



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Thursday, 7 December 2017

### **GRV Media Release - Sports stars and community leaders come together for Gippsland Carnival launch**

Australia's biggest greyhound racing regional series was launched with a bang at the Traralgon Greyhound Racing Club on Thursday night.

Local business leaders, politicians and high-profile sports stars were among a crowd of more than 200 for the launch of the second annual Gippsland Carnival which connects four country Cups in Sale, Traralgon, Warragul and Cranbourne.

State Shadow Minister for Racing and Gippsland East MP Tim Bull was in attendance as was the member for Gippsland South Danny O'Brien.

Victorian greyhound racing ambassador and AFL games record holder Brent Harvey was on hand, as was Western Bulldogs premiership player and Gippsland native Josh Dunkley and his sister, Melbourne Vixens netballer Lara Dunkley.

The \$75,000 TRFM Sale Cup will kick off the series on Boxing Day, followed by the \$47,000 Warragul Cup on 13 January, the \$47,000 Traralgon Cup on 27 January and the \$47,000 Cranbourne Cup on 10 February.

Points are allocated for first, second and third place getters throughout the series and a Gippsland Champion will be crowned at the end of the carnival.

The series was held for the first time last year and has been finetuned for 2017, to span eight weeks. The Stayer and Sprinter competitions have been combined into one overall championship series and more points will be on offer in the heats.

A \$20,000 bonus will be shared among the top three greyhounds of the series.

Greyhound Racing Victoria's Chairman Bernie Carolan said the Victorian State Government had been a strong backer of Victorian greyhound racing, particularly in the Gippsland region.

"In the last six months alone GRV and the government have committed almost \$450,000 to racing and community initiatives in Gippsland and Cranbourne through the Victorian Racing Industry Fund, and the Gippsland Carnival is a major part of that investment," Mr Carolan said.

Mr Carolan said the amendments to the 2017 series would create an even more intense competition and a better racing spectacle for the crowds.



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“This is a terrific concept that connects four clubs for one exciting series,” Mr Carolan said.

“Last year’s carnival generated a lot of interest. The series showcases the Gippsland region and greyhound racing.”

Mr Carolan said Gippsland was greyhound racing heartland, adding that the industry had a significant presence in the region.

“Outside of Melbourne, Gippsland is the biggest centre of greyhound racing in Victoria, contributing around \$30 million to the local economy and sustaining thousands of jobs. There is no better place for a series like this,” he said.

“GRV, the clubs and the Victorian Government are demonstrating their commitment to Gippsland and greyhound racing by investing in events like this.

Mr Carolan thanked major sponsor TRFM and other important sponsors for their participation.

“All over Victoria the success of greyhound racing depends on the support of the community. We have great friends of greyhound racing in Gippsland and the clubs have developed great partnerships. Greyhound racing is an integral part of the Gippsland community.”

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