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## **Media Release**

### **Nervous wait for Hawkins and his Queen**

IT'S taken more than 20 years for Gold Coast racing identity and new Turf Club board member Steve Hawkins to win a Group One race, let alone have his champion in the running for the 2008 Greyhound Of The Year.

"I bought my first dog when I was 17 and had always dreamed of winning a Group One, and now I may own Queensland's best", said Mr Hawkins.

Mr Hawkins' star bitch, Queen Lauryn, has been named alongside three other nationally recognised star greyhounds, Knocka Norris, Made To Size and Size Can Matter as a finalist of Queensland greyhound racing's top award.

After Queen Lauryn successfully won the \$72,000 Group One Solo Sapphire Crown at Sandown Park last October, Mr Hawkins couldn't believe his luck.

Months down the track, Queen Lauryn is on the brink of being crowned Queensland's best greyhound in 2008.

Mr Hawkins, who is a UniTab and Sky Channel race caller, said he was very proud that Queen Lauryn was named among such an elite group of greyhounds.

"Being nominated in the final four is an honour, but to be up against Knocka Norris, Made To Size and Size Can Matter is a great privilege," said Mr Hawkins.

Queen Lauryn was bought in 2006 after friend and former Gold Coast Bulletin Chief Reporter Peter Gleeson persuaded him to buy the bitch after he had bought one from the same litter.

Mr Gleeson's pick of the litter, Petrovski, went on to win six races, earning \$7890 in prize money. To date, Queen Lauryn has won 17 races and has earned \$130,700 in prize money.

Mr Hawkins' racing prowess was also acknowledged this year when he was elected to the board of the Gold Coast Turf Club, replacing former board member and state Labor MP, Peter Lawlor.



Mr Hawkins' said his passion for racing was inspired by his grandfather.

"I have grown up with horse racing, following my grandfather's lead, and I have always loved going to the races as a young lad," he said.

"But when I hit my late teens I could only afford to buy a greyhound, so my heart and soul went into finding a champion greyhound.

"So my passion now lies with both codes and I will continue to follow both horse racing and greyhound racing with great interest."

Mr Hawkins said it had been an amazing year to watch industry icons like Reg Kay, who has made history by owning and/or training the remaining three Greyhound of the Year finalists.

"Reg (Kay) has had an outstanding year and I have no doubt that he will take home the crown," he said.

"My pick for the Greyhound Of The Year title would probably be Made To Size because he holds the Albion Park track record over 520 meters."

Queen Lauryn will return to racing in the Group One Temlee Invitational over 520m at the Meadows on February 14.

Mr Hawkins' said that Queen Lauryn's next move was in the hands of champion trainer Tony Brett.

"In my eyes Tony Brett is the best trainer in Australia at the moment and I will leave Queen Lauryn's racing future in his capable hands," he said.

Mr Hawkins hinted that Queen Lauryn may take a shot at the Sandown Cup in May 2009.

The award for the Queensland Greyhound of the Year will be announced on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> February, at the annual gala dinner presented by the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club and Greyhounds Queensland Ltd.

For further information of the Queensland Greyhound of the Year, or to purchase tickets, visit [www.brisgreys.com](http://www.brisgreys.com) or call (07) 3862 1744.

**For all media enquiries please contact the Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club's public relations and sponsorship officer Melinda Berry on 0424 665 842 or email [melinda@brisgreys.com](mailto:melinda@brisgreys.com)**