

BYAMEE

Byamee was bred and trained in Diamond Creek by Ray Herbert and is regarded by many of the elder generation as the best coursing greyhound of all time. An AGRA Hall of Fame trainer Herbert always rated Byamee his best dog only marginally above his other superstar Silver Chief the 1939 Waterloo Cup and Melbourne Cup winner. Silver Chief's achievements as a Stud Dog were also a reason to hold him in such high regard if Byamee wasn't better he was certainly his equal by all measures.



The Great Byamee

Coursing in those days was the premier form of Greyhound racing along with its traditions the sport was brought here before the turn of the century from the United Kingdom, it was the sport of the rich and famous and the aristocratic members of society made up a large portion of its participants. That changed as the years went on and Coursing was enjoyed and participated by people from all walks of life. Conducted in open enclosures hares were kept and trained to escape through small open hatches at the opposite end of the enclosures where two dogs were slipped from a special two collared lead by a Slipper. This person learnt the skill and craft required from previous slippers as the art was passed down through the generations. The dogs scored points from a single judge for leading, turning the hare or on the odd occasion catching their prey. The two dogs drawn randomly wore Red and White collars and the coloured flag signified the result with the winner progressing to the next round.

Feature events like the Waterloo Cup could consist of any number of entries and many events had a 100 plus dogs entered. Coursing dogs may have to course up to six times in three days with courses lasting from two minutes to five minutes. The Greyhounds had to be quick, agile and possess great stamina to make it as the best coursing dogs and they were bred accordingly from champion coursing stock. In most cases track racing behind the pacemaker and later the "Tin Hare" was very much a secondary activity in those days.

In 1953 in the lead up to the Waterloo Cup Byamee divided the St Ledger Classic with his litter sister Rarcomba before he won his first Waterloo Cup at Bendigo when only 22 months of age after being ill in the lead up to the series. He beat True Scamper in the final, he proved no match for the youngster.

In the 1954 Cup decider at Tynong Byamee defeated track star Gallant Plume although Byamee was an easy winner there was plenty of praise for the first time courser who had won 31 of his 42 Speed track starts for legendary greyhound trainer Jack Mayes.

At Maryborough in 1955 Byamee accounted for 1954 Melbourne Cup winner Wanalta Chief trained by another greyhound legend Ed Tucker. It was a great performance to win three in a row and it was the first time the feat had been achieved in 43 years since Bulwark did it for Hall of Fame trainer Sam Bladon in 1906-07-09.

They were then called the Australian Waterloo Cups and were held at Moonee Valley in Victoria in 1906 and Rooty Hill in New South Wales in 07 & 09. The only other greyhound to win more than two Cups was the great Terminus he won the Victorian Waterloo Cup at Geelong in 1926 the New South Wales Cups at Rooty Hill in 1926 and 27 plus the Australasian Waterloo Cup in 1925 also held at Rooty Hill.

Prizemoney was 750 pound for the winner of the Cup in the 50's, I roughly calculated Byamee stake earnings to be around 2500 pounds. In today's money it would be worth \$22,000. Ray Herbert was certainly not afraid to have a bet in 1955 at the Waterloo Cup Call of the Card held by bookmakers at the start of the meeting giving owners and trainers an exclusive time to bet if they so desired on their own runners. Herbert had 230 pound to win 830 pound or in today's money \$2000 to win \$7500.

Herbert an AGRA Hall of Fame trainer was acknowledged as the finest Victorian trainer of his era and on many occasions showed his admiration for his star Coursing and race dog, he was quoted as saying Byamee was the best dog he ever put a lead and collar on.

High praise from a man that rewrote the record books as a greyhound trainer, a person held in highest regard at his craft and considered to have no peer during his training days.

Legendary Sporting Globe greyhound journalist Frank Morley Junior wrote in 1953 that no Waterloo Cup winner had ever come from a more perfect line of breeding than Byamee. His reasoning may explain some of the dog's greatness. By Ray Herbert's Yarloop the 1945 Melbourne Cup winner and field coursing star was a brilliant performer. He was by Menang (Alwin Chris x Bonny's Pride) ex Moonshine Maid (Grey Friar x My Lady). Grey Friar was a son of dual Waterloo Cup winner Kreuger ex Silvermane, who was the dam of Herbert's 1939 Waterloo Cup winner Silver Chief and many other good winners.



BYAMEE starts to streak away from The Mudlark in the first Waterloo Cup semi-final.

Byamee's dam Tarryhere, divider with Coonega, of the 1948 NSW Waterloo Cup and winner of the Waterloo Cup and runner-up in the NSW Waterloo Cup in 1949 was by Silver Chief (Pharminda x Silvermane) ex Lassalla by noted SA sire Quandialla (Bob Agricola x Shirley Lass) ex Percyton Lass (Paper Talk x Mulga May). Percyton Lass was the dam of SA Derby winner Percyton Lad, who sired the brilliant Harryed and many other star performers.

Byamee spent his short time at stud on Ray Herbert's Diamond Creek property and besides his deeds on the Coursing fields and Victorian racetracks perhaps Byamee's greatest legacy has been as a Stud Dog.

Not acknowledged for any great numbers of offspring in fact he only produced 42 pups, however the quality and depth of line is where his contribution to the Australian bloodlines is best illustrated.

An investigation unveils my theory, as previously stated his numbers were minimal but from those few he did produce 1961 Australian Cup winner Copeland and 1961 Melbourne Cup winner Bybrae plus from the broodbitch Bylane she produced the 67 Australian Cup winner Fawn Nulla.

Byamee's bloodlines seemed to click particularly well with brood matrons from South Australia, however there is a host of evidence to suggest he produced from bitches in most states.

Without doubt the best brood matron Byamee produced was Byam Rose she produced 15 pups by Sunview, Shan's View and Baratta in the late 50's and early 60's. Saskagay and Saskaview both won a Melbourne Cup with Harem Belle third in the Cup to Saskaview.

She also threw very successful race dogs and sires Bandar Prince, Pine Mulga and Sungari.

Bandar Prince produced the 1970 Australian Cup winner The Smoother who then produced Emiline Bale the foundation bitch of the all-conquering **Bale Line**.

Byam Rose also produced The Stripper a track record holder at Sandown Park and a prolific race winner, Chivasing a great race dog finished fourth in the 1966 Melbourne Cup plus other excellent race dogs Saskadoon, Constella, Bar Rose, By Rose, Coramic and Maretim.

Other outstanding members of the Shan's View x Bylane litter not only included Fawn Nulla but Nulla View and Spartan Prince. Spartan Prince produced many fine greyhounds including star sprinter Grand Sapper. Glenda Gale a Sandown track record holder a wonderful producing brood matron herself from a Byamee matron Meedo produced Rod Deakin's 1970 Hobart 1000 winner Plunder Road who in turn when at stud produced Corcoran, Bolta, Crete, Rustic Road, Fountain Hall, Warrenwood Girl and Bahdavid.

More importantly Plunder Road produced Pengala who was the dam of superstar race dog Tangaloo winner of the 1978 Melbourne Cup and the 1980 Australian Cup. He was also one of the great stud dogs of his era. He produced Tangairn, Eaglehawk Star, Pretty Short, November Prince, Rustic Venture, La Paz (dam of China Trip) and many more from his 627 offspring.

Glenda Gale's (Meedo) two best litter brothers Chief Anama produced talented sprinters Dawn's Sapphire and Baio and the 1966 Australian Cup winner Worthing.

Among Worthing's outstanding offspring came 1973 Australian Cup winner Half Your Luck (the best beginner I still have ever seen) 1971 Sydney Cup winner and 72 National Distance Champion Bubbles Luck plus the mighty He's Some Boy, Bandwagon John, Sir Worthy, Worthy View, Lajka, Princess Jilka, Bunratty Boy and Bronze Tonic.



A young Robin Herbert with Byamee and his litter sister Rarcomba

Byamee produced two very significant dam lines. One was from the broodbitch Beatnik (Byamee x Tiny City) she produced the dam line of Awesome Assassin, Lilli Pilli Lad, Isa Brown, Knocka Norris, Elite Oriental, Arsonist, Dazzle You, Irreplaceable, Spirit of Will, Aston Gallilee, Robust Character, Slater, Labyrinth, Tranquil Fire, Black Anvil and El Grand Senor.

The other sensational dam line and producer was Secretly by Rocket Mac from Makino (Byamee x Magenta) her granddaughter Newmore's Secretly produced Pretty Short the sire of New Tears and her daughter Bonnie Secret produced Little Blade the sire of the mighty Brother Fox.

Byamee didn't have many races starts but won on all Melbourne Speed Tracks and at Albury behind the Tin Hare Ray's son Robin recalls his race days.

"I remember Byamee's kennel name was Tim and he was a ripper of a race dog", said Ray's son, Robin Herbert. "Dad always had great box dogs [fast beginners] and Byamee was no exception. He was unlucky in a heat of the Melbourne Cup when he got caught in the boxes and was thrown up in the air. He still made up plenty of ground that day. That was the only time I can recall him being beaten. He won a lot of races and was so good he led a lot of his races by as much as 20 and 30 lengths", Robin added.



Ray Herbert's Son Robin and Grandson Adam accept the Hall of Fame award for Byamee

Byamee may have made his name great from another time and a world away from how we know Greyhound Racing today. However the rich history of our great sport will always be remember by the AGRA Hall of Fame. In 2013 at the Langham Hotel another worthy member joined the illustrious group the great **BYAMEE**.

By Neil Brown