



Australian Greyhound
Racing Association

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Punters left out in the cold as Midwinter puts freeze on rivals in Silver Chief

GRV Website

2015 was a tumultuous year for greyhound racing, but 2016 has begun with a timely reminder of why so many people love this great sport.



Midwinter Charges home in Silver Chief Final (All Pics Clint Anderson)

Greyhound racing's first Group 1 of the year – the \$145,000 Group 1 Silver Chief Classic (525m) – took place at The Meadows on Saturday night (January 2), with the race being won by an underdog, \$41.00 chance Midwinter (pictured above – far left).

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Trainer Andy Stewart was left in disbelief as his greyhound, whom he bred, owns and trains in conjunction with wife Judy, stormed over the top of his opposition to claim the \$100,000 first prize.

Australians love an underdog, and the greyhound racing community love it when a hobby trainer wins a major event, as evidenced when Stewart returned to the dining area after the race to the applause of everyone in the room.

Despite 18 years' experience training greyhounds, Stewart isn't a regular in group racing circles, and this was his first Group 1 finalist.

In fact, entering Midwinter (Cosmic Rumble – Tania Two Shoes) for the Silver Chief was more of an after-thought than a well laid plan.

“He is more of a 600m greyhound, and he may even end up a stayer,” Stewart said.

“The Silver Chief wasn't even on our radar a few weeks ago, but (wife) Judy said it's an age-restricted race so Midwinter only gets one chance to go for it.”

“So we put him in and he ran 2nd in his heat and his semi, but he showed excellent track sense in those runs and I felt that if he was within a few lengths of the leaders down the back straight in the final he'd be hard to hold out, and that's exactly what happened.”

Midwinter again showed outstanding track sense in the final, as he ran down Harlon (\$3.50) and Marley Bale (\$5.90) in 29.992sec in a heart-stopping display.

Prior to the Silver Chief series Midwinter had won little more than \$12,000 from his 21 career starts. His stats now read at eight wins from 24 starts and \$117,000 in prize money.



Stewart, 70, has led an interesting life. He was coach of the gold medal winning Australian culinary Olympic team and is an A-grade table tennis player.

However, training the Group 1 Silver Chief winner has brought an incredible sense of achievement to a husband and wife team that “only ever have a couple of dogs at a time.”

The win was also a great story for the town of Melton, which boasts a popular straight track facility used by hundreds of greyhound trainers for trialling, and also by the National Coursing Association.

(The Stewarts with Midwinter post-race)

Melton Greyhound Racing Club President John McFarlane, on track to support Midwinter, joked early on in the night that there was a storm brewing in from the west, and as it turned out he was right.

Silver Chief night was also the first of GRV's 'Little Big Day Out' campaign, which will see Victoria's 13 TAB greyhound race tracks each host a huge day or night of kids entertainment between January and April.

In the Silver Chief after the placed runners the field finished in the following order 4th Ernest Bale (\$3.20), 5th Moreira (\$6.60), 6th My Silver Chisel (\$15.90) 7th Invictus Rapid (\$7.40) and Aeroplane Bob (\$23.70).

Midwinter is a Black dog whelped December 2013 by Cosmic Rumble from Tania Two Shoes (Premier Fantasy x Pearlee Surprise). He is raced by Andy & Judy Stewart and trained by Andrew Stewart at Melton in Victoria. He has now won eight races and been placed on nine occasions from his 25 starts. The Silver Chief first prize of \$100,000 brings Above All's overall prizemoney to \$116,765.

The Classic is one steeped in tradition, first being run in 1964. Directors of the Melbourne Greyhound Racing association saw fit to name The Classic after the greyhound "Silver Chief" who was whelped in 1936 and owned by Ray Herbert. Silver Chief was a "Waterloo Cup" winner in 1939 and performed admirably on the speed coursing circuit as well. He raced in both Melbourne and Sydney and was keenly sought after for stud duties once his racing career was finished.

The cream of racing have won this event referred to as the Derby of Greyhound Racing. Champions such as Plunder Road, Black Diro, Satan's Legend, Tempix, Chariot Supreme, Ginger, Light of Fire and Awesome Assassin to name a few. Many have gone on to produce sons who have also won the Classic.

The mighty Tempix won in 1978 then produced sons who won in (81) Tempix Image and Bold Assail in 1982. Australian super sire Chariot Supreme won the race in record time in 1983. His progeny took out the honours in 1986 (Hopeful Supreme), 1989 (Autumn Chariot) and 1991 (Bomber Gleeson). In recent years Light of Fire won in 1994 then produced greats such as Awesome Assassin and Kantarn Bale. Awesome Assassin went on to sire 2005 winner Ben's Fury. Jason Thompson has a unique record training five winners of the great race.

Listed below is the star studded Silver Chief honour roll.

1964 **Barunah**, 1965 **Spartan Prince**, 1966 **Phantom's Return**, 1967 **Lord Baden**, 1968 **Dupondy Two**, 1969 **Plunder Road**, 1970 **Black Diro**, 1971 **Michael Takiri**, 1972 **Getaway**, 1973 **Flash Gordon**, 1974 **Petillant**, 1975 **Nigger Chimes**, 1976 **Fritz Mactavish**, 1977 **Satan's Legend**, 1978 **Tempix**, 1979 **San Remo**, 1980 **Mork The Stork**, 1981 **Tempix Image**, 1982 **Bold Assail**, 1983 **Chariot Supreme**, 1984 **Rumpus Pappa**, 1985 **Supreme Spot**, 1986 **Hopeful Supreme**, 1987 **Calamity Kid**, 1988 **Ginger**, 1989 **Autumn Chariot**, 1990 **Enfield**, 1991 **Bomber Gleeson**, 1992 **Nevik**, 1993 **Plugger Fever**, 1994 **Light Of Fire**, 1995 **Zealous Guy**, 1996 **Awesome Assassin**, 1997 **Hotshot**, 1998 **"Not Held"**, 1999 **Jamella Prince**, 1999 **Kantarn Bale**, 2000 **Dave's Mentor**, 2001 **Burali Bale**, 2002 **"Not Held"**, 2003 **Jimmy Neutron**, 2004 **Big Daddy Cool**, 2005 **Ben's Fury**, 2006 **Closing Argument**, 2007 **Meticulous**, 2008 **Regal Thyme**, 2009 **Fedex**, 2010 **Enry Walt** and 2011 **Kilty Lad**, 2012 **Godsend**, 2013 **Renegade Chief**, 2014 **Ollie Bale** and 2015 **Above All**.

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