



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**10th September 2021**  
***Tommy Shelby wins the GCA 2020-2021***  
***Australian Greyhound Of The Year Award***



In another change to the presentation of the GCA Australian Greyhound of the Year Awards night. GCA with the outstanding assistance of Sky Channel and the Catching Pen the Awards show was presented in a 90-minute special, due to Covid -19 and the cancellation of the National Championships in Melbourne. Beautifully put together by talented producer Kat Ernst the show was well received by the industry Australia wide. Hosts Marc Ohlmus and Jason Adams did a sterling job presenting the Award winners in great detail.

West Australian owned & trained sprint sensation Tommy Shelby won the Greyhound the Year.

The winner was selected by the GCA Racing committee in consultation with industry experts. The other three finalists all had outstanding years. Shima Shine (37 wins, \$729,000, G1 Topgun, G1 Gold Bullion), Stanley Road (15 wins, \$357,000, G1 Super Stayers, G1 Association Cup) and Tiggerlong Tonk (42 wins, \$707,000, G1 Perth Cup, G1 Harrison Dawson).

## **TOMMY SHELBY**

Tommy Shelby is a Black dog by Fernando Bale from Serena Fly High whelped on the 8th March 2018, he has had 47 race starts for 31 wins and 12 placings winning \$1,020,870.

Tommy's win strike rate was 66%.

Raced by the Withers Harders Syndicate - S Withers, J Harders he is trained by Steve Withers at Casuarina in West Australia.

Tommy Shelby had a 2020-21 season that was staggering in not only its success but proved his greatness in front of the entire country.

He chased Group success in five different states during a time of great uncertainty with Covid.

His 2020-21 highlight reel included: Won the G1 Australian Cup, Won the G1 Golden Easter Egg, Won the G1 Hobart 1000, Second in the G1 Vic Peters to Playlist, Third in the Million Dollar Chase to Handsome Prince, Fourth in the G1 Topgun to Shima Shine, Third in the G3 Golden Ticket to Crazy Cool, Third in the G1 Gold Bullion to Shima Shine and Finalist in the G1 Temlee to Wow

Tommy Shelby - a worthy winner of the 2020/21 GCA Greyhound Of The Year Award.

The previous winners of the AGRA - GCA Australian Greyhound of the Year are 2002 **Boomeroo**, 2003 **Bombastic Shiraz**, 2004 **Whisky Assassin**, 2005 **Pure Octane**, 2006 **Betty's Angel**, 2007 **Flashing Floods**, 2008 **El Galo**, 2009 **Cindeen Shelby**, 2010 **El Grand Senior**, 2011 **Dyna Tron**, 2012 **Miata**, 2012-2013 **Miata**, 2013-2014 **Xylia Allen**, 2014-2015 **Fernando Bale**, 2015-2016 **Dyna Double One**, 2016-2017 **Fanta Bale**, 2017-2018 **Fanta Bale**, 2018-2019 **Orson Allen and** 2020-2021 **Simon Told Helen**.

GCA announced the other award winners in the following categories.

### **2020-2021 Brood Bitch of the Year was Serena Fly High**

When your progeny includes Greyhound of the Year Tommy Shelby and star sprinter Jungle Deuce there's a good chance you'll claim the coveted dam of the year award.

Tommy Shelby's mother, Serena Fly High, a fine race bitch herself and owned in Sydney by Vince Bennett and his daughter Amy, has produced the winners of \$1.6 million.

They also include Tommy's littermates Withers Monelli (17 wins, \$106,000), Steve Monelli (13 wins, \$95,000), Jumbo Jet (9 wins, \$36,000) and Kirra Monelli (6 wins, \$33,000), while to Barcia Bale she is the mother of current Group star Jungle Deuce (15 wins, \$220,000) etc.

Serena Fly High's influence on the breeding scene continues to be profound and the deeds of her offspring during 2020/21 more than earned her Dam of The Year for the racing season.

### **2020-2021 Sire of the Year was Fernando Bale**

It was yet another remarkable racing season for champion sire Fernando Bale as his offspring picked up a spate of big races right around the country. He won by a record number of Group points at 3931 from Barcia Bale 2102 it was the biggest winning margin the history of the Rankings.

With his progeny winning over 8,000 races and a record \$28 million in stake earnings, Fernando Bale laid claim to eight Group 1 winners during the season, led by superstar sprinters Tommy Shelby three and Wow two plus Fernando Cazz, Tornado Tears and Lakeview Walter.

It was another truly amazing year by the Hall of Fame chaser as a sire, continuing to have a profound influence over the Australasian breeding landscape.

### **2020-2021 Run of the Year went to Stanley Road**

To win a group 1 race is no easy feat.

To do it "coming from nowhere" in a run that had to be seen to be believed. His extraordinary performance to come from 12 lengths off the lead in the Group 1 Association Cup running down the leaders in the straight to get up and win at Wentworth Park on April 10th.

After giving away a decent start to greyhounds the caliber of Fernando Cazz, Let's See and Zipping Niseko in the final, even his most ardent supporters would have considered his chances forlorn.

But doing only as Stanley Road can, the freakish talent dropped from the clouds to produce one of the more stunning Group 1 wins you'll see, and in turn delivering connections the Run Of The Year gong.

The Run Of the Year was determined from the 12 runs of the month, then by a vast panel of judges from each state. This year some 25 people cast their opinion in the nationwide poll deciding quite conclusively that the performance of Stanley Road was without doubt the Run of the Year.

### **2020-2021 Trainer of the Year was Steve Withers**

43 wins from 14 starters at a strike-rate of 37% for a whopping \$1 million in prize money.

They're the lofty numbers that contributed to Steve Withers earning the 2020/21 Trainer of The Year Award.

However, as we know a lot is taken into consideration when determining the winner. For Steve his exploits with champion sprinter Tommy Shelby were on show all over the country, as part-owner and trainer Steve Withers endeared himself to whatever state he got to, and he made it to five. It was a difficult time to be travelling due to the restrictions imposed on all and Withers handled it with amazing grace and represented the industry as always in its best light. His sense of community donating \$40,000 of Tommy Shelby's prizemoney to a number of charities in WA did not go unnoticed. Steve Withers - a worthy victor of the 2020/21 Trainer Of The Year.

The Trainer of the Year is determined after nominations are put forward to the GCA Racing Committee who cast votes at a meeting held in July.

The panel takes into account a number of different aspects of the training side of things, it includes. Group wins, and finalists, State city wins, number of runners and dogs in work, percentage per runners ect. Plus, the important aspect of the manner in which the trainer is an ambassador for our code.

### **Denise Fysh Award Ron Hawkswell**

In April 2019, the Australian greyhound industry lost a true icon with the passing of Denise Fysh after succumbing to cancer. Her passion and selfless devotion to the Hobart Club and to her home state Tasmania had a profound influence that will benefit generations to come.

Having no set criteria, the GCA Committee can direct this award in any direction it deems fit, and this year they decided to acknowledge the efforts of Victorian racecaller Ron Hawkswell. This year marked 50 years calling for the Hawk a most popular figure Australia wide. His passion and love of the industry has endeared him to many over the years. A humble and likeable character Hawkswell has made friends in every corner of the nation. He has served on every Top Gun panel, Victorian Greyhound of the Year panel and was recognized with the Ken Carr medal for services to the Victorian industry. Having known Denise Ron is delighted to have won the award.

### **The GCA Hall of Fame Inductees**

Two new members were inducted into the GCA Hall of Fame this year. In the category of Brood Bitch Strand Belle as the foundation bitch of Barry Smith's Mepunga line her legacy spans 50 years and shows no signs of slowing down.

In the category of Associate one of the most popular Greyhound journalists of all time New South Wales's Jeff Collerson has been inducted into the GCA Hall of Fame. A much-loved figure nationwide Collerson has promoted the industry tirelessly for over 60 years. A detailed account of both inductees can be found in the Hall of Fame section of the GCA Website.

We look forward to the Awards night being back to normal next year when the National Championships are held in Sydney along with the GCA Greyhound of the Year, Annual meeting and Conference is hosted by the GBOTA.

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