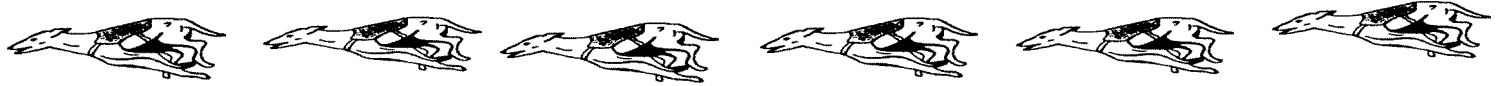




Running for their Lives!



Newsletter of Greyhound Action No. 20 Aug/Sept 2008

Yet another greyhound track to close!

Last rites for racing at Reading

According to the Reading Evening Post, Stadia UK, owner's of the town's Smallmead greyhound stadium, have announced that the track "will cease to operate racing after the greyhound meeting on Wednesday October 22 at the latest".

The newspaper has also stated that "greyhound trainers have already started to take their dogs away from Smallmead, forcing a reduction in the number of races held each Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday".

The stadium, which was described by the Evening Post as "an eyesore", is due to be demolished to make way for business premises.

The impending closure of the track is a victory for local Greyhound Action campaigners, who have held regular demos outside Smallmead, calling on the public to boycott dog racing there.

Stadia UK had originally planned to build a new greyhound track to replace the old one, but that project has faced setbacks and may not go ahead.



A recent demo outside Smallmead Stadium

Greyhound Remembrance Weekend

Events held in memory of dog racing's victims



Ex-racer Poppy with a young friend at remembrance event in Wolverhampton

July 26th & 27th marked the 82nd anniversary of the start of commercial greyhound racing in Britain and, all over the country, Greyhound Action supporters staged various events, as part of Greyhound Remembrance Weekend, in memory of the hundreds of thousands of dogs that have suffered and died at the hands of the greyhound racing industry, since that fateful day in 1926. Events consisted of dog track demos, street stalls, greyhound gatherings and remembrance ceremonies, and the Weekend attracted more media attention than ever before.



Remembrance event at Eastville Park, Bristol; opposite to where the greyhound stadium used to be

More woes for Wimbledon

Prize money cut as profits plummet

Prize-money for greyhound races at Wimbledon Stadium has been cut by about 20%, the fourth cut in two years, adding up to a 40% drop in total.

According to the stadium's general manager, Darren Kennedy, (quoted in the Racing Post): "Wimbledon has experienced a financially difficult start to 2008 after a disappointing end to 2007.

The business is running well below last year and profit forecasts due to increased costs right across the business and the pending closure of Walthamstow is a reminder that the industry faces some difficult times ahead.....The business is in a

financially horrendous state - we've just not been getting the crowds through....We've had to take drastic action right across the board. It's not what we wanted to do, but we've had to do itGrowth is not coming up to spec. The business has been in a difficult position for a year."

One of Wimbledon's biggest owners, Jeremy Hayes, who has 20 greyhounds in training, told the Racing Post: "It's the death knell for me as an owner....this is a step too far. I won't be investing time or money in greyhound racing at Wimbledon any more. It's just not financially viable. I can't justify it."

The same article mentioned figures indicating that the stadium car park, through car boot sales and other events, generated more profit than the greyhound track, and a dog racing enthusiast, writing to the racing paper's letters page, described the stadium as "a tip", which "does not really encourage people to be there", with "high food prices for moderate fare".

There is little doubt that this further nail in the coffin of greyhound racing at Wimbledon is mainly due to the efforts of the small, but dedicated, group of local Greyhound Action supporters, who, for the past 18 months, have regularly leafletted race-goers there to persuade them never to attend dog racing again. The dire financial situation at Wimbledon and other tracks throughout the country prompted Irish Greyhound Board chairman Dick O'Sullivan to assert that greyhound racing in England had "collapsed".



Good news from the USA

Track closures – and more on the way?

The Cloverleaf greyhound stadium in Colorado has shut, making it the latest of eleven US dog tracks to close or end live dog racing since 2004. The Woodlands track in Kansas is on the point of closing and two more tracks will go, if Massachusetts voters decide to ban dog racing in a ballot that is to take place in November.

Meanwhile, the Twin River greyhound track in Rhode Island has been reported to be on the verge of bankruptcy.

Bord na Big Con

That's dog racing in Ireland

A damning report into the Bord na gCon (Irish Greyhound Board) has revealed a series of cost over-runs, contract controversies and staff disputes.

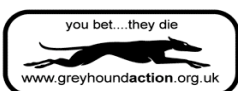
The report by the Comptroller and Auditor General, detailed how the Bord paid £98,000 for a "new" generator for Dublin's Shelbourne Park greyhound stadium, which turned out to be 20 years old.

It allowed a mysterious "building overseer" to take charge of the redevelopment of the stadium, where costs of the project spiralled from £4.6m to £9.5m.

32 legal cases against the Bord, mainly by former staff, from 2000 to 2006, cost it over £3m.



A recent demo outside Shelbourne Park



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