

LETTERS

Gentle hounds abandoned to a pitiful fate

MANY involved with the 'sport' are lamenting the imminent closure of Walthamstow Stadium and its greyhound racing track. But do they also worry about the fate of the dogs they see racing there?

Loyal Honcho was an impressive winner last Saturday, one of many hounds sired by Top Honcho in Ireland. But where would he have been if he hadn't been so fast or had suffered an injury which prevented him from running, like so many other dogs?

I'm the proud owner of one of Loyal Honcho's half-sisters, a beautiful, graceful, gentle and loving girl, found wandering the streets of South Yorkshire last year. How did she end up there? No longer useful to her owners, she was simply discarded.

She was one of the lucky ones, taken in by a rescue centre and given a new and loving home. Many aren't so fortunate. They're shot, hanged or simply thrown out, miles from familiar territory, as soon as their racing days are over.

As all racers have identifying tattoos in their ears, in some cases these are cut off to make the dog untraceable. Look at any rescue greyhound site on the web and you'll see pitiful pictures of terribly abused dogs.

This is allowed to happen because the 'sport' makes money for the owners, the bookmakers and the Government, but the greyhound industry is 'self-regulating' and no one will pay to improve conditions for ex-racers — the 99 per cent of dogs who don't win.

BARBARA WILLIAMS,
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Loving home: Barbara Williams and retired greyhound Lornie