



***MEDIA RELEASE 23rd September 2017***



# **Aqua Cheetah Sets Pace In Megastar Heats**

**By Jeff Collerson GRNSW Website**

Fastest heat winner Aqua Cheetah looks the one to beat after again drawing box eight in the Group 1 Crownbet Megastar at Dapto next Thursday.

Aqua Cheetah jumped from box eight to win his heat last Thursday in 29.72, defeating Riley Tokaam. If Aqua Cheetah snares the \$75,000 winner's cheque this Thursday he will lift his earnings past \$300,000.

Aqua Cheetah is trained in Victoria by Seona Thompson and owned in partnership by Ian Robertson, his wife Tia and their friend Mark Morgan.

Robertson bred Aqua Cheetah from Dalta Bale, a greyhound who was presented to him as a gift.

"Margaret Bannerman trained Dalta Bale and when she finished racing she gave her to me in return for a couple of pups from each of the greyhound's litters," Robertson said.

"I trained Aqua Cheetah early in his career and after a stint in Sydney he went to Seona Thompson. Leading Sydney trainer Jason Mackay has been Aqua Cheetah's caretaker trainer for the Dapto campaign and it was Jason's greyhound Riley Tokaam we beat in the heat.

"I really wanted Aqua Cheetah in box eight in the final, he loves it out wide."

Jodie Lord, who supplied four of last week's eight Canberra Cup finalists including the winner Champion Model, qualified three greyhounds for the Megastar, including Rohan Hill who won his heat in 29.89 and Asa Barboza who won in 30.22.

The Gunning-based trainer will also be represented by Zambora Cross, while Bombshell Bandit is first reserve.

Lord won last year's Megastar with Let It Develop after taking out the 2016 Canberra Cup and is confident of landing the double again.

The other heat winner was Barking Bad who won his heat in 29.95.

Barking Bad will have a huge cheer squad at Dapto on Thursday as he is owned by four bankers who plan to descend on the Illawarra track with their families to watch their first greyhound contest a Group 1 final.

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Brad Crawford, head of the ownership syndicate which bought Barking Bad as a pup for only \$1500, has already requested that the six-time group finalist becomes his family's pet when the greyhound's racing days are over.

Barking Bad is a son of Ebby Miss, who has become one of the best producers in recent times.

Owner Michael Eberand bought the rather "scrawny" Ebby Miss at the urging of his teenage son Bradley and although she won only four races she has been brilliant at stud.











Eight of her offspring, Barking Bad, Ebby Ripper, Ebby Chance, Aussie Infrared, Utah Miss, Suffragette, Reichenbach and Lord Golec, have so far won more than \$677,000 prizemoney.

Eberand, who trains Barking Bad is not concerned at his greyhound's box six draw on Thursday.

"Barking Bad's record shows his best boxes are five and six and he has a 50 per cent winning strike rate from box six," Eberand said.

## GROUP ONE – CROWNBET DAPTO MEGASTAR - \$75,000 to the winner

### Box Draw and Crownbet Fixed Odds Market for the Megastar 520m:

<b>\$75,000 to the winner Group 1 CROWNBET Dapto Megastar 520m</b>				
<b>Box</b>	<b>Greyhound</b>	<b>Trainer</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>B/T</b>
 <b>1</b>	<b>Asa Barboza</b>	<b>Jodie Lord</b>	<b>\$10</b>	<b>30.22</b>
 <b>2</b>	<b>Where Art Thou</b>	<b>Kayla-Jane Coleman</b>	<b>\$8</b>	<b>29.53</b>
 <b>3</b>	<b>Another Gangsta</b>	<b>Tracey Bryant</b>	<b>\$26</b>	<b>29.83</b>
 <b>4</b>	<b>Rohan Hill</b>	<b>Jodie Lord</b>	<b>\$13</b>	<b>29.89</b>
 <b>5</b>	<b>Riley Tokaam</b>	<b>Jason MacKay</b>	<b>\$4.20</b>	<b>NBT</b>
 <b>6</b>	<b>Barking Bad</b>	<b>Michael Eberand</b>	<b>\$7</b>	<b>29.95</b>
 <b>7</b>	<b>Zambora Cross</b>	<b>Jodie Lord</b>	<b>\$13</b>	<b>29.66</b>
 <b>8</b>	<b>Aqua Cheetah (VIC)</b>	<b>Seona Thompson</b>	<b>\$2.50</b>	<b>29.85</b>
 <b>9</b>	<b>Bombshell Bandit (RES)</b>	<b>Jodie Lord</b>	<b>\$10</b>	<b>NBT</b>
 <b>10</b>	<b>Up Hill Jill (VIC) (RES)</b>	<b>David Geall</b>	<b>\$2.70</b>	<b>NBT</b>

Local expert's selections for the final are as follows.

#### Ron Arnold

1<sup>st</sup> Aqua Cheetah  
2<sup>nd</sup> Riley Tokaam  
3<sup>rd</sup> Where Art Thou

#### Adam Dobin

1<sup>st</sup> Aqua Cheetah  
2<sup>nd</sup> Barking Bad  
3<sup>rd</sup> Riley Tokaam

#### Tim Newbold

1<sup>st</sup> Aqua Cheetah  
2<sup>nd</sup> Rohan Hill  
3<sup>rd</sup> Where Art Thou

## What's happening on race night?

Thursday 28th September—FREE ENTRY

10 event programme including the CrownBet Megastar (\$75,000 to the winner).

1st race approx. 7.27pm (TBC)

Gates open 6.30pm.

Bring the Kids along and enjoy the fun. Jumping Castle, Face Painting and Kids Rides.

Gourmet foods, canteen facilities and best BBQ in town run by Supporter's Club.

Full bar, tote and TAB facilities.



## Honour Roll

The first winner of the Megastar Dapto invitational in 2010 was Mr Metz and in 2011 it became a Group 3 event and was won by Oaks Road in 29.94. In 2012 the race was elevated to Group 2 status and was won by Bye Bye Bucks in 29.75, then in 2013 the race became a Group 1 event when won by Peter Rocket in 29.81, then 2014 Tommy Brislane won in 29.82, in 2015 Fantastic Dotty in 29.51. Last year's winner was Let It Develop in 30.02.



*Last year's winner Let It Develop*

### Media Contact:

Dapto Showground - 89 Princes Highway, Dapto NSW 2530

Phone - 02 42611080

Fax - 02 42621513

Email - [admin@daptodogs.org.au](mailto:admin@daptodogs.org.au)

For more information please contact:

**Neil Brown**

**GCA Publicity Officer**

**Tel: 03 97691234**

**Mob: 0423 129 950**

**David Simonette**

**GCA Executive Officer**

**simonette7862@gmail.com**