

## MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 21 November 2018

### **GRV Media Release – TAB Melbourne Cup set to take centre stage as Australia’s most prestigious greyhound race**

An elite field of runners from around Australia has assembled for the 2018 TAB Melbourne Cup at Sandown Park this Friday night.

With \$630,000 available in prize money for the Cup alone, and \$1 million across the entire card, the 2018 TAB Melbourne Cup is shaping as one of the biggest ever.

Seona Thompson, who trained last year’s winner Aston Dee Bee, is rated as a strong chance to go back-to-back with her two runners in the field Poke The Bear and the undefeated Black Opium rated highly ahead of greyhound racing’s biggest night.

Poke The Bear has drawn the familiar box six, having won three of his group races from there and will be wearing the green rug for the 10th time when he lines up in his 52nd career start on Friday night.

My Redeemer was the big winner out of Sunday’s TAB Melbourne Cup box draw after drawing the coveted box 1 for Friday night’s final.

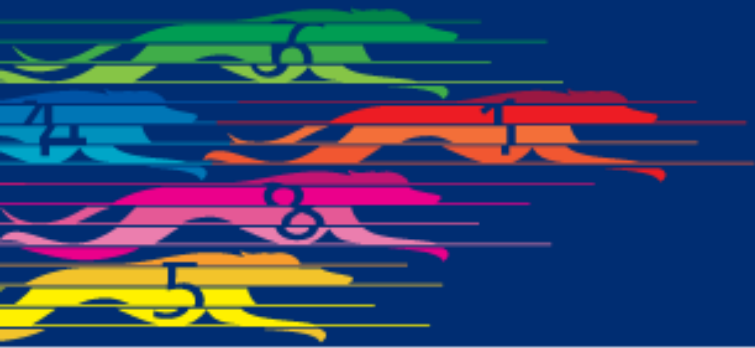
Trainer David Geall was the first to be called forward at the box draw and did well to contain his delight at securing the inside box.

“I didn’t want to be drawn out first, but as soon as I saw we had box 1 it was a huge relief,” Geall said.

“It’s such a massive race and it’s so important to draw a good box. It’s given him every chance – there’s no guarantees, we all know that – but it gives him a big chance.”

It’s the second consecutive year Geall has had a TAB Melbourne Cup contender after Up Hill Jill made the final in 2017. Despite ‘Jill’ finishing outside of the placings, the thrill of having a runner in the final of the world’s greatest greyhound race provided wonderful memories for Geall and his wife Rose, and they are looking forward to experiencing it all again this year.

“We were privileged to do it last year with Jill. It’s so exciting to know you have a runner in it, but then the week leading up to it – it’s what makes it so fun and so exciting. It’s so well done by everyone involved, it makes it the race the biggest in the world.”



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Reigning National Sprint Champion West On Augie comes across the nullabor with plenty of hype in his quest to become the first chaser since Hall of Famer Rapid Journey to claim the Nationals-Melbourne Cup double.

She's Gifted was also a big winner out of the box draw after coming up with box 2. Trained by Debbie Coleman for the 15 member Tsols Tips Syndicate, many of whom are enjoying greyhound ownership for the first time, She's Gifted is rated a good chance to become the first Shootout finalist since Bombastic Shiraz to go on and win the TAB Melbourne Cup.

### Group 1 TAB Melbourne Cup – November 23

1. My Redeemer (David Geall - Lara)
2. She's Gifted (Deborah Coleman - Lara)
3. Dyna Harpa (Andrea Dailly - Anakie)
4. Notorious Mac (Des Douch - Maffra)
5. Black Opium (Seona Thompson - Pearcedale)
6. Poke The Bear (Seona Thompson - Pearcedale)
7. Degani (William McMahon - Darriman)
8. West On Augie (Robert Britton - Lara)

**Res:**

9. Hasten Slowly (Angela Langton - Anakie)
10. Miss Splendarimo (David Geall - Lara)

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