

AGRA HALL OF FAME

Chief Havoc

White and Fawn Dog

(Trion x Thelma's Mate)

Whelped September 1944

Owner-Trainer: J.Millerd

Year of Induction 2000

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS:

1946 NCA Stake Harold Park

1947 800 Yards Championship Harold Park

Track Records:

Chief Havoc attempted to set six track records times

440 yards – 23.5 sec

500 yards – 26.8 sec equalled track record

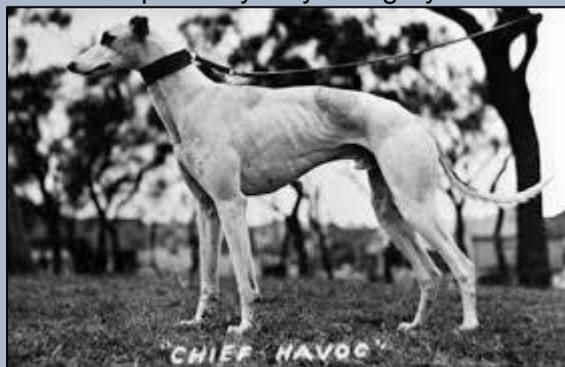
660 yards – 36.9 sec

700 yards – 38.7 sec

750 yards – 41.4 sec

800 yards – 44.3 sec

There was probably only one greyhound that deserved to be the oldest member of the AGRA Hall of Fame and that's the dog that is claimed to be Australian's Champion of Champions Chief Havoc.



It is almost impossible to compare eras but it's hard to argue with both Chief Havoc's race record and more importantly his contribution to the Australian stud scene is quite imposing. I think combined they almost put the champion out on his own, I'm happy to let you be the judge.

In a time following the Second World War, Chief Havoc was acclaimed to be the world's fastest greyhound. His deeds captured the imagination of the nation and brought crowds to the track in numbers never seen before.

The legend commenced in the mid 40's in north-eastern New South Wales . Mr Russ Westerweller a public trainer of Gunnedah and Mr Ernie Swan of Manilla decided to breed a litter combining greyhounds they had raced by association. Westerweller had raced and trained Naw's Own on lease from Swan. He also trained Trion an outstanding greyhound bred by Mrs Swan, both dogs had clashed in the 1944 NCA Trophy.

You could call it luck or just good management that the gentlemen decided on a union between the brilliant Trion, a greyhound who had won 40 races on 15 different tracks in New South



Wales and Thelma's Mate - a litter sister to Naw's Own. Whatever the case it's a breeding philosophy that has stood the test of time and remains a successful formula today.

The litter was the first for both dogs and was whelped on September 12th 1944; it comprised six dogs and two bitches. Entry the second and another prominent figure in the Chief Havoc story Mr Jack Millerd of Werris Creek New South Wales. Millerd sent a letter requesting a pup from the litter and purchased a five-week-old fawn and white dog for eight guineas in October 1944.

Chief Havoc or "Patches" as he was affectionately called, soon became an important member of the Millerd family. Not only was he reared in the backyard, but the young pup had the run of the place from the time he arrived.

Chief Havoc commenced his race career on the 20th of April 1946 at Grafton in a heat of the Easter Maiden. He was backed off the map and won easily, returning to score in the final two days later. It was to be the start of an astonishing career that saw the champion tagged as the "World's fastest greyhound" and "a wonder dog".

So superior was Chief Havoc as a race dog, fellow trainers refused to nominate against him. Millerd had no alternative than to compete in a number of match races and exhibition performances.

His most talked about exhibition was on May the 24th of 1947 at Harold Park. A crowd of 17,000 fans packed the complex to witness Chief Havoc's solo attack on all existing Harold Park records.



A series of discs were erected at points, which corresponded with six distances over which races had been run at Harold Park since a new track had been opened in 1936. A light was installed at each disc, which was to flash on when the record time for that particular distance showed on an official timer. Chief Havoc broke the 440 yards record, equalled the 500-yard record and broke the 660, 700, 750 and 800-yard records.

The Champion's race record was one to behold, he raced on 36 occasions over distances ranging from 300 to 800 yards recording 26 wins, five seconds and two thirds.

He set or equalled records in races at Harold Park, Wentworth Park, Bathurst, Dubbo, Dapto, Tamworth, Maitland, Wollongong, Gosford, Parkes, Lismore, Casino, Cessnock and Grafton.

He is probably the only greyhound in history that has had his name emblazoned on the front pages of Sydney Daily Newspapers.

The champion commanded a stud fee of 25 pounds when the average fee at the time was five to ten. Millerd had resisted many substantial offers for Chief Havoc during his race career knowing full well his greyhound's stud potential on retirement. He couldn't have been more correct in his judgement. Chief Havoc's deeds as a sire are legendary.

He sired no less than 453 litters earning around 14,000 pounds in stud fees. If you consider it was the late 40's and early 50's it was a small fortune.

He produced outstanding race dogs that became influential sires and created dam lines that produced champions for over 20 years. In fact the first 15 New South Wales Greyhounds Of the Year were all direct descendants of the wonder dog. It's fair to say that together with three or four others, Chief Havoc would rank as one of, if not the best Australian sires ever to stand at stud in this country.

His breeding exploits weren't confined to only Australia. Some of his progeny left an indelible mark on the breeding scene in America as well. The Champ's greatest honour was being inducted in April 1974 to the American "Hall Of Fame" in a ceremony held in Abilene, Kansas.



"Patches" passed away peacefully in his sleep in 1957 aged 13 and was buried beneath a tree at the near by Gunnedah track. The club later erected a life-sized monument of Chief Havoc that stands at the track's entrance not far from his resting-place.

As a final chapter a moving moment certainly for this writer and many others no doubt, came at the 2001 induction of Chief Havoc into the AGRA Hall of Fame. The presentation was held at the Nationals Gala dinner before a packed house in the dining room at the Meadows.

Visible moved by the whole occasion, Jack Millerd's widow Mrs Beryl Kennedy who had made the trip down from Gunnedah to accept the award. Was almost unable to speak such was her heart felt emotion for the memory of what Chief Havoc had meant to her family. It was an explanation of pride where silence told a thousand words and it was a moment I'll never forget.

Yes, Chief Havoc a true legend in every sense of the word.

As host of that awards night I took the opportunity to do something in public I'd never done before. To the full house of invited guests from all over Australia I recited the following Poem. It was to honour the great champion, as I don't think many greyhounds in history have had a Poem penned in honour of their name. Here is Neville Fisher's tribute to the champion, simple titled.

SON OF GUNNEDAH

Now gather round you punters and bookies here tonight,
We want to draw attention to an important oversight,
There's a wonder dog in question made coursing history,
This hound was named CHIEF HAVOC and is buried by this tree
Born a real Australian, won races by the score,
With a heart as big as Phar Lap and the brains of trainers galore,
Tonight, we all should toast him, a son of GUNNEDAH.

A brave and honest coursing dog, as good ones mostly are,
Tonight, we should remember him, as all here will agree
They never breed them better than the old hound by the tree.

And sometimes on a race night, when the bunny starts to whirr,
And the traps spring open I'm sure the old CHIEF stirs
And listens till the punters have all gone home, Too soon,
Then he has a final gallop by the pale light of the moon.

