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# **Silver Chief in Thompson's 'range'**

*By Gerard Guthrie and Andrew Copley*

The Thompson kennel's remarkable love affair with the Feikuai Greyhounds Silver Chief continued at The Meadows on Friday night when hot favourite Out Of Range was a dominant all-the-way winner of the Group 1 Classic.



**Out Of Range leads all the way in the Silver Chief Final**

Out Of Range is trained by Seona Thompson, whose husband Jason boasts five Silver Chief victories, courtesy of Light Of Fire (1994), Awesome Assassin (1996), Ben's Fury (2005), Fedex (2009) and Godsend (2012).

However, it was a Group 1 first for Darren Puleio and his father Michael, who bred and race the sensational Fernando Bale – Nicki Fields litter, headlined by Out Of Range.

"We've bred and owned a lot of city winners over the years, but the best dogs we bred were Boris Fields and Xtreme Knocka, who we sold as pups," Darren explained.

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“So this is the biggest race we’ve been involved in as owners, and it’s a huge thrill.”

After a 30.17sec heat victory, Out Of Range ran second in his semi-final, but started \$2.40 favourite in 2018’s first Group 1 event, courtesy of a rails draw and an imposing six from eight record over The Meadows’ 525m course.



Out Of Range took full advantage of his prized inside alley to hold the lead in the all-important charge to the first turn.

While Out Of Range wasn’t able to break clear, he kept kicking strongly to repel Degani (\$5.90) by .79 of a length in 29.83sec, eclipsing his previous personal best of 29.90sec at The Meadows, with Fast Car Driving (\$12.60) close up in third.

Out Of Range’s litter brother and kennelmate Poke The Bear was first reserve for the Silver Chief and while he missed a shot at the \$100,000 winner’s purse, Poke The Bear set The Meadows alight earlier in the night when coming from the rear of the field to clock a scintillating 29.71sec in the free-for-all.

Out Of Range has now won nine of his 14 starts, while Poke The Bear has won 10 from 16.

“We named Out Of Range after Kelvin Jones, who is here tonight. Kelvin has been training for us for a lot of years (in conjunction with Gerry O’Keeffe), and he has had a bit to do with this dog. His phone is always out of range,” Darren Puleio laughed.

“I only breed one or two litters a year because I work full-time running Ram Security, which sponsors the Cranbourne and Warragul greyhound clubs.

“I breed the litters at my property in Langwarrin, which is almost five acres in size, and then I send them to dad at 10 months of age. He lives in Mulgrave (in suburban Melbourne), where he gets them used to traffic by walking the streets with them. Then we send them to a breaker, they go back to dad for pre-training and then finally we send them off to be trained.”

Just eight minutes after Out Of Range’s Silver Chief triumph, Melbourne Cup hero Aston Dee Bee enhanced an already unforgettable night for Seona Thompson when extending his winning streak to eight in the Group 2 TAB Warragul Cup heats.

The Warragul 460m record holder, Aston Dee Bee (\$1.20) also had the benefit of box one as he led throughout in 25.49sec, romping to an 8.36 length victory over Peter Galo.

Group racing returns to The Meadows next month, with the \$1.2 million Australian Cup Carnival kicking off on February 17.

In the Silver Chief after the placed runners the field finished in the following order 4<sup>th</sup> Dyna Wazza (\$4.60), 5<sup>th</sup> Mossimo Bale (\$11), 6<sup>th</sup> Immen Bale (\$36.20) 7<sup>th</sup> Fernando Express (\$7.50) and Dyna Carnie (\$21.20).

Out Of Range is a White & Black dog whelped December 2015 by Fernando Bale from Nicki Fields (Knocka Norris x Misty Fields). He is raced by the Darren and Michael Puleio Syndicate and trained by Seona Thompson at Pearcedale in Victoria. He has now won nine races and been placed on two occasions from his 14 starts. The Silver Chief first prize of \$100,000 brings Out Of Range’s overall prizemoney to \$140,720.

The Classic is one steeped in tradition, first being run in 1964. Directors of the Melbourne Greyhound Racing association saw fit to name The Classic after the greyhound “Silver Chief” who was whelped in 1936 and owned by Ray Herbert. Silver Chief was a “Waterloo Cup” winner in 1939 and performed admirably on the speed coursing circuit as well. He raced in both Melbourne and Sydney and was keenly sought after for stud duties once his racing career was finished.

The cream of racing have won this event referred to as the Derby of Greyhound Racing. Champions such as Plunder Road, Black Diro, Satan's Legend, Tempix, Chariot Supreme, Ginger, Light of Fire and Awesome Assassin to name a few. Many have gone on to produce sons who have also won the Classic.

The mighty Tempix won in 1978 then produced sons who won in (81) Tempix Image and Bold Assail in 1982. Australian super sire Chariot Supreme won the race in record time in 1983. His progeny took out the honours in 1986 (Hopeful Supreme), 1989 (Autumn Chariot) and 1991 (Bomber Gleeson). In recent years Light of Fire won in 1994 then produced greats such as Awesome Assassin and Kantarn Bale. Awesome Assassin went on to sire 2005 winner Ben's Fury. Jason Thompson has a unique record of training five winners of the great race.

Listed below is the star-studded Silver Chief honour roll.

1964 **Barunah**, 1965 **Spartan Prince**, 1966 **Phantom's Return**, 1967 **Lord Baden**, 1968 **Dupondy Two**, 1969 **Plunder Road**, 1970 **Black Diro**, 1971 **Michael Takiri**, 1972 **Getaway**, 1973 **Flash Gordon**, 1974 **Petillant**, 1975 **Nigger Chimes**, 1976 **Fritz Mactavish**, 1977 **Satan's Legend**, 1978 **Tempix**, 1979 **San Remo**, 1980 **Mork The Stork**, 1981 **Tempix Image**, 1982 **Bold Assail**, 1983 **Chariot Supreme**, 1984 **Rumpus Pappa**, 1985 **Supreme Spot**, 1986 **Hopeful Supreme**, 1987 **Calamity Kid**, 1988 **Ginger**, 1989 **Autumn Chariot**, 1990 **Enfield**, 1991 **Bomber Gleeson**, 1992 **Nevik**, 1993 **Plugger Fever**, 1994 **Light Of Fire**, 1995 **Zealous Guy**, 1996 **Awesome Assassin**, 1997 **Hotshot**, 1998 **"Not Held"**, 1999 **Jamella Prince**, 1999 **Kantarn Bale**, 2000 **Dave's Mentor**, 2001 **Burali Bale**, 2002 **"Not Held"**, 2003 **Jimmy Neutron**, 2004 **Big Daddy Cool**, 2005 **Ben's Fury**, 2006 **Closing Argument**, 2007 **Meticulous**, 2008 **Regal Thyme**, 2009 **Fedex**, 2010 **Enry Walt** and 2011 **Kilty Lad**, 2012 **Godsend**, 2013 **Renegade Chief**, 2014 **Ollie Bale**, 2015 **Above All**, 2016 **Midwinter** and 2017 **Lightning Frank**.

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