

Seventh Heaven for Spring Cleo in Past Members Trophy

There could be no more appropriate winner of the Past Members Trophy than the flying Spring Cleo for Pauline Byers.

Not only did the bitch extend her winning streak to seven but did so in a race that remembers late members of the club who made lasting contributions, and arguably no-one left a bigger imprint on the club than the late Col Byers who would have been smiling from above as his wife's greyhound of the year frontrunner did it again.

The win was Spring Cleo's tenth of the year and with her ability to bounce between the four and five hundred metre trips in top grade who knows what she could tally by the end of the year.

The bitch is used to racing in Best 8 company but faced her toughest test yet against the rare Class Two Saturday night field with city winners like Copy Workshop, Flying Yuna and Cuddle me Cloud dropping back in grade while Spring Cleo stepped up.

That didn't deter the punters who piled into her to the tune of \$1.75 off the strength of her winning streak and it was get in the que stuff early as she burst out from box seven setting a sizzling first sectional to lead handily down the back.

The race looked like it might be about to heat up as the classy Copy Workshop loomed up nearing the far turn, but Warren Nicholls dog peaked on his run, Spring Cleo kicking clear to win in 30.69, the fastest time of the night and just outside her personal best.

All credit to the winner but perhaps the run of the race was Serena Lawrance's Ringbark Reign who had not raced over the five hundred metres at Ipswich since September 2020 and his fifth run back from a spell made up remarkable ground in the run to the line.

He was only moderately served out of the pink at box rise and found himself sitting fourth a good five lengths off Spring Cleo approaching the home turn before he gave Sky's the Limit and Copy Workshop windburn dashing between them for second only a length and a half off the winner.

Spring Cleo and Ringbark Reign are regular combatants in Best 8 company over the 431-metre trip and showed no matter the journey you put them over there's not much between the two.

Spring Cleo races solely at the Ipswich Club and will enjoy a week off while the show comes to town.

Keep your eyes peeled for an Albion Park nomination for Ringbark Reign who's a winner over the short course and the traditional sprint, Lawrance may go with the latter given the quality of his most recent five hundred metre run.

Stay Warm Bear Gets Bragging Rights

Last weeks column chronicled the battles between Darren Johnstone's trio Stay Warm Bear, Stay Warm Clyde and Oxley Pleasure and the kennel mates were in the headlines again last Saturday night, a big part of Johnstone's training treble.

Stay Warm Bear came out on top in the battle of the brothers who have both been close to knocking over their Novice's for a number of weeks.

He was a clear second elect in the market to his brother who was favoured out of box one, but it was Bear who would get the fly from box four crossing at the first corner and not looking back pulling away from Serena Lawrance's Power Moves by three lengths in a handy 30.85 clip.

Now that Stay Warm Bear and Oxley Pleasure have both moved into fifth grade company it's logical to think when racing returns to Ipswich in a fortnight's time it'll be Stay Warm Clyde's turn who ran a close third.

Oxley Pleasure was clearly ready for her step up in class coming from well off the pace to swamp them in her fifth-grade contest, recording back-to-back wins for this first time in her young career where she's only missed the money once in seven starts.

Despite a slow getaway the bitch continued to chase from midfield slowly abbreviating the margin to the leading trio down the back before hugging the rail around the home turn with a burst of speed to the post.

The daughter of Zambora Brockie looks like some sort of talent for Johnstone, having won previous races with early speed she showed the versatility and race smarts of a much more experienced race bitch.

It's a big week for Johnstone who has star stayer Maggie Moo Moo in Melbourne where she will begin her Group One Sandown Cup tilt on Thursday night.

The bitch is kennelled with champion Victorian trainer Robbie Britton and ran a promising fourth after being checked badly mid-race in a key lead in at the track last week, make sure to check the results to see if the Queenslander can make the final of the time-honoured event.

Maggie's sister Daphne Moo Moo gave Johnstone his treble Saturday night winning at big odds over the 431 metres, she's never had the ability of her sister but is a consistent figure at Ipswich and added to an already successful night.

It's a Rush Obliterates Bundaberg Track Record

Prominent Ipswich trainer Gerard Bowe has seen star sprinter It's a Rush add to his resume earlier this week the first dog to break thirty-one seconds over the 550 metres at Bundaberg winning the TAB Anniversary trophy.

The gun chaser cut his teeth early on at Ipswich over the four and five hundred metre trips but hasn't raced at the track since late January his career taking off with a visit to Wentworth Park.

Keen to see just how far he'd come Bowe sent the dog down to caretaker trainer Michael Hodges who guided him to back-to-back Wentworth Park wins, a Group Two Richmond Oaks heat win before he finished a close up fourth in the final.

In the space of a month, It's a Rush had gone from a good city dog in Brisbane to making a name for himself on the national stage and when he returned to Queensland for the Rockhampton Cup Heats late last month he brought his new found confidence with him.

The dog was dealt a cruel blow in the heats coming up against the eventual Cup quinella behind Tony Brett's Orchestrate and Tom Tzouvelis' Mitchell Street, but he stayed on for the consolation where he was a dominant winner.

Bowe gave him a much-deserved ten-day break until his record-breaking run where he didn't put a paw wrong, first out from box six straight on the bunny and all that tough racing in his legs carried him home in the quickest time seen over the track and trip.

It'll be fascinating to see if he can continue his upward spiral on the eve of Brisbane's Winter Carnival.

He now holds a stunning forty-two start career with eighteen wins and over \$65,000 in prize money for connections, just having turned three he's in his prime.

McCarthy Makes the Most of his Chance

John McCarthy's speed merchant Chance had been racing in top in top company over the 431 at Ipswich but unfortunately for the young chaser he's run into the white-hot Spring Cleo in Best 8 company his last two starts, but with Spring Cleo engaged in the Past Members Trophy Chance was free to fire and did just that.

The dog showed yet again he has the ability to overcome an outside draw on the corner start, second away behind Cribb Island Gal giving himself plenty of space around the first corner before winding up for the run home.

In the end he trotted in running 25.06 extending away by three lengths, it's the type of time and performance that could see Spring Cleo's winning run come to an end if he keeps it up.

Deck Fifty-two Dominant for Russell

As impressive as Chance's run was he wasn't the quickest dog over the trip this week with Darren Russell's Deck Fifty-Two posting a powerful 24.94 win on Thursday.

The dog was bred by Lawry Meteyard who owns the Barcia Bale/Mitchie Madam chaser who made it to the Ipswich Auction Consolation final, Russell adamant his best was yet to come, proven right with the win.

Deck Fifty-Two looks an out and out five hundred metre prospect, his closing sectionals were superb over the 431 and with a little more age and experience on his side could turn into a serious chaser.

