



Australian Greyhound
Racing Association



MEDIA RELEASE

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Uphill Jill Conquers Laurels Mountain

By Jason Adams

Up Hill Jill (\$4.10) delivered her connections their biggest thrill in greyhound racing when she took out last night's \$72,500 Group 2 Laurels final.

Up Hill Jill speared out of the inside alley as fancied runners Fanta Bale and Striker Light found trouble. Up Hill Jill led clearly down the back straight and was unchallenged in the run to the line, defeating Fearless Swan (\$6.50) by eight lengths in 29.55.



Up Hill Jill with Geall family after Laurels final (Pic Paul Munt)

The win hit close to home as Up Hill Jill is owned by Geall's wife, Rose, and bred by the family.

"To have bred and brought her up ourselves makes it very special. For breeders, this is the one of the most sought after races – out of all the big races the Laurels is in the top echelon."

"It's special because as breeders we spend a lot of time with the dogs – we whelp and care for them throughout their whole career. It's a race we all want to win – it's synonymous with breeding."

The Laurels is not Geall's first success at group level however regards the win as one of his biggest achievements.

"We've been fortunate to have won Group races before but to win a race like this at Sandown, being the venue it is and the history behind it, it's sensational."

Back in October Up Hill Jill was an impressive winner of the Match Maker final at Shepparton, two runs later she was a gallant 2nd to future star Hit The Highway. Following advice from good friends, Up Hill Jill's Laurels preparation began.

There was no hiding of emotions from trainer David Geall post-race.

"I'm over the moon. The Laurels is a very prestigious race with a lot of history," said Geall.

"We were quietly confident after she drew box 1. She's got great early pace and the box was going to give her every chance to win. In saying that you must have great respect for the rest of the field, there were some top-quality greyhounds in the race."

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“Good friends of ours (Angela Langton and Jeff Britton) have a greyhound (Hit The Highway) that ran her down and he is a super dog – they thought her run was great and recommended we give her a go at the Laurels.”

Geall took up training greyhounds full-time 9 years ago, and was extremely thankful for those who have helped him along the way.

“My wife works full-time though still finds time to help with the dogs, my brother Jeff always gives me a hand and Mick Vaughan takes control whenever I go away. Angela Langton and the Britton’s have also been a huge help. I’ve got a good team around me.”

The Laurels Classic was restricted to female greyhounds only, born on or after 01/06/2014

After the first two placed runners, the field finished in the following order 3rd Fanta Bale (\$3.30), 4th Fair Of Face (\$30.30), 5th Leave Me Out (\$50.70), 6th Striker Light (\$2.90), 7th Poppy Pete (\$30) and Isla’s Style (\$16.70).

Up Hill Jill Skye is raced, trained and was bred by David & Rose Geall at Lara in Victoria, she is a Black bitch whelped February 2015 by Premier Fantasy from Where’s Demonica (Where’s Pedro x Demonica). Up Hill Jill has won seven and been placed five times from her 14 starts and with the \$50,000 first prize for the Laurels it took her current stake earnings to \$65,670.

Recognized Australia wide as the pinnacle age restricted bitches’ classic the Laurels was first conducted by the Sandown Club in 1964 when won by Tara Princess. It is a very much sought after Group 1 event with the winner usually acknowledged as a very valuable brood bitch as well as most carve out a successful race career. It has also been proven over the years that most of the finalists are bitches that produce when they go to stud and some have become house hold names after producing some of the superstars of the sport.

The Classic has found some outstanding winners over the years none the least 1965 champ Cheltenham Lass who later in her career was runner up and won a Melbourne Cup as well as runner up in an Australian Cup. Odious who went on to win an Australian Cup in 1976, Carrington Jade won a Melbourne Cup in 1976. Cavalier Queen won the Adelaide Cup in 1977. Paua To Burn won the 2005 Easter Egg and 2004/ 2005 Group 1 Sapphire Crown. Plus, two other winners are Hall of Fame superstars Winifred Bale and Sandi’s Me Mum. The race will now continue to be staged in December after a revamp of the AGRA Group Race calendar commenced in July 2010 it considered a better age time for the young bitches and it will also coincide with the running of the Silver Chief for the same aged dog pups. Listed below is the Laurels Classic Honour roll highlighted by so many stars that enjoyed outstanding careers.

1964 **Tara Princess**, 1965 **Cheltenham Lass**, 1966 **Ever Present**, 1967 **Magic Fuel**, 1968 **Enapetic**, 1969 **Watch A Flash**, 1970 **La Rate**, 1971 **Lady Of Rome**, 1972 **Blackliner**, 1973 **Crete**, 1974 **Vibrant Lass**, 1975 **Odious**, 1976 **Carrington Jade**, 1977 **Cavalier Queen**, 1978 **Debbie's Wood**, 1979 **Jewel Of All**, 1980 **Sharonlee Girl**, 1981 **Sarah Kuda**, 1982 **Winifred Bale**, 1983 **Wee Rua**, 1984 **Select Girl**, 1985 **Little Nola**, 1986 **Autumn Leaf**, 1987 **Playgirl Bonnie**, 1988 **Dancing Vixen**, 1989 **Sandi's Me Mum**, 1990 **Witchery**, 1991 **Barb's Tune**, 1992 **To Perfection**, 1993 **Suzy Also**, 1994 **Victorious Road**, 1995 **Little Promise**, 1996 **Hanson Kelly**, 1997 **Moonambel Gem**, 1998 **Chersam Honcho**, 1999 **Labyrinth**, 2000 **Creative Whisky**, 2001 **Hail A Harley**, 2002 **Katella Bale**, 2003 **Dance Portrait**, 2004 **Paua To Burn**, 2005 **Maureen Shirly**, 2006 **Pure Burst**, 2007 **Miss Hot Gossip**, 2008 **Hybrid Theory**, 2009 **Boozeroo** and 2010 **C'est La Vie (June)** and **Up And Away (December)** 2011 **Stetson Donna**, 2012 **Gunda Bale**, 2013 **Ritza Hattie**, 2014 **Lamia Bale** and 2015 **Fantastic Skye**.

*****Replay of the final can be viewed on the club’s and AGRA website at:

www.sandowngreyhounds.com.au

www.agra.com.au

Thanks to Jason Adams Sandown Racing & Communications Officer for story content.

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