



M
E
D
I
A

R
E
L
E
A
S
E

MEDIA RELEASE
10th February 2015



AZZA ALL THE WAY

By GRV Website

Azza Azza Azza (\$1.60) completed a faultless Shepparton Cup campaign on Sunday night, which could prove a stepping stone to greater riches with the Australian Cup Carnival on our doorstep.

After easily running the fastest heat time and then drawing the cherished box 1 in the final, Azza Azza Azza made the Group 2 CKH Shepparton Cup (450m) series his own, leading all the way as the \$1.60 Favourite in the final to score by five lengths and snare the \$45,000 first prize.



Azza Azza Azza races away with the Shepparton Cup (All Pics Clint Anderson)

The magnitude of the victory, Azza Azza Azza's first at group level, wasn't lost on Brad Keel, who has handled the greyhound on behalf of trainer Wayne Vassallo in all but two of his 30 starts.

AUSTRALIAN GREYHOUND RACING ASSOCIATION

“When you’ve got a talented greyhound like him, some people think winning big races like country cups are just handed to you, but they are always very hard to come by,” Keel said.

“You look at the field tonight and there was so much quality. The reality is that here in Victoria, any cup race is so prestigious because of the calibre of greyhounds running around in this state.”

Keel pointed to Azza Azza Azza’s liking for the Shepparton track as a key part of the win.

“He has won four from four here now. I wish every group race was held at Shepparton because he loves the place,” he laughed.

However, Azza Azza Azza is now destined for the bright lights of The Meadows, with the Australian Cup on the agenda.

The Australian Cup Carnival kicks off on Feb 21 three Group 1 Invitationals as well as eight Preludes of the Australian Cup, the winners of which to join the top 56 ranked sprinters that gain automatic entry into the Australian Cup heats.



Azza Azza Azza, now with a Group 2 win under his belt, will almost certainly be among the top 56 entrants given he has a Group 2 victory among his 20 wins (from 30 starts).

“He’s a very, very fast greyhound with high-turn speed and he can run out 500 metres,” Keel said.

“He’ll enter the Australian Cup with plenty of confidence and hopefully he has now done enough to secure

his place among the top 56 greyhounds which will allow him to bypass the first week of the series.”

Azza Azza Azza (Collision – Alotta Mojo) was bred by Vassallo and is owned by the Whittington Sprod Syndicate, and he won in 25.126sec.

After the winner the runners finished in the following order: 2nd Allen Malik (\$46.70) 3rd Tiggerlong Amigo (\$39.10) 4th Armed And Ready (\$7.40), 5th Midnight Flynn (\$57.60), 6th Ronray Spirit (\$12.90), 7th Sisco Rage (\$22.60) and 8th Dyna Villa (\$3.90).

Azza Azza Azza is a Brindle dog whelped May 2012 by Collision from Alotta Mojo (Hallucinate x Mint Mojo). He is raced by Whittington Sprod Syndicate and trained by Wayne Vassallo at Devon Meadows in Victoria. He has now won 20 races and been placed on four occasions from his 30 starts. The Shepparton Cup first prize of \$45,000 brings Azza Azza Azza’s overall prizemoney to \$95,490.

On a monster night of racing Jenny Hunt and Dawkins Bale took out the Ron Nestor Memorial. Shepparton Greyhound Racing Club commemorate the passing of greyhound figure Ron Nestor by honouring his memory with the special event after his passing in March 2006 – Nestor was one of few people who had never missed a Shepparton Cup Final and the Committee at the time decided to make sure that spirit remains forever for a true gentleman of the sport.

Continued on Page 3 ...

The Shepparton Cup has always been a well sought after country cup and a one time a very important lead up race for the Melbourne Cup. It has been won by some brilliant greyhounds over the years none better than Hall of Famer and local superstar Highly Blessed. Other Melbourne Cup winners included Master Giant and Kantarn Bale. While like Highly Blessed, Bahama Image went on to win an Easter Egg. The race was run over the 440 metres at the old Shepparton Showgrounds until its closure in 2004.

1973 **Garner Bin**, 1974 **Morning Glow**, 1975 **Tivashley**, 1976 **Marungi Boy**, 1977 **Near History**, 1978 **Relle Louise**, 1979 **Mannerism**, 1980 **Proven Bold**, 1981 **First Question**, 1982 **Golden Impulse**, 1983 **Blue Echo**, 1984 **Blitzem Bill**, 1985 **Thorgil Magic**, 1986 **Thorgil Magic**, 1987 **Nan's Pal**, 1988 **Fantasy Boy**, 1989 **Pure Talent**, 1990 **Highly Blessed**, 1991 **Bomber Gleeson**, 1992 **Master Giant**, 1993 **Head Honcho**, 1994 **Thorgil Tex**, 1995 **Hanson Diamond**, 1996 **Bahama Image**, 1997 **World Title**, 1998 **Ashigga**, 1999 **Star Of Mine**, 2000 **Kantarn Bale**, 2001 **Salong Bale**, 2002 **Knockabout Wok**, 2003 **Puzzle Prize**, 2004 **Whisky Assassin**, 2005 not run, 2006 **Slater**, 2007 **Overflow Breaker**, 2008 **Hanify's Impact**, 2009 **Gardam Prince**, 2010 **Din's Son**, 2011 **El Grand Senor**, 2012 **Blackall's Boss** and 2013 **Paw Licking (2014 Not Held)**.

For more information please contact:

Neil Brown
AGRA Publicity Officer
Tel: 03 97691234
Mob: 0423 129 950
nbrown@agra.com.au

Howard Ashton
AGRA Executive Officer
Tel: 08 8243 7100
Mob: 0438 042 838