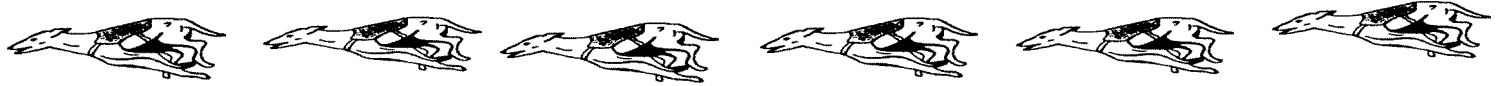




Running for their Lives!



Newsletter of Greyhound Action No. 24 March/April 2009

Greyhound Action on the up!

More campaigns, increased support

Increasing support for Greyhound Action has enabled us to launch four new campaigns in the first few months of 2009.

Show Some Charity to Greyhounds is aimed at persuading charities not to organise fundraising trips to the dogs. Such outings make it more difficult to persuade the public to boycott greyhound racing, as they help give the dog racing industry a respectable image, which it clearly does not deserve.

The campaign has already been successful in persuading Caravan, a grocery-trade charity involving many major supermarkets, to end their annual fundraising night at Belle Vue Stadium.

If you hear of any charity organising trips to greyhound

racing, please e-mail Show Some Charity to Greyhounds at showsomecharity@greyhoundaction.org.uk or send a text message to 07816 078395, so the campaign can swing into action.

The **Greyhound Carers Compensation Campaign** (GCCC) has been set up to expose just how little the racing industry cares about the greyhounds it makes use of. The rules of commercial greyhound racing allow "owners" of racing greyhounds to get rid of dogs whose "careers" on the tracks have come to an end, instead of forcing those people to comply with their moral duty and look after those dogs in comfort for the rest of their lives. This means that thousands of ex-racing greyhounds get put to death every year. Thankfully, many others do get saved, but only because rescues and caring individuals are prepared to spend a great deal of time and money looking after them.

Greyhound Action believes the dog racing industry should pay compensation to people who take care of discarded greyhounds, to cover the cost of food, vets fees etc. and GCCC is encouraging all carers of rescued greyhounds and greyhound rescue organisations to put in claims to the Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) and other organisations involved in commercial dog racing.

Two rescues have already submitted claims, which the GBGB, disgracefully, has refused to pay, but each time they do so, we intend to use this to obtain maximum publicity highlighting the industry's appalling lack of concern for the greyhounds they use to line their pockets.



If you are involved in greyhound rescue or have an ex-racing greyhound in your care and would like to take part in the campaign, please e-mail carerscompensation@greyhoundaction.org.uk or call 01562 700 043.

Sheffield Animal Friends have begun a campaign to put an end to greyhound racing at the city's Owlerton Stadium, where they have already held several demonstrations, as well as info stalls in the city centre. The high rate of injury to greyhounds at the stadium was exposed in a local newspaper article last summer.

In **Nottingham**, the local animal protection group is also campaigning to close the city's greyhound track and have begun holding regular demonstrations and leafletting there.

New campaign – demonstrators outside Sheffield's Owlerton Stadium



*Recent demo at Manchester's Belle Vue dog track
The Caravan charity has ended its trips there*

Greyhound racing on the down!

Failing finance, falling figures

Britain - Owing to poor attendances, Manchester's Belle Vue Stadium has become the latest of many greyhound tracks to call a halt to midweek race meetings. The stadium has also had to make a number of staff members redundant due to financial problems. Greyhound Action North-West's concerted campaign against dog racing there seems to be having an effect!

◆ Kevin Wilde, head of stadia for Coral bookmakers, has admitted that the company's two tracks at Brighton & Hove and Romford are struggling, especially the former (where GA supporters have held regular demos). Wilde told the Racing Post that both tracks "need major surgery".

◆ Charles Lenox-Conyngham, chairman of the British Greyhound Racing Fund, which provides betting industry money for greyhound racing, has stated that the Fund "could fall by 10% or more, given the recession and a worrying decline in greyhound business in the shops".

◆ At a parliamentary meeting, Greyhound Board of Great Britain (GBGB) chairman Maurice Watkins stated: "The outlook for the 2nd half of 2009 and the budget planning process for 2010 is not positive. Imposed budget reductions appear inevitable, and great pressure will be exerted on the GBGB." Watkins expressed frustration that some 17% of betting shops continue to take bets on greyhound racing without contributing to the voluntary levy in aid of the racing industry.

◆ Britain's leading bookmakers have warned the government that any attempt to increase taxes or regulation at the Budget will lead to betting shop closures and job losses. The bookies stated: "Analysis by London Economics indicates that an increase in gross profits tax from 15% to 17% would result in the closure of 845 betting shops and see the loss of 3,190 full time jobs" and they said the recession was already hurting 2,500 of the UK's 8,600 shops that are making less than £30,000 profit per year.

◆ The dog racing industry has been dealt blows in both North-East and South-West England, where regional newspapers have carried stories about greyhounds being killed and their bodies dumped, as well as publishing responses from Greyhound Action that the public should boycott greyhound racing.



Above - Minister for Sport, Martin Cullen, was greeted with a demo by supporters of Greyhound Action Ireland inside the Kiltash House Hotel, near Naas, when he attended the IGB annual awards ceremony there in March

◆ Sports Minister Cullen has already said it is not sustainable for the exchequer to continue to support racing in the manner it has since the Horse & Greyhound Fund began in 2001. Tax revenue from Ireland's bookmakers goes to the Fund, but the take has declined from 2001's figure of £61m to last year's £34m, with the balance picked up by the government, which has now announced that off-course betting tax is to increase from 1% to 2% and state funding for racing will fall by a further 2%.

◆ There has been speculation that work on a new £16m greyhound stadium in Limerick is to be put on hold due to the economic downturn and because no buyers have been found for the land and offices relating to the city's existing dog track.

◆ The discovery of the dead body of a greyhound in the River Foyle attracted considerable media attention, including an appeal from Greyhound Action, urging readers of the local Derry Journal not to attend or bet on greyhound races.



January - Demo outside GBGB awards event at the Hilton Metropole hotel in London's West End

Ireland - Final figures for 2008 show a reduction in greyhound track attendances of 12% and a drop of 8% in tote betting on dog racing, as well as a 17% fall in the sponsorship of races. Betting on greyhounds with bookies fell by nearly 16.5% and prize money was down by 2.5%.

◆ With profits falling and in response to a 9% drop in government funding for 2009, the Irish Greyhound Board (IGB) announced it would cut costs by £1.8m, with the chief executive and other managers taking a 5% pay cut and salaries above £45,000 frozen.