



Friday 15 December, 2023

The Phoenix: Armchair guide

Compiled by Gerard Guthrie and Peter Quilty

The world's highest-earning greyhound, **Wow She's Fast**, is chasing an incredible third straight victory in the \$1.65 million The Phoenix (525m) at The Meadows on Saturday night.

The third running of The Phoenix, the world's richest greyhound race, will provide an epic conclusion to the second \$4.1 million Dream Chasers Festival.

Wow She's Fast (box 6), trained by Kel and Jackie Greenough at Pearcedale, has accumulated \$2,391,995 in prizemoney, the figure boosted significantly by her two Phoenix triumphs, which have netted \$750,000 (2021) and \$1 million (2022).

Eight groups/organisations paid \$100,000 each to purchase a slot in The Phoenix, with **Wow She's Fast** continuing her association with Sportsbet.

After winning the first two editions of The Phoenix from boxes four and six, the champion will once again have to do it the hard way after drawing six for the second year in succession, with Sportsbet rating her at \$10.

The price should not deter **Wow She's Fast's** legion of admirers, as she's started at \$11 and \$6.60 in her two Phoenix triumphs.

The Phoenix box draw, conducted in a 'pick a box' format, wasn't kind to the Greenough kennel, with their two slot holders, **Big Energy** (box 7) and **Wow She's Fast**, the final two sprinters to select a box.

Melbourne Cup runner-up **Big Energy** drifted from pre-box draw favourite to the fourth line of betting at \$6 as a consequence of his wide alley.

The big winners at the box draw were undoubtedly **Pass The Buck** (box 1) and **Hector Fawley** (box 2), which share favouritism with Sportsbet at \$4.50.

The youngest and most inexperienced contender, **Pass The Buck**, trained by Anthony Azzopardi, faces the biggest test of his brief career, having won eight of his 10 starts.

Hector Fawley, trained, owned, and bred by Lisa Cockerell and family, is Australia's best middle distance greyhound and brings enormous X factor into The Phoenix after drawing favourably.

Champion trainer Jason Thompson has two key players in star youngster **Alpha Zulu** (box 3), part-owned by former Brisbane Lions AFL champion Jonathan Brown, and sensational New Zealand import **Postman Pat** (box 4).

The 'Thompson twins' are at the pointy end of betting, with **Alpha Zulu** \$4.60 and **Postman Pat** \$6.

Queensland star **Jay Is Jay** (box 8), the only contender not trained in Victoria, is striving to win his second \$1 million race in two months, after taking out the Million Dollar Chase in Sydney in October.

Jay Is Jay, trained by Michael and Selena Zammit, is \$13 to become only the second greyhound to break the \$2 million prizemoney barrier.

The outsider of the field at \$26 is **Schillaci** (box 5), prepared by Jihad Talgi.

A total of \$1,934,505 in prizemoney will be distributed on Phoenix night.

The meeting also features the \$160,500 G1 Sportsbet Silver Chief (525m), where boom youngster **Morton** (box 5) is \$2.70 favourite, and the \$20,000 Phoenix Challenger Match Race (525m), featuring Melbourne Cup hero **Aussie Rocks** (box 1) and Topgun winner **Transponder** (box 3).

The Phoenix meeting will be showcased nationally on free-to-air television on Racing.com, as well as Foxtel's channel 529.

CHASE YOUR DREAM PROMOTION

The 'Chase Your Dream' promotion is a massive chance for you to win \$10,000 cash or \$5,000 in food and petrol vouchers. All you need to do is be on track, register, and wait for your number to come up!

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Sprint queen **Wow She's Fast** (box 6) is chasing an unfathomable Phoenix three-peat. She will have amassed \$2.75m in all three races if successful!
- Trained by Jackie Greenough, **Wow She's Fast** won the inaugural 2021 Phoenix from Box 4 at \$11 in 29.66sec defeating Queenslander **Spotted Elk. True Collinda** – trained by Jason Thompson – finished fifth. All

three greyhounds were the only females in the race and Jackie was the only female trainer.

- **Wow She's Fast** went back-to-back in 2022. She exited Box 6 at \$6.60 in 29.84sec. It was an all-female trainer trifecta – Brooke Ennis (**Amron Boy** – 2nd) and Jodie Lord (**She's A Pearl** – 3rd). Kelly Bravo (**Paddy Wants Pats** – 8th) also flew the flag for the fairer sex.
- In the 2023 edition, there are three female trainers – Lisa Cockerell (**Hector Fawley** – box 2); Jackie Greenough (**Wow She's Fast** – box 6 and **Big Energy** – box 7) and Selena Zammit (**Jay Is Jay** – box 8). **Jay Is Jay** (Qld) is the only interstate greyhound in the race.
- **Wow She's Fast** won the 2021 Phoenix at her seventh race start, aged 22 months. This year, **Pass The Buck** (box 1) is attempting to land the \$1,000,000 first prize at his 11th start, aged 24 months. (He turned two years old on Thursday.)
- Two trainers, Jackie Greenough and Jason Thompson, will launch a dual challenge this year – Greenough with **Wow She's Fast** (box 6) and **Big Energy** (box 7) and Thompson with **Alpha Zulu** (box 3) and **Postman Pat** (box 4).
- Highly underrated sire **Bernardo** is represented by two runners – **Pass The Buck** (box 1) and **Hector Fawley** (box 2).

\$1.65M THE PHOENIX (525m)
Race 10, 9.50pm. First prize \$1,000,000

- 1 PASS THE BUCK (Anthony Azzopardi, Rowsley VIC)
- 2 HECTOR FAWLEY (Lisa Cockerell, Buckley VIC)
- 3 ALPHA ZULU (Jason Thompson, Pearcedale VIC)
- 4 POSTMAN PAT (Jason Thompson, Pearcedale VIC)
- 5 SCHILLACI (Jihad Talgi, Devon Meadows VIC)
- 6 WOW SHE'S FAST (Jacqueline Greenough, Pearcedale VIC)
- 7 BIG ENERGY (Jacqueline Greenough, Pearcedale VIC)
- 8 JAY IS JAY (Selena Zammit, Willow Vale QLD)

Reserves

- 9 TRANSPONDER (Jason Thompson, Pearcedale VIC)
- 10 AUSSIE ROCKS (Geoff Mitchell, Spotswood VIC)

PREVIOUS THE PHOENIX WINNERS

2021 WOW SHE'S FAST (Jacqueline Greenough, Pearcedale VIC)

2022 WOW SHE'S FAST (Jacqueline Greenough, Pearcedale VIC)

\$160,500 GROUP 1 SPORTSBET SILVER CHIEF FINAL (525m)
Race 8, 9.07pm. First prize \$100,000

- 1 SHIMA STEEL (Tom Dailly, Anakie VIC)
- 2 ROCKET RIOT (Jason Thompson, Pearcedale VIC)
- 3 MEPUNGA SHINE (Jeff Britton, Anakie VIC)
- 4 SMOOTH PLANE (Tom Dailly, Anakie VIC)
- 5 MORTON (Jessica Sharp, Lara VIC)
- 6 FERNANDO PHIL (Michelle Mallia, Avalon VIC)
- 7 ALL TALENT (John Barbara, Exford VIC)
- 8 OREGON DURANT (Tom Dailly, Anakie VIC)

Reserves

- 9 OREGON CALDWELL (Tom Dailly, Anakie VIC)
 - 10 HERE COMES BLUE (Des Douch, Maffra VIC)
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2023 Sportsbet Dream Chasers Festival (major winners so far)

G1 Sportsbet Topgun: TRANSPONDER (Jason Thompson, Pearcedale VIC)

G1 Sportsbet Topgun Stayers: RITZA PIPER (Joe Scerri, Berkeley NSW)

G1 Hume Cup: HECTOR FAWLEY (Lisa Cockerell, Buckley VIC)

G3 Shootout: BIG ENERGY (Jacqueline Greenough, Pearcedale VIC)

G1 Sportsbet Melbourne Cup: AUSSIE ROCKS (Geoff Mitchell, Spotswood VIC)

G1 Sportsbet Bold Trease: PALAWA KING (Ray Smith, Forbes NSW)

KEY TIMES

6.36pm – First race

8.06pm – First Quaddie leg (Race 5)

9.07pm – G1 Sportsbet Silver Chief Final (Race 8)

9.28pm – The Challenger Match Race, Aussie Rocks v Transponder (Race 9)

9.50pm – The Phoenix (Race 10)

10.38pm – Last race (Race 12)

HOW TO FOLLOW THE ACTION

- Racing.com will cover every race, every story, and every moment from 6.15pm with Gareth Hall, George Farrugia, Mitch Ebeyer, James Van de Maat, and Kelsey Browne.
- Watch the racing LIVE and FREE on the Watchdog App.

- Social media coverage on GRV Facebook, GRV Instagram and Watchdog Racing X.
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