



MEDIA RELEASE

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Hitman on Target In Geelong Cup

From GRV Website

Hurunui Hitman won the \$42,000 first prize in the Group 2 Sita Geelong Cup (460m) on Friday night, catapulting trainer Steve McKenna back into the group racing spotlight after a period in the wilderness.

McKenna, of Napoleons, now has his sights firmly set on completing the Geelong Cup-Melbourne Cup double later this month, a feat that was achieved last year by Dyna Tron.

"The Melbourne Cup is his next mission," McKenna announced. "He has won a (Melbourne Cup) Prelude so he is guaranteed a start in the heats, and we're just hoping he can achieve what Dyna Tron did in 2011."



Hurunui Hitman too good in the Geelong Cup (Pic GRV Website)

Heats of the Melbourne Cup will be conducted this Thursday night, with the series now boasting total prize money of \$500,000 including a first prize of \$350,000.

One of only two greyhounds not from the Geelong region to make Friday night's Geelong Cup final, Hurunui Hitman (Spiral Nikita x Miss Yap) won at huge odds (\$7.10) considering he was the fastest heat winner seven nights earlier in 25.56sec.

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AUSTRALIAN GREYHOUND RACING ASSOCIATION

"I can't think of the last time a Ballarat trainer won the Geelong Cup...it's a great thrill," McKenna said after Hurunui Hitman defeated Blackalls Boss (\$5.60) (Michelle Mallia-Magri) by three lengths, with Brenna Bale (\$3.90) (Graeme Bate) third in the time of 25.58sec.

"I have been lucky enough to win a number of big races and I trained the dog who came third in the Perth Cup earlier this year, but this is the first win I've had a group level for about five years."

"It's a nice feeling and I'm delighted for the owner Tony Forte, who has bought a number of dogs for me to train over the years. He paid a lot of money for Hurunui Hitman after he had won nine of his first 12 starts, so he has been well rewarded tonight."

Hurunui Hitman's record now stands at 20 starts for 13 wins and five placings.

Forte made the trip from his WA home for the Geelong Cup, which is his first visit to Victoria for two years.

"Tony and I have been racing dogs together for years, and we've had a bottle of grange that we have been waiting to open until we won a big race."

"Tonight would have been the perfect night to drink it but Tony left it at his home in WA."

McKenna, who had a lot of success training toplineers such as No Shame and Rocky in the 2000's, was not confident about Hurunui Hitman's chances from box 5 in the Geelong Cup.

"You can never be too confident from box 5. I thought whichever greyhound led would win, and he was lucky enough to find the lead fairly early," he said.

After the placed runners the field finished in the following order 4th Jordy Pordy (\$20.80), 5th Pop's Max (\$15.40), 6th Stagger (\$8.70) 7th Irma Bale (\$9.70) and Desalle Bale (\$3.60)

Hurunui Hitman is a Black dog whelped September 2010 by Spiral Nikita from Miss Yap (Brett Lee x Leprechaun Yap) he has raced 20 times for 13 wins and five placings with his win in the Geelong Cup the \$42,000 first prize took his current stake earnings to \$82,570.

Listed below are the many outstanding dogs that have won the Geelong Cup.

1962 **Darkie Bobs**, 1963 **Mardec**, 1964 **Silver Cadet**, 1965 **Amasta**, 1966 **Billy Vee**, 1967 **Haydale**, 1968 **The Apprentice**, 1969 **Miram Miss**, 1970 **Phantom's Heir**, 1971 **High Volant**, 1972 **Ranee's Magic**, 1973 **The Little Gent**, 1974 **Ty Court**, 1975 **Zero Ranger**, 1976 **Tivashley**, 1977 **Smart Roman**, 1978 **"Not Held"**, 1979 **Rustic Star**, 1980 **Tempix**, 1981 **Worthy Weston**, 1982 **Satan's Shroud**, 1983 **Diamond Tempix**, 1984 **Pomona's Tigress**, 1985 **Dublin Flyer**, 1986 **Thorgil Magic**, 1987 **Modern Gossip**, 1988 **Benito's Boy**, 1989 **Fair Sentence** 1990 **Ravello**, 1991 **Honourly**, 1992 **Golden Ridge**, 1993 **Golden Currency**, 1994 **Tantallon**, 1995 **Painted Wish**, 1996 **Sobbing Sal**, 1997 **Power Zone**, 1998 **Cerin Bale**, 1999 **Pete's Boss**, 2000 **Suellen Bale**, 2001 **Modern Assassin**, 2002 **Bear Creek**, 2003 **Puzzle Prize**, 2004 **Whisky Assassin** and 2005 **Brilliant Lee**, 2006 **Dyna Checa**, 2007 **Cool Effort**, 2008 **Birthday Boy**, 2009 **Gripen Bale**, 2010 **No Race** and 2011 **Dyna Tron** .

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