

**Submission
No 941**

INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND RACING IN NSW

Name: Mr Don Ronneberg

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Hon Robert Borsak MLC
Committee Chair
Select Committee On Greyhound Racing In NSW.

Submission re: Inquiry into Greyhound Racing in New South Wales

Profile: I first registered as an owner/trainer in Sydney approx. 46 years ago, progressing to a public trainer, breeder, stud manager and presently not racing as I have relocated and in the process of building.

Have successfully trained greyhounds for owners in three states and stood successful stud dogs inc: Caber King, Hayseed Hank and Ali Baba.

Also, I held executive positions on the Dubbo Greyhound Racing Club Committee when we incorporated the constitution, which still stands and built the existing kennel block.

Facts: When I began racing, there were seven grades, beginning with *Maiden (G.7)* and we advanced one grade with each win. To qualify for Harold Park (City) you had to win a Monday night Grade5 qualifying, for the following Saturday night final, or have at least two wins; one 500m and have raced under lights.

To gain some form, we had to nominate and travel to country tracks, like: Lithgow, Bathurst, Orange etc.

There are many more greyhounds retained after racing than we see on the adoption

program. I keep my personally owned racers for life and so do my interstate friends.

Many owners choose euthanasia rather than giving away non-competitive greyhounds, to avoid injury, if used for hunting or risk not receiving adequate care.

There were as many rumours around in the past as there are today and probably as many villains, .as have been exposed in: Government office, police, religious orders, child and welfare services, horse racing (gallops & harness) human athletes etc.

.Many people had a greyhound in their yard and racing was a friendly atmosphere where neighbours turned up to support their local champ.

Over the years with rising costs, council restrictions, covenants, closer density housing, pressure groups etc, the industry has retracted.

The introduction of TAB created major changes to the industry

There were 60-80 bookmakers at Harold Park and Wentworth Park, and the night I saw Zoom Top win at Wentworth Park, I was one of over 15,000 at the track.

People now watch races and bet at hotels and clubs, where there is no entry fee and subsidised drinks at some clubs. Last visit to Wentworth Park I saw 3 bookmakers.

Loss of attendance, introduction of drink driver programs and loss of bookmaker fees

effected race clubs and they became dependent on a share of distribution from TAB

With the development of mid-week and twilight greyhound racing, the distribution break-up has become disproportional and the greyhound industry is now subsidising the harness and horse racing industries.

Suggestions: More support for country racing to retain the nursery of greyhound racing

The attempt to force 'lower performed' dogs from the stud books by increasing the registration fee from \$110 to \$1,000 will tend to reduce the gene pool, encouraging more imports which have to date had a poor record, except for a select few.

Legislate for a fair share of distribution, this time with regular reviews

Review the betting taxes compared with adjoining States

Opinions: I believe greyhounds are one of the most cared for of any canines.

They are fed formulated diets. Routinely wormed and .treated for external parasites

Groomed, foot checked daily. Lead and muzzle on when away from kennel.

Muzzled in trials with other greyhounds and constantly checked for minor injury.

With the available funds Greyhound Racing NSW appears to be progressively

keeping abreast of the times in terms of:

Animal welfare issues.

Drug detection.

Overall standards and Integrity

Something to think about: Some European countries eat horse meat.

Some Asians eat dog. Some feed dog to cultured prawns.

We are a multicultural country.

We have knackeries to dispose of unwanted horses.

Maybe one day we will have the same for canines.

Thank you for reading this submission. It may appear to ramble on a little, but is written with the view that the reader is totally new to the concept of greyhound breeding and racing.

Yours faithfully