

INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND RACING IN NSW

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

Hello and thank you for allowing me to share my concerns. I bought my very first greyhounds (two) with a friend from an Ad in The Daily Telegraph back in 1986. I had mixed success, but learnt a great deal from people who were willing to help. I joined the GBOTA and became Secretary of one of their sub-branches and later was a delegate with the Metropolitan Delegates Association within the GBOTA. I was and still am passionate about the industry. I have owned, trained and bred greyhounds. They are lovely animals. The industry has changed and grown over the years, but there seemed to have been limited vision, planning and somewhat haphazard decisions, without passion and 'ownership'. For example, the radio promotion I think it was called 106.5 radio station with Merrick and Rosso, was brilliant! However, it lasted what appeared to be one year with no follow-up or replacement. A more recent one was the Country Challenge. A great NCA concept bought or borrowed by the GRNSW and operated for a couple of years then, given a modified and reduced version and thrown away only recently. Why? The GRNSW had \$5 million in the bank, the people loved it, allowed them to travel NSW with their pooches to win some decent prize money and allowed the locals to compete at their home or regional track and watch some fast greyhounds.

A lot of locals can't afford to travel too far, but love racing their dogs at their home or neighbouring track. However, there are some track administrators who don't believe they are racing in a region and would rather wipe out the 'competitors' instead of working with them for the region to grow. They could have heats at one track and a final at another and rotate the tracks around. They could have 'battlers' races for dogs that haven't placed in a race for awhile. Golden Oldies races! It appears to me that the GRNSW hierarchy has the same mentality and would love to see more tracks close as a quick fix solution to their so-called problems. As you know, once the track is closed it's difficult to get it up and running again. Due to passionate greyhound lovers we spoke about the problems in the Riverina Region, how it was hard to get a run, etc... Guess what? The GRNSW allowed Goulburn RC to operate with TAB C Class. Geez, that was great vision! We saw the problem a couple of years before they did and they happen to 'run the show'.

The GRNSW should be fostering and supporting non-tab country racing instead of alienating and ruining them. They should be looking after all race clubs. I've raced at many country and TAB tracks and the enjoyment and love of the game is there even for small prize money. The closing of Cessnock was a tragedy and I still believe it was to funnel nominations into The Gardens because NCA had spent big monies to operate it. They had closed Wyong and Singleton to promote it. I believe that only two persons voted to close Cessnock and Nowra because of conflicts of interest. What happened next? Nowra was allowed a licence and operated again! And rightly so! Poor old Cessnock fought a brave fight and failed to get their licence renewed when they should never have had to take the matter to court. The 'powers that be' showed no fore-thought. Nepotism strongly existed in the process. Recent history showed that NCA were hopeless with the administration so they had to hand over The Gardens to GRNSW who cleverly supported them by purchasing a large majority share at an inflated price. Where were their advisors then?? Please look at the figures to see what I am writing.

To me, ownership of The Gardens by the governing authority namely the GRNSW is a direct conflict of interest. I have recently seen some Category C meetings race as Category B meetings (more prize money). Again, GRNSW has changed things to suit themselves. Don't get me wrong The Gardens is worth saving, but ownership should be independent of the governing body as I have just illustrated with just one example. They will support their 'own' at the expense of others.

I wasn't going to make a submission because things don't seem to change. However, if the Enquiry makes recommendations and the authority acts upon it well I will be happy to see where greyhound racing will be in ten years time.