



MEDIA RELEASE
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Walking Away A Champion
By GRV Marketing Dept

It was an emotion charged night at Warragul, with Walk Hard (box 5 - \$10.70) winning the Group 2 Lion Quality Products Warragul Cup (460m) for trainer Nikki McRae in a time of 25.60s.

Hand-picked by McRae as a three-month old pup, Walk Hard has been plagued by injury throughout his career, with an ongoing stopper bone problem constantly ruling the greyhound out of racing.

It's been a hard road for the greyhound and his trainer who has nursed her 'Ronnie' throughout his entire career.



Walk Hard races away to win the Warragul Cup (All Clint Anderson)

Of the race, McRae commented that she couldn't believe he had won after thinking throughout the week that box five would be too much of a task to overcome.

"Words can't describe how I feel now, I'm in complete shock it's such an amazing feeling because I know what the dog has been through," McRae said.

AUSTRALIAN GREYHOUND RACING ASSOCIATION

"In the race I kept thinking to myself, 'he's not going to get a run, he's not going to get a run' but coming into the home turn I thought, 'wait a second, he might be able to do it here'," she laughed. After the race, an emotional McRae embraced her Mother, as they celebrated Walk Hard's tremendous victory.

"It's more emotional because it's been such hard work with him, I've had good dogs before but he is extra special to me."

"I picked him out of a litter of seven or eight when he was three months old and have been right with him throughout his whole career. We bred him, reared him, broke him in and now we race him," McRae said. Walk Hard's injuries will be monitored, with his next task being the Healesville Cup series.

"He loves Healesville so I'll take him up to the Healesville Cup, it's easier on his stopper bone and I want to make sure he stays sound."

The race saw hot favourites, Black Magic Opal (box 7 - \$2.90) and Paw Licking (box 1 - \$2.70) vying for the lead with Walk Hard finding himself sitting third around the home turn.

Paw Licking jostled his way to the front, checking Black Magic Opal and opening the race up for the eventual winner. Evie's Entity (\$19.00) rallied strongly to run over the top of Paw Licking (\$2.90) to finish second.

Walk Hard broke the track-record in his heat victory stopping the clock at 25.46s, with tonight's 25.60s run not as fast, but much more important as he claimed the first Group victory of his career.

Walk Hard's career record now stands at 17 wins and 12 placings from 35 career starts with the \$43,750 first-prize taking his career earnings beyond \$100,000.



An excited Nikki McRae with Group 2 Warragul Cup champion Walk Hard

Walk Hard is a Black dog whelped September 2010 by Bit Chilli from Miss Bling (Spiral Nikita x Skullring). He is raced and trained by Nicole Mcrae at Clyde in Victoria. He has now won 16 races and been placed on 12 occasions from her 34 starts. He has an outstanding record at Warragul over the 460 metres as well as lowering the track record in the heats to 25.46 he has raced there seven times for four wins and three seconds. The Warragul Cup first prize of \$43,750 brings Walk Hard's overall prizemoney to \$105,460.

After the placed runners the field finished in the following order Crump (\$6.50), Deadly Vane (\$9.30), Black Magic Opal (\$2.70), Awesome Grunt (\$23.70) and Risk Of Damage (\$65.80).

Records of past Warragul Cup winners are bit sketchy, however we do know the first cup run under non propriety racing was won by Melbourne Cup winner Rocketeer and again in 1958 as a lead up race to the Melbourne Cup Marine Jet completed the double. In the 50's Warragul was a very popular Saturday afternoon meeting that later moving to Friday night racing for many years. The race has been won by some of the sports finest sprinters and listed below is the honour roll as we currently know it.

1956 **Rocketeer**, 1958 **Marine Jet**, 1960 **Flash Dasher**, 1962 **Coma's Pride**, 1969 **Sunday Punch**, 1970 **White Post**, 1971 **Red Velore**, 1972 **Make The Scene**, 1973 **Half Your Luck**, 1974 **Sylvan Prince**, 1975 **Plain Stage**, 1976 **Golden Spur**, 1977 **Simon's Twin**, 1978 **Newmore Glenn**, 1979 **Glen's Elect**, 1980 **Tempix**, 1981 **Shamrock Flight**, 1982 **Sartorius**, 1983 **Salem's Pride**, 1984 **Chariot Supreme**, 1985 **Broken Cup**, 1986 **Chariot Of Gods**, 1987 **Peppalooa**, 1988 **Trumbry Ace**, 1989 **Hua**, 1990 **Pure Talent**, 1991 **Sheedy**, 1992 **Brudge**, 1993 **Indoor Boy**, 1994 **Gipsy General**, 1995 **Bonjase**, 1996 **Best Of Bev**, 1997 **Applaud**, 1998 **Hotshot**, 1999 **Fibba**, 2000 **Labyrinth**, 2001 **Big Smig**, 2002 **Carlisle Jack**, 2003 **Knockabout Wok**, 2004 **Puzzle Prize**, 2005 **Sun Hero**, 2006 **Vapour Whirl**, 2007 **Magnificent Love**, 2008 **North Sea**, 2009 **Major Mission**, 2010 **Race Not Held**, 2011 **El Grand Senior**, 2012 **Stagger** and 2013 **Nitro Cee**.



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