

Publicity greyhound racing did not need



GRA Chair

Phil Bennett

The recent publicity given to the convictions of Gwen and Steven Sorrenson in the Beenleigh Magistrates Court for offences of keeping animals as a kill or lure to train a coursing dog, has brought shame on the Queensland Greyhound racing industry. The heavy fines showed how serious such practices is viewed by the Queensland community.

Furthermore, the Board of the GRA has disqualified them from holding licences or attending racetracks for a period of three years. In the eyes of the law, all persons are deemed to know the law. In case you don't, I am setting out below for your information the portion of the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 setting out "Other Offences relating to Dogs"

Section 30 Causing captive animal to be injured or killed by a dog

A person must not knowingly cause an animal in captivity to be injured or killed by a dog.
Maximum penalty - 300 penalty units (\$22,500) or 1 year's imprisonment.

Section 31 Releasing animal for injury or killed by a dog

A person must not release an animal if the release is
a) to allow the animal to be injured or killed by a dog; or
b) in circumstances in which the animal is likely to be injured or killed by a dog unless the person took reasonable steps to prevent the injury or killing.
Maximum penalty - 300 penalty units (\$22,500) or 1 year's imprisonment.

Section 32 Keeping or using kill or lure for bleeding or coursing

A person must not keep or use an animal as a kill or lure

- a) for bleeding of a dog; or
- b) to race or train a coursing dog.

Maximum penalty - 300 penalty units (\$22,500) or 1 year's imprisonment.

On a less serious note, the Board was happy to announce a \$300,000 prizemoney increase for the period 1 February 2004 to 30 June 2004.

This was able to be achieved due to the higher than anticipated turnover on UniTAB in the first six months of the financial year.

Again, I am happy to report that the percentage increase in greyhound turnover exceeded the other two racing codes, with an 11.2% increase over the corresponding period in the previous year.

It was pleasing to see that the changes to the race scheduling by Queensland Racing has produced the dividends expected.

This is necessary to produce the real increases in distribution to the codes.

The announcement of the appointment of Robert Swarten as Racing Minister is welcomed.

Robert is a keen supporter of the Rockhampton Greyhound Club and I attended a meeting with him on the Labour Day holiday a few years ago.

He, and his Works portfolio, may be the fillip needed to ensure there is a timely solution to the dilemma that is Albion Park.

I wish him well in his new role and the GRA Board and staff look forward to working with him to further greyhound racing in Queensland.