



MEDIA RELEASE
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Kleeven Commitment Leads to Luca's Cup Triumph

From GRV Website

It almost didn't happen. After more than 40 years in the sport hoping for a Cup victory illness threatened to ruin the night. Gerald Kleeven had to drag himself off his sick bed to handle Luca Neveelk in the Geelong Cup tonight.

It was a display of strength and determination from the trainer as much as the greyhound. As Gerry lay in the car struck down with gastro, wife Rose thought he may not be able to handle their prized greyhound in the Cup.



Luca Neveelk too good in the Geelong Cup (All Pics Clint Anderson)

Despite his illness, Gerry gathered the strength to not only handle in the Cup, but to handle the winner in the \$64,000 feature.

"He was really sick all week and was lying down in the car before the races tonight," Rose said.

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AUSTRALIAN GREYHOUND RACING ASSOCIATION

"I didn't know whether he would be able to handle tonight because he was unwell but he made it and we're so happy."

The Kleeven's live in the quiet Gippsland town of Denison. Just the two of them, with their greyhounds. They have been training for more than 40 years and bred, own and train Gippsland's finest greyhound, Luca Neveelk.

Rose remembers holding Luca as a puppy and says that there is something different about him. He knows when he's done well, he knows when he's not run his best race and he is thorough professional.

"He has this amazing desire to win," Rose said "he is no fuss, when he comes to the races he knows what he's there to do.

"When he's in the boxes he just focusses on the lure and usually doesn't put a paw wrong."

The Kleeven's are the quintessential team. No one else is allowed to handle Luca Neveelk but Gerry and no one else is allowed to catch him but Rose.

After the race, Gerry was full of emotion – showing no signs of illness – with a smile from ear-to-ear and a tear in his eye.

"I'm very, very happy, I can't really describe it," Gerry said.

"It's funny, I don't get nervous with him at all because I know that he will do everything right. Even before the Geelong Cup I wasn't nervous.

"This is without a doubt the biggest win of our career and when I saw my family after the race I had a tear in my eye."

Luca Neveelk (box five – \$3.30) jumped beautifully to challenge for the early lead with eventual runner-up Top Secret (box one – \$7.90) for Kelly Bravo. From there it was a battle of strength and the son of Talk's Cheep and It's A Neveelk was able to prevail while Peter Akathiotis' Nockabout Aussie (box eight – \$16.80) stormed home on the rail for third.

Gerald hinted that the TAB Melbourne Cup may be the greyhound's next assignment, but admitted that he hadn't thought that far ahead just yet.

Luca Neveelk's career record now stands at 21 wins and two placings from 25 starts with the \$45,000 first prize taking his career prize money beyond \$100,000.

After the placed runners the field finished in the following order 4th Dyna Alchemist (\$36.40), 5th Swagzilla (\$25.50), 6th Awesome Project (\$3.20) 7th Hallelujah Henry (\$12.80) and Dyna Villa (\$4.20)

Luca Neveelk is a Blue dog whelped May 2012 by Talk's Cheap from It's A Neveelk (Nitro Neveelk x Bigbad Leesa). Luca Neveelk is raced Paul Kleeven and was bred & is trained by Gerald & Rose Kleeven at Denison in Victoria. He has raced 25 times for 21 wins and two placings. After adding the \$45,000 first prize for the Geelong Cup his stake earnings stand at \$112,865.





A very happy couple Gerald and Rose Kleeven with their Cup winner Luca Neveelk

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**, 2012 **Hurunui Hitman** and 2013 **Black Magic Opal**.

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