



**Monday 29 April, 2024**

## **Sportsbet Warrnambool Cup: Armchair Guide**

Wednesday night's \$83,000 Group 2 Sportsbet Warrnambool Cup Final (450m) promises to be a beauty.

Seven heats were run on ANZAC Day evening, with Group 1 winning superstar Morton clocking the fastest heat time (24.87 seconds) among the seven heat victors, with the fastest runner-up (Matt Loch) also qualifying.

Extraordinarily, it was Morton's first run on a non-metropolitan track in his 26 start career, and he made the most of his inside draw (box 2), scoring a tearaway 5.5 length win.

Trainer Jason Sharp is quietly confident that Morton can improve on his heat win, providing he gets clear air in the final, in which he will exit Box 3.

"He has only trialled twice on horse-shoe tracks in his life, so he was probably looking for the turn pretty early in his heat," Sharp said.

"With that in mind he should be better for the run... if he can get a clear run.

"If he can find the front early or can settle just behind the leaders he'll be hard to beat, but you always need luck in group races because the competition is so good.

"You're always up against dogs that are very capable on their night."

A top-two finish would see Morton (\$487K) surpass half a million dollars in prize money.

Morton is Sportsbet's \$3.20 favourite in Wednesday night's final ahead of Fernando Phil (\$5.00), Flying Zulu (\$5.00) and Matt Loch (\$5.00).

Flying Zulu and Matt Loch produced a titanic battle in their heat, with the former emerging victorious in a photo finish as both greyhounds broke the magical 25 second barrier.

### **Points of interest:**

- The Gibbons kennel will be chasing back-to-back Warrnambool Cups following Kelsey Bale's win last year.
- Super Shanks is trained by Carl Haas Junior, son of Victorian greyhound racing Hall of Fame inductee, the late Pat Haas, who sadly passed away earlier this month.
- Jason Thompson is chasing his sixth Warrnambool Cup win. He has two finalists, as does Michelle Mallia.
- The two reserves – Ice Bath Forth and Grand Tourer - are both trained in the Warrnambool region.

### **Heat winners (fastest to slowest):**

- 24.87sec – Morton
- 24.98sec – Bernie Burrow
- 24.99sec – Flying Zulu
- 25.04sec – Fernando Phil
- 25.14sec – Description
- 25.32sec – Super Shanks
- 25.32sec – Trooper Tears

## **2024 GROUP 2 SPORTSBET WARRNAMBOOL CUP**

**\$55,000 (1st) | \$16,000 (2nd) | \$8,000 (3rd) | \$4,000 (4th)**

- 1 **SUPER SHANKS** – Carl Haas (Tynong)
  - 2 **TROOPER TEARS** – Robert Britton (Lara)
  - 3 **MORTON** – Jason Sharp (Lara)
  - 4 **MATT LOCH** – Michelle Mallia (Avalon)
  - 5 **FERNANDO PHIL** – Michalle Mallia (Avalon)
  - 6 **FLYING ZULU** – Jason Thompson (Pearcedale)
  - 7 **DESCRIPTION** – Rebecca Gibbons (Avalon)
  - 8 **BERNE BURROW** – Jason Thompson (Pearcedale)
- Reserves
- 9 **ICE BATH FORTH** – Mathew Wright (Wangoom)
  - 10 **GRAND TOURER** – Stephen Bruce (Warrnambool)

**Recent Warrnambool Cup winners:**

2023 **Kelsey Bale** (Daniel Gibbons)  
2022 **Ferdinand Boy** (David Geall)  
2021 **Qwara Bale** (Andrea Dailly)  
2020 **Zambora Smokey** (Jason Thompson)  
2019 **Dyna Patty** (Andrea Dailly)  
2018 **Striker Light** (Brett Bravo)  
2017 **Leo's Gift** (Robert Britton)  
2016 **Zambora Brockie** (Anthony Azzopardi)  
2015 **Ronray Spirit** (Terry Reid)  
2014 **Black Magic Opal** (Jason Thompson)

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