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Official first for greyhound racing as females fill all major roles at Gosford

Official first – it's a term which carried extra significance when an all-female team of officials oversaw the Gosford Greyhound Racing Club's meeting on 31 October.

Having all the main roles at the 12-race meeting filled by female staff was not only a historic first for the New South Wales greyhound racing industry, but is believed to be an Australian first in the sport.

Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission veterinarian Emily Streckfuss plus stewards Louise Warren, Stephanie Richards and Madison Watson teamed with swab official/judge Anne-Marie Jarvis, starter Kira Bennett and supervisor Donna Richards for the landmark occasion.

It was an occasion which highlights both the Commission's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion and how the state's greyhound industry as a whole is providing equal opportunities.

Of the 34 stewards currently employed by the Commission seven are female, while the 25 veterinarians at GWIC include two-full-time and 11 casual positions filled by females.

"We are committed to providing pathways for women to be involved in regulatory roles as part of our ambition to be the leading jurisdiction in the global greyhound racing community," Mr Wade Birch, GWIC's Chief Operating Officer said.

"The Gosford meeting shows young women there are career opportunities and pathways within the greyhound racing industry for them and that the Commission offers a variety of ways to become involved with the sport.

"The perception that greyhound racing is a male-dominated environment is changing, women are playing important roles and I'm sure that will continue to be the case well into the future."

The history-making occasion at Gosford came just three days after Warren, Watson and Steff Richards formed the first all-female stewards panel at a NSW TAB meeting when working together at Muswellbrook.

For Steff Richards, this latest milestone carried extra significance given she was working alongside her mother Donna Richards.

"To share this piece of history with Mum was such a great experience to have," she said.

"Being involved in a history-making event as part of the first all-female steward panel in NSW to run a race meeting was very special. Now having the opportunity to be a part of another history-making event, with all females in main positions at a race meeting, it is incredible. I would never have imaged this happening."

Since joining the Commission in 2022 and progressing into a steward role three months ago, Steff Richard's passion for the sport has grown another dimension as she works to ensure the best standards of integrity and welfare.

It is a passion she hopes many more women get to experience for themselves in the coming years.

"Words can't describe how proud I am being part of the GWIC Hunter stewards' team and just being a part of GWIC in general," she said.



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“The whole team has been very welcoming, and I look forward to seeing where this career takes me. If there are any young women out there wanting a career opportunity with no experience, I would highly recommend approaching your local track to see if you can kick off your new career”.