



## MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 19 December 2016

### Sale kicks off Gippsland Carnival with local stars chasing glory

Trainers from Gippsland and kennel stars from across the State are set to compete for a share of more than \$800,000 in prizemoney during the Gippsland Carnival which kicks off at Sale on Boxing Day.

The opening running of the Gippsland Sprint will see Melbourne Cup runner-up Jesaulenko and Pantera Nera represent the Gippsland region in hope of becoming Gippsland Sprint Champion.

The Pakenham South-trained Dundee Osprey headlines the \$107,250 Group One TRFM Sale Cup field which also includes a number of other Gippsland stars including Zipping Kane which is trained near Sale by Carolyn Jones.

Dundee Osprey, trained by Geoff Scott-Smith is one of the fastest greyhounds of the modern era and is likely to start favourite over the testing 650m of the Sale Cup.

"It is great to be part of greyhound racing, especially when they are supporting our local Gippsland region," Mr Scott-Smith said.

Hazelwood North-based trainer Gavin Burke has Pantera Nera (who won the Traralgon Cup this year) targeting the sprint side of the Gippsland Carnival including attempting to make it back-to-back Traralgon Cup victories.

"It's a time to celebrate greyhound racing— GRV are providing our struggling communities not only with funds through local businesses but putting on a carnival where people can enjoy a day out at the greyhounds without breaking the bank," Mr Burke said.

"The Gippsland Carnival can be life changing, especially with more than \$800,000 up for grabs.

"It's great to be a part of it and if you can take a small piece of the pie I'm sure it will go a long way to making the new year even better.

"It's good to have the sprinters and the stayers running in the same atmosphere and the same point system with both type of greyhounds being given a chance to hold the Champion Stayer or Sprinter title."

Western Bulldogs captain Bob Murphy, who was born and bred in Warragul, is the ambassador for the carnival.

"The Carnival brings Gippsland together, shines a light on the region and is going to be a good thing for all Gippslanders and visitors," Mr Murphy said.

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The Gippsland Carnival is a regional Australian-first, connecting four country cups from Sale, through Warragul and Cranbourne to Traralgon.

A sprint and distance series will link all four legs with a Gippsland Champion Sprinter, and Gippsland Champion Stayer, crowned at the end of the carnival.

The TRFM Sale Cup will kick off the excitement with its traditional race meeting on Boxing Day, while Traralgon will wrap it up with a grand finale on March 25.

Warragul's feature night will be held January 28 with Cranbourne taking centre stage February 11.

Families can also go in the draw to win a trip to Disneyland, by getting their 'passport' stamped at two of the four cups.

With an underlying theme of 'flying colours', Colours on Course will give everyone a chance to win a prize for best dressed. Alex Osmond from *Her Wardrobe* was recently announced as fashion partner and has encouraged everyone to get involved.

"I am extremely excited to come on board as a fashion partner with Greyhound Racing Victoria, for their inaugural Colours on Course competition," Ms Osmond said.

"I hope to see as many women and men as possible dressing to the colours and patterns of all eight greyhounds, with judges looking for the most styling representation of this."

Greyhound racing generates about \$40 million for the Gippsland economy, employing hundreds of local people.

Across Victoria, greyhound racing makes a substantial contribution of more than \$300 million to the economy, employing more than 3000 people and generating \$1.8 billion in wagering.

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