartolo expressed what a thrill it was to be judged the winner against such outstanding competition and acknowledged the achievements of Superman and Jaimandy Coops.

"It has been such a fantastic year with the dogs and Betty's Angel was brilliant for us I think she deserved to win, she is a great little chaser and only 26 kilos she gives her all. I'd like to congratulate both Superman and Jaimandy Coops who also had great years on the track it's an enormous thrill to win such an award." Paul Bartolo said.

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## AUSTRALIAN GREYHOUND RACING ASSOCIATION

Listed below are Betty's Angel's achievements during 2006.

### **BETTY'S ANGEL**

(Bitch – November 2004 Brett Lee-Leprechaun Yap)

*Race starts:* 17 – 12 wins, 1 second, 1 third

*Owner:* Diane Bartolo

*Trainer:* Paul Bartolo

*Winner:* Group 1 Melbourne Cup; Group 1 Sapphire Crown Classic

*Finalist:* Group 2 South Australian Oaks (7<sup>th</sup>)

*Prizemoney 2006:* \$250,050.



**Betty's Angel winning the Melbourne Cup**

The previous three winners of the AGRA Australian Greyhound of the Year are 2002 **Boomeroo**, 2003 **Bombastic Shiraz**, 2004 **Whisky Assassin** and 2005 **Pure Octane**.



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Earlier in the night under the guidance of dual M.C's Rob Testa and Michael Radley who both did a sterling job AGRA announced its inaugural awards in the following categories.

### **2006 Dam of the Year was Sheza Swifty**

Geoff Collins accepted the award on behalf of Queensland owner Helen Ivers.

Sheza Swifty won in a tight contest with 26.2 points from Leprechaun Yap 24.1, Broad Band 24. and Ashlee Jeannine 22.

Sheza Swifty's May 2003 Flying Penske litter consisting of Texas Gold, Quidame and Lucy's Light between them in 2006 they won the following Group races the Gleeson & Tonta Stayers Cup, Sydney Cup, Lizrene Classic and the Darwin Cup.

### **2006 Sire of the Year was Brett Lee**

Marg Long accepted the award on behalf of owners Keith & Tracy Pedrano

Brett Lee won the award easily with 1759 points from 58 group finalists, then followed Token Prince 1338 from 50, Awesome Assassin 977 from 31 and Just The Best 569 from 25.

Brett Lee's better performed dogs in 2006 included. Spaulding, Cromlah Bale, Betty's Angel, Sensation Lee, Superman, Brilliant Lee, Two Up Larry, Bentley Jane, Bank Manager, Miss Mini Mouse, Airbourne Bale Leefull, Meticulous, Regal Brett, Ace Hi Rumble, Strike Attack, Highlee, Leica Paper Boy, Black Chantilly, Laurie Banner, Rooney, Banklee, Leprechaun Pace, Oxley Gazelle, Binga Flo, Torque Bale and Big Tone Bale.

Brett Lee sired the winners of the following group races Perth Cup, Vic Peters, Sapphire Crown, Melbourne Cup, Hobart 1000, Warrnambool Cup, Queensland Derby, SA Oaks, Traralgon Cup and Nowra Puppy Classic.

**2006 Run of the Year went to Elektra** for her outstanding performance in the Sale Cup.

Owner Phillip Lenehan and trainer Graeme Bate accepted the award.

The Run Of the Year was determined from the 12 runs of the month, then by a panel consisting of John Brasch (Qld), Peter O'Neil (WA), Brenton Yeats (SA), Peter Hayes (Tas), Michael Radley (NSW) and Neil Brown in Victoria. They were encouraged to enlist who ever they saw fit to offer an opinion then cast their state's nomination.

### **2006 Trainer of the Year was Darren Murray**

On hand to accept the award Murray was delighted with the accolade acknowledging it as a highlight of his 30 plus years as a trainer.

The Victorian mentor had a fantastic year all around Australia winning group races and enjoyed tremendous success with his top line kennel stars Closing Argument, Vapour Whirl and Slater.

The trainer of year was determined after nominations went put forward to the AGRA CEO's who then appointed a sub committee that consisted of Brenton Scott (NSW), Luke Gatehouse (QLD) and Neil Brown (AGRA) who decided the winner.

The panel took into account a number of different aspects of the training side of things it included. Group wins, and finalists, state city wins, number of runners and dogs in work, percentage per runners ect.

The other contenders for the award included: **Troy Murray (SA), Don McMillan (NSW), Engin Gemci (VIC), Tony Brett (QLD), Paul Felgate (QLD) and Linda Britton (WA).**

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The final accolade of the evening was the induction of **TEMLEE** into the AGRA Hall of Fame, MGRA Chairman Eddie Caruana made the presentation of the Hall of Fame plaque to Bev and Katherine Hocken representing owner Ray Hocken who passed away in 2001, also on stage was Temlee's stud master Tony Marino.

In an emotional response Katherine Hocken expressed the family's fond memories of the time they raced "Tiger" and how much he meant to her late father while she heaped praise on the contribution of both trainer Frank Cray and stud master Tony Marino for the parts they played in Temlee extraordinary life.

It concluded a fantastic night which is sure to be the fore runner of many more spectacular award nights in the future. The awards night will rotate from state to state and take place in March each year coinciding with AGRA's Bi-Annual Meeting and Conference.



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