

AGRA HALL OF FAME

Macareena

Brindle Bitch

(Chef Havoc x Casson)

Whelped June 1951

Owner-Trainer: L.Taylor

Year of Induction 2001

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS:

96 stars: 50 wins, 32 placings

Track Records:

Dubbo 425 yards (23.0)

Gunnedah 600 yards (32.9)

Gunnedah 375 yards (20.3)

Harold Park 500 yards (26.5)

Newcastle 530 yards (29.0)

Maitland 550yards (30.0)

Wentworth Park 580 yards (31.4)

Newcastle 530 yards (28.8)

Gunnedah 475 yards (25.5)

Dubbo 425 yards (22.8)

Young 550 yards (30.0)

Tamworth 493 yards (26.6)

Lithgow 310 yards (17.1)

Jack Woodward (the Editor of the Greyhound Recorder for 25 years) rated Macareena as the equal of Zoom Top. Her winning strike rate for a greyhound, which had close to 100 starts, was quite remarkable.

During 1954, many rival camps refused to nominate their dogs against Macareena unless their charge was given a six or eight yard head start under handicap conditions; quite simply they had resigned themselves to defeat.

The death of Macareena In September 1967, at the kennels of her owner, Len Taylor of Coolah (northern New South Wales), severed a link with the golden era of greyhound racing In Australia when the daughter of Chief Havoc and Casson established herself as one of the greatest greyhound ever to race behind the mechanical hare in Australia.

If there's any doubt, to the above statement take a quick look at her tally of records.

She raced record times at Harold Park, Wentworth Park, Newcastle (three times), Maitland, Gunnedah (five times), Tamworth (three times), Dubbo (three times), Young (twice) and Lithgow.



Yes, this made her tally 20 record runs, and eclipsed the performance of her sire Chief Havoc, who earned the title of Australia's "wonder dog" when he raced record time on 19 occasions during his brilliant career.

Macareena was whelped in June 1951 and retired from racing in April 1957 at the age of five years and 10 months with an amazing tally of 95 race starts for 50 wins and 32 minor placings.

She was bred by Mr T. Wilkinson, who owned her dam Casson, who was a daughter of Minda Jerry the 1942 Derby and Waterloo Cup winner at Rooty Hill.

There were seven pups, in the litter, including Miss Oakey and Macareena, each of whom started their racing careers with Mr Wilkinson as their part owners.

Later Macareena was purchased outright by Len Taylor, whilst Kevin Izzard took over Mr Wilkinson's share in Miss Oakey.

Miss Oakey was the better performer of the pair when they both started racing and as a bad age puppy, whelped in June, 1951, she won the 1953 Harold Park Biannual Classic.

Soon afterwards American coal and oil magnate, Mr L. M. Kirkpatrick, sent an envoy to Australia to purchase our "best dog" and "best bitch" for his own private kennels.

The late Jack Woodward was given the task of naming the pair and at that time selected Miss Oakey as the best bitch and Marheat as the best dog.

The pair were purchased for the equivalent of \$200,000 on present day currency, and soon after their departure for America Macareena started to show the form which would have made her an obvious choice over her litter sister.

Marheat proved a good buy as he was an outstanding stud success at the Kirkpatrick kennels but Miss Oakey never did anything of note.

Macareena, who had been beaten at her first start at Dubbo, won her next 11 starts, including her first three at Harold Park, and raced record time at Dubbo (425 yards) and at Gunnedah over 375 and 600 yards.

She then won the 800 yards President Stake at Harold Park, leading all the way to beat Sashweight after being backed to 6/4-on.

Macareena then went back to win over 370 yards at Gunnedah the following Saturday, and during her return trips to Sydney won four Harold Park Stakes (500 yards) on end to make her

tally seven successive wins. Harold Park Stakes in those days were considered the "blue riband" or major free-for-all of greyhound racing In Australia.

In one of these wins Macareena equalled the existing track and world record of 26.5 secs, established by China Lady in 1948, and in another she ran 26.6 secs.

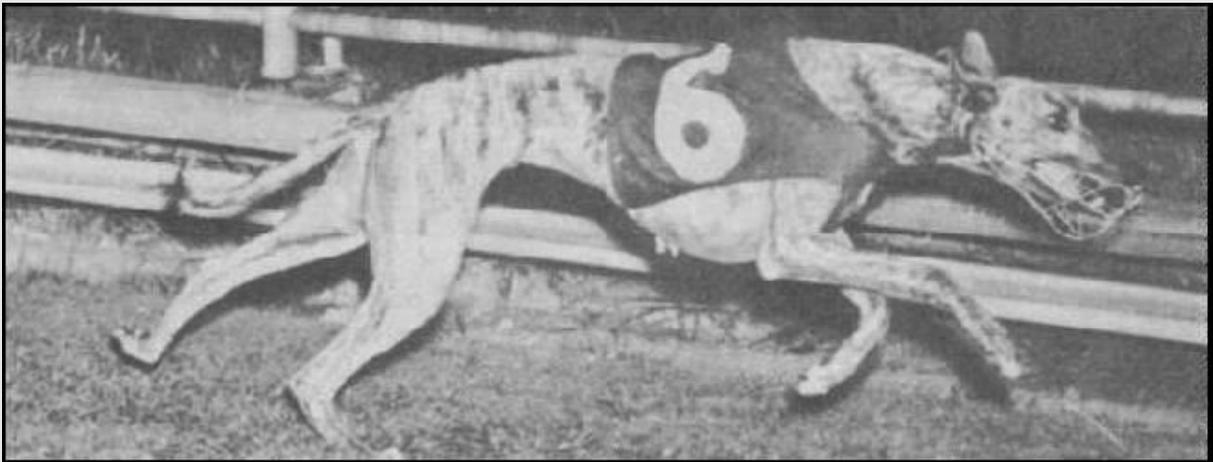
Her racing however was not restricted to Harold Park as Len Taylor would take her anywhere to boost a country meeting, and in between her Sydney wins Macareena also won at Gosford and Bulli.

Four records in a row followed at Tamworth (480 yards), Gunnedah (475 yards), Newcastle (530 yards) and Maitland (550 yards) before Macareena set the Australasian 580 yards record of 31.4 secs at Wentworth Park.

Wentworth Park at the time was a grass surface and we must take into account how tracks were prepared in those days, it's a far cry to what modern technology and the know how that is used since the early 90's.

Following her Wentworth Park record in which she beat Farloc by eight lengths Macareena broke her own records at Newcastle, Gunnedah and Dubbo. She then struck more than her share of bad luck when Plunkett's Pride beat her into second place at her next three starts at Harold Park.

In one of those defeats Plunkett's Pride equalled the record of 26.5 secs and a match race between the pair was arranged for April 1954.



It was one of the best match races in the history of the sport, Plunkett's Pride with the inside running, kept Macareena on the outside of him all the way to beat her by, three-quarters of a length.

Despite further brilliant country wins, including two record runs at Young, Macareena had no luck in Sydney and Farloc beat her in the NCA Championship at Wentworth Park, in a time, only a tenth outside her own record.

Betting indicated what punters thought of her defeat in the championship and Macareena was an odds-on favourite when she beat Farloc at her next two starts at Wentworth Park and Harold Park.

After more record runs at Tamworth, Lithgow and Newcastle, Macareena was back, again at Harold Park to beat Farloc, a win which completed another "hat trick", and she then went on to add two more wins at Wentworth Park to her tally.

In February 1955 the NCA introduced a 580 yards Summer Handicap at Wentworth Park in which all the best sprinters were drawn to compete, Macareena was handicapped on the scratch mark and conceding seven yards to the front markers.

In her heat she raced through the entire field to win by eight lengths in 31.5secs - an amazing performance but she had to be scratched from the final following a leg injury.

That was Macareena's last win in Sydney, as the "hoodoo" of handicap racing, also marred the future performance of many stars when the dogs had been introduced to that form of racing late in their careers, Macareena proved a slow beginner in remaining starts in Sydney. She didn't seem to be affected on country tracks as she added a further record at Dubbo, to her tally and won at Gunnedah, Tamworth and Murrumburrah before her retirement in 1957.

Macareena was mated twice, in 1957 and 1958, with Fine Linen, the sire of Top Linen, but she produced nothing special and it looked as though she, like her sister Miss Oakey in America, was not going to produce anything to carry on her name. Then in 1959 Len Taylor mated her with Rocket Jet and she produced Rocket Mac.

Rocket Mac was the star puppy during 1961, winning the Harold Park Classic and NSW Country Championship at Wentworth Park.

Rocket Mac raced only for 13 months before Len Taylor retired him to stud, in his short race career he won 27 races and ran 10 placings, including 11 record runs on seven different tracks.

In April 1962 he twice clipped a tenth of a second off the 530-yard record at Newcastle which Macareena had set just, eight years previously.

Rocket Jet died soon after his mating with Macareena and it has always been a matter of regret that the pair, who were obviously the right "nick", never had a chance to produce another litter. However, Rocket Mac, whose progeny continued an outstanding sire line for many generations after his death, his name consistently appearing in most top pedigrees for the last four decades. It has maintained the famous name of Macareena to the present day, and her greatness was further acknowledged and remembered after she was inducted into the AGRA Hall of Fame at the Brisbane Nationals in 2002. Finally a recommendation of how Macareena should rate, came from the late legendary Rod Deakin when he once told me she was the best bitch he ever saw race.