

AGRA HALL OF FAME

Paul Cauchi

Years involved in industry: 53

Category: Trainer

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS:

Leading Trainer in New South Wales 1971, 1972 and 1980's.

Trained winners of the Association Cup (Group 1) and National Sprint Championship (Group 1) and countless other feature events.

Trained many champion dogs including Pied Rebel, Ragsie, Coorparoo Flyer, Miami Moss, Clover Duke, Go Billy Go and Naralta.

Paul Cauchi migrated to Australia from Malta in 1952 at the age of 16. His interest in greyhound racing began not long after when he attended race meetings at the Richmond track.

His training career commenced in 1958 with two greyhounds he leased. They were both considered to be of limited ability and soon after the best of them contracted Hepatitis and died. This left Paul with just one greyhound who failed to impress in early trials.

Paul, however, persisted with different methods and ultimately, the greyhound raced as Roy's Ace and won eight races. Roy's Ace also gave Paul his first racing experience at the famed Harold Park circuit where he raced just once for a half-head second at 50/1.



It was clear from this early point, Paul had a rare gift with greyhounds. His racing team increased, and the winners flowed.

Greyhound racing in NSW, in this period, was booming. Competition for starts was so high that most clubs restricted trainers to two runners per meeting and one runner per race.

Paul's strike rate was staggering. In 1960, with a small team in work, he won 36 races in a six-week period. Unheard of statistics given the starting restrictions that existed.

Paul soon identified opportunities in the greyhound industry and was soon putting his earnings into a trial track

at Toongabbie, followed by Northmead and ultimately the purchasing of 27 acres at Kellyville.

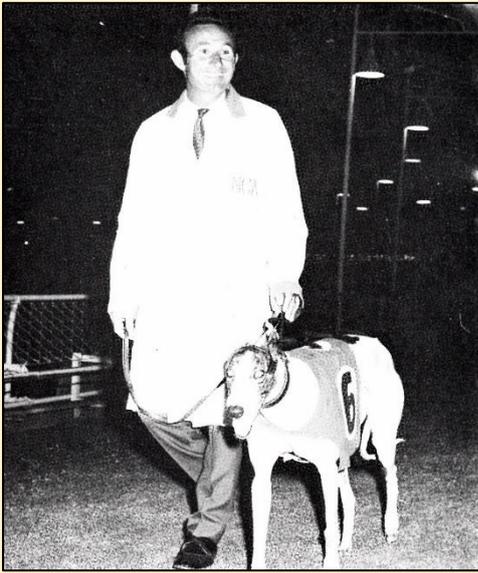
Kellyville would, over a four-year period, be developed into the most important trialling track in NSW. It boasted a straight track and two 500m circle tracks – one grass and one loam.

All NSW tracks at the time were grass and provided limited trialling services. Cauchi's – as it was known – therefore catered for extraordinary demand. A Sunday trial session involved 1000 greyhounds in circle trials and up to 500 in the straight trials.

Paul obviously needed assistance and his family, as well as the Sultana and Gatt families were heavily involved. To this date, the influence of these three-greyhound racing devoted families remains profound.

While the trialling business boomed, Paul never lost sight of his first love – training. Starting restrictions still existed and so Paul's race team was never more than 20 in number.

City starts were restricted but the Cauchi team emerged as one of the most powerful training brands in Australia and the stars began to emerge.



In 1970's Paul's team was headed by Pied Rebel. He raced successfully throughout the eastern States and was runner up in the NSW Greyhound of the Year. In 1971, Paul's kennel was led by Ragsie, the all distance champion and NSW Greyhound of the Year. Ragsie was sent to Paul from Victoria - he started 30 times for 20 wins.

Paul was the NSW leading Metropolitan Trainer in 1971 and 1972 and again in the 1980's. He was consistently in the top three in between. In addition to Pied Rebel and Ragsie, Paul applied the training polish to a host of top-liners including Coorparoo Flyer, Miami Moss, Clover Duke, Go Billy Go and Naralta.

His trophy cabinet includes an Association Cup (Group 1) and a National Sprint Championship (Group 1) and

countless other feature events. It is difficult to compare trainers over time – they race to circumstances in their era.

In his best years, Paul raced in a golden era. A time where weekly feature invitation races were virtually all at Group standard, a time when a city start was cause for celebration and a time when the punt was king.

With Harold Park and Wentworth Park boasting in excess of 70 bookmakers, the art of having a greyhound peak when money was on was a primary skill requirement for any trainer. And Paul was a master of the art.

“The punt in those days was how we made a quid... trialling was big at Kellyville but I was only charging 30 cents a trials and costs were high,” said Paul.

Beyond training, Paul was also a stud master enjoying great success with Pied Rebel and Ragsie.

Pied Rebel's progeny include: Dynamic Dean, Rebel Attack and Lord Tegimi.

Paul shifted from Sydney in 1988 to the Gold Coast. Since then, his involvement has been limited to a small number in training and the checking of greyhounds where his skills are still widely sought. He has also served as a member of the former Gold Coast Greyhound Racing Club.

He still regularly attends race meetings and holds great appreciation for participants in the sport.

By Brenton Scott.



Paul Cauchi accepts his award from GBOTA Chairman Geoff Rose