



Friday 24 November, 2023

Sportsbet Melbourne Cup Heats: Armchair guide

Compiled by Peter Quilty

The 2023 \$4.1m Sportsbet *Dream Chasers Festival* is the world's richest greyhound series.

And the 2023 \$1.008m Group 1 Sportsbet Melbourne Cup – carrying a \$650,000 first prize on December 2 – is the world's greatest greyhound race.

So, naturally, you would expect the Melbourne Cup heats (515m) – Night 3 of the *DCF's* five massive nights of elite greyhound racing and entertainment – to be possibly the best quality night of racing in the world.

Well, ponder the following facts and figures as 64 of Australia's premier sprinters go "marching as one on the road to the holy grail".

Yes, "it's one hell of a story"!

On a cumulative basis, the Melbourne Cup aspirants have amassed a staggering **806** wins from **2381** starts (a 34% strike rate) with – get this – **\$11,596,762** in prizemoney – and **11** Group 1 trophies on the mantelpiece!

Further, Sportsbet's early betting market is dominated by six superstars.

Amazingly, three are trained by four-time Melbourne Cup winner Jason Thompson – **Alpha Zulu** (\$6), **Flying Zulu** (\$7.50) and **Postman Pat** (\$7.50) – while the other three – **Big Energy** (\$6), **Wow She's Fast** (\$7.50) and **Victa Damian** (\$9.50) are prepared by 'Team Greenough' (Jackie and Kel).

The sextet has a combined total of **148** starts for **91** wins (a 61% strike rate) with **\$3,410,160** in prizemoney. They have also won **four** G1s between them.

Quite simply, the Melbourne Cup heats are 'Fields of Dreams'!

Meanwhile, four heats of the Group 1 Sportsbet Bold Trease (715m) for the staying supremos will also be decided on the program.

Some of the major players ultimately chasing a \$105,000 first prize are locals **Moraine Suzie** (reigning Victorian Stayer of the Year), **Zoha Bale** (dual G1 finalist) and **Like Wildfire** (G1 Topgun Stayers finalist), along with New South Wales star **Palawa King** (winner G1 National Distance Championship and G1

Queensland Cup) and Queensland staying revelation **Icy Eyes** (12 wins from 22 starts including past six in succession) who heads Sportsbet's 'All In' market at \$4.

Saturday night's Melbourne Cup heats meeting, and the remainder of the Dream Chasers Festival, will be showcased nationally on free-to-air television on Racing.com, as well as Foxtel's channel 529.

CHASE YOUR DREAM PROMOTION

Be on course on any of the three remaining nights of the Sportsbet Dream Chasers Festival for a chance to share in more than \$100,000 in cash and prizes.

On Topgun night one lucky patron won a sporting experience in Los Angeles for two, where he'll watch legendary franchise the LA Lakers take on defending champions the Denver Nuggets, as well as an ice hockey match between the LA Kings and New Jersey.

Shootout night saw another patron win a fully catered corporate suite for 12 guests at the AFL match of her choice at Marvel Stadium.

This Saturday night, simply head to the Sportsbet tent at Sandown Park and scan the QR code before Race 5 (8.02pm) for your chance to be one of eight lucky patrons drawn and allocated a greyhound competing in Race 9 (9.25pm).

If your dog wins, you'll get to pick a box to reveal your prize from a pool including \$10k cash or \$5k fuel and grocery vouchers.

You must be on course to collect your prize.

Terms and conditions at dreamchasersfestival.com.au

KEY TIMES

5.30pm – Gates open.

6.34pm – First race.

7.59pm – QR code entries close for Chase Your Dream promotion prior to start of Race 5.

8.00pm – Race 5 – First Quaddie leg.

10.33pm – Last race (Race 12) followed by the box draw.

HOW TO FOLLOW THE ACTION

- Racing.com will cover every race, every story, and every moment from 6.15pm with Gareth Hall, James Van de Maat, Mitch Ebeyer, Corey Smith and Kelsey Browne.
 - Watch the racing LIVE and FREE on the Watchdog App.
 - Radio coverage and expert analysis from GRV's Gerard Guthrie on RSN Racing & Sport (927 AM).
 - Social media coverage on GRV Facebook, GRV Instagram and Watchdog Racing X.
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REMAINING DREAM CHASERS FESTIVAL NIGHTS

Saturday 25 November: Sportsbet Melbourne Cup Heats, Sandown Park

Saturday 2 December: Sportsbet Melbourne Cup Final, Sandown Park

Saturday 16 December: The Phoenix, The Meadows

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