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Media Release

Gabba glory days relived at Albion Park

ONE of Brisbane's oldest greyhound races, the Queensland Derby, is sure to be one of the most exciting yet, says Brisbane Greyhounds boss.

The Brandons Electrical sponsored Queensland Derby, which dates back to 1973 when greyhound racing was at the now Brisbane Lion's home at the Gabba, will take place this Thursday night after an electric night of heats last Thursday.

The Group Two, 520m race features some of Australia's fastest male greyhounds, which Brisbane Greyhound Racing Club general manager Luke Gatehouse insists are one of the 'hottest' fields for a Derby that he has seen.

"The heat fields were some of the best I've seen in greyhound racing, and these have produced a very strong Derby final," said Mr Gatehouse.

The Derby is worth \$38,000, and is one of the Australian greyhound racing industry's major races.

The race was first won at the Gabba Greyhound Racing Club in the Club's inaugural year by Dixie's First, in front of a 5,000 strong crowd with Clem Jones AO as president.

Back then crowds were regularly recorded in the thousands with betting options largely limited to on-track TOTE facilities and bookmakers.

At any one time there were almost 20 bookmakers fielding and on the opening night of the Club it attracted 42 'bookies', including leading southern high-flyer Bill Waterhouse.

The race has been sponsored by Brandons Electrical for the past 10 years, and prior to this was sponsored by ANZ Queensland.

Brandons Electrical is owned by former successful trainer, and Greyhounds Queensland director, Paul Felgate, who has his first shot at winning a Queensland Derby as owner of top performing greyhound Jamaican Bolt.

Mr Felgate said he it would be an honour to win such an iconic Brisbane race, especially on the tenth anniversary of his sponsorship.

"Some of my fondest memories are from watching the Derby over the 585m at the Gabba," he said.

"They were some great days, the atmosphere was electric and there wasn't a shortage of bookies to have a punt with.

"It would be great to win this race, not only because of Brandons being the sponsor, but because it is one of those races that makes up a large chunk of greyhound racing history in Queensland."

Some of the greats to win the major race include Iron Hawk (1978), Smart Mission (1979), Superman (2006), Black Enforcer (2005) and last year's Queensland Greyhound of the Year, Size Can Matter (2008).



The race was originally over 585m and was changed to 520m when the Club was relocated to the Harness Racing headquarters at Albion Park Raceway in 1993.

The prize money has also jumped with its status increase, going from a Group Three to a Group Two race in 2000.

Mr Gatehouse called for anyone that had been around for the 'Gabba days' to return to Albion Park to witness the historic race this Thursday night.

"The dogs are faster than ever, and this field is sure to make it a very exciting race," he said.

"It is a great opportunity for those who remember the old Derby's at the Gabba to return to the track and check out the new talent."

The Brandons Electrical Queensland Derby will be celebrated this Thursday night with free entry, a jumping castle for the kids, and the chance for one lucky punter to win a \$500 bet on the big race.

There is also free parking available on site. Gates open at 6pm.

For further information on the night visit www.brisgreys.com

2009 Group Two Brandons Electrical Queensland Derby Final

1. Surfin Silence
2. Dashing Corsair
3. Jamaican Bolt
4. High Earner
5. Setanta
6. Dyna Lachlan
7. Take The Kitty
8. Bogie Bomber
- Reserves
9. Fedex
10. Trew Chase

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