

## **INQUIRY INTO GREYHOUND RACING IN NSW**

**Name:** Mr Jack Gatty

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I am presenting this submission in support of the NSW Greyhound Racing Industry. Unfortunately there are well meaning ill-informed people in our society that wish to hold one segment of the canine owning population to task on issue's relating to welfare. Let me make this point clear. There is no place in society for people who are cruel, ill-treat or abuse any animal be it sporting, hunting, wild or family pet. However the problem with anti-racing extremists is they fail to recognise or understand that the over whelming majority of people in greyhound racing are good hard working people who love their dogs and the thought of anything but the best for their dog is unthinkable. Again unfortunately in society there are a small percentage of people who bring bad into any organisation or group be it police, politicians, lawyers or greyhound participants and I have to have faith in the 'powers that be' to weed out these undesirables.

The damage that the anti's have done to this great breed is so counterproductive. They put the breed back decades in the 1970's and 80's because they reported then that greyhounds were used as hunting dogs and taught to kill feral vermin (rabbits, hares etc.) and the breed is aggressive, vicious are dangerous dogs, trained to kill. The media then ran these stories as fact and so created the Urban Myth that mischaracterised this gentle loving breed and ensured that the muzzling of these great dogs in public perpetuated this myth. Now 30 to 40 yrs later today's "Enlightened" new age anti is spreading unfounded totally fabricated statistics to the media thus hurting the breed further. They have now come to the realisation that the greyhound IS a wonderful canine and now have web sites promoting the virtues of this great breed. Greyhound participants have known this all along but have had to endure the bad public perception given to us by the anti's of past decades. Where does all this growing sentiment among the ill-informed anti-racing extremist for prohibition stop? Are we to ban military dogs at risk of injury even death at the hands of explosives? The cattle and sheep dog – should it be banned at the risk of being injured by a horn or hoof? The police dog, the agility dog all performing what are either essential or even WORSE (according to anti racing groups) pleasurable pursuits. If the anti-racing extremists really wanted to advance the cause of the greyhound they would stop spreading lies and half twisted truths to the public via media and learn the real facts. Their time would be much better spent working with GRNSW to provide the positive truth about this gentle, beautiful dog and then the greyhound maybe accepted by society as a viable pet option in the future.

The anti-racing fanatics fail to understand that the greyhound is a very unique animal. It has evolved over thousands of years to become the most brilliant of canine athletes. Their DNA is etched with the desire to run and compete. Over countless generations they have become faster than their prey and have evolved to compete and be faster than their canine peers. Now the anti-racing extremists will have people believe that this "nasty, cruel" greyhound industry will force these poor dogs to run and chase only for man's pleasure. This is just complete mythology. The greyhound runs and competes because it is ingrained in its DNA to do so. The CRUELEST thing I can imagine would be to deprive this majestic canine its natural instincts.

This brings me to injuries sustained by greyhounds racing. An athlete who can run over 60km per hour and can turn on a pin, of course like any athlete can be injured, just like thousands of pet dogs are injured in the park or on the farm or by chasing down criminals. The big difference being that

greyhounds run on manicured surfaces designed and cambered to help prevent injury. This is not the case for their canine brothers running on roads, at parks or in the bush. The track is the safest place for greyhounds to do what comes instinctively to them.

Another point being pushed by the anti- racing extremist is the issue of Drugs in sport. As we have seen recently, the use of performance enhancing drugs has become a moral and legal issue in Australian society within the football codes. This problem is being combated with modern techniques of detection being employed by GRNSW increasing surveillance and intelligencealso helps to fight combat this problem. To single out the greyhound racing industry is UNFAIR and with hard work and diligence I have faith that GRNSW will weed out and ban any participants engaging in these practises.

To summarise – anyone who has ever worked with racing greyhounds knows that running and competing is not just a want or desire for a greyhound, it is a deeply and genetically ingrained demand. To deny this majestic breed the opportunity to do so would be the cruellest form of abuse imaginable. Greyhound racing is heavily regulated. I know of no other canine breed that is so documented, recorded, licenced and tightly controlled as the magnificent greyhound. How about working with the greyhound industry to give these dogs the opportunity to express themselves as nature designed. Work with GRNSW for the betterment and longevity of the greyhound and don't let misguided anti groups continue to peddle unsubstantiated untruths that continues to hurt these great dogs.

Yours Sincerely

John Gatty