"Not to hurt our humble brethren is our first duty to them, but to stop there is not enough. We have a higher mission – to be of service to them whenever they require it."
St. Francis of Assisi

HSW

15p

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# WE WON THE CUP

**In eight years of demonstrations and attempts at sabotage of the Waterloo Cup hare coursing events, this years was the most successful. The event, staged at Altcar, Formby in Lancashire is the Grand National of the coursing world and has always been a target of the HSA. In the past huge numbers of police have been able to out-manoevre hunt saboteurs but this was not to be the case in 1983.**

Originally a march had been organised with full co-operation with local police forces. Twenty-four hours before the cours- was officially to start it was discovered that police and coursing organisers had moved the event a day forward to start on Tuesday, 1st March. The highly planned and secret move gave coursing officials a trouble-free first day enabling them to complete 66 courses and deluded both antis and press who were therefore unable to photograph any of the ten hares that died agonising deaths. The only consolation lies in the knowledge that barely 500 supporters turned up for this first day's coursing compared to the usual 1500. It is estimated that Altcar Coursing Club lost **at the very least £2500** in ticket and programme money not to mention the hefty police bill, they will be presented with (in the last two years the club have had to fork out nearly £3000 for private police protection). In 1981 they were £100 in the red.

There was no alternative but to cancel the planned march. As the police had been partly responsible for deceiving press and HSA they were not informed of the change in plan or the day's tactics. All plans for co-operation with the police were abandoned. In the past attempts by HSA have been made to get onto the coursing arena, but this year's tactic was to prevent coursing beaters bringing hares in from the surrounding fields and driving them onto the Lydiate coursing arena by the river Alt. For five hours hunt saboteurs prevented organised coursing taking place simply by driving back any hares the coursing beaters drove towards the arena. By 2.00 p.m. only five courses had been run compared to 45 the previous day, the area had been virtually cleared of hares, they were forced to cram the remainder of the event into the last day on the Thursday and indeed away from the coursing arena, gamekeepers caught a large bunch of lurcher boys illegally coursing hares because they were bored and wanted their money's worth – there followed a John Wayne style brawl as our opposition divided and angry coursers started belting hell out of each other.

The day started at 7.30 a.m. when 100 sabs who had travelled up on Tuesday night, from London, Exeter, Oxford, Stirling, Glasgow, Brighton, Hastings and Birmingham University, formed a two-mile long beating line interspersed with moving vans and cars, and beat a two-mile square, clearing the area of hares. The whole area around the Lydiate coursing arena was beaten and approximately 50-60 hares funnelled into Merseyside County Council scrubland at Maghull although about 20 hares succeeded in breaking through the beat line, and heading back into the coursing area. The sabs involved in this operation should be congratulated in maintaining the straight line over such a long distance; even the press (two of whom joined the line) were astonished to see the sheer number of hares being channelled into safety as they were driven through a make-shift funnel of sabs at the end of the beat-line.

The HSA beat-line finished at 9.00 a.m. and because the coursing beat-line started immediately it proved impossible to regroup at Formby with other sabs, brief them on the day's tactics and lead them to the coursing fields. There was no choice but to form opposing beat-lines to the coursers. In the next two hours sabs made four separate sweeps into thei beat-line and stopped all hares passing through. Already the police had started dragging sabs from beating-lines and dumping them three miles away as well as preventing vehicles passing through private tracks. Eventually all HSA and LACS members as well as nearly 100 members of the public were brought to the coursing field and most of the 450 (some papers quoted 1000!) demonstrators although disappointed with the cancellation of the march had no hesitation but to get stuck in and blockade the funnel through which the coursing beaters were trying to channel hares into the arena.

For 1½ hours this stalemate lasted, beaters were left with no choice but to remain static, most of the police were still at Formby waiting for the march and coursing spectators turned to the beer in sheer boredom. Finally around 1.30 p.m. mass police reinforcements from as far away as Preston, Skelmersdale and Blackburn, assisted by mounties and dogs dragged, shoved, kicked and herded the non-violent, entirely legal, sit-down blockade out of the beaters funnel and back to the road. By 2.00 p.m. there was little left to do. Over 200 police persons highly mobile succeeded in stopping every attempt to penetrate once again the coursers beat-line, most sabs were exhausted and police started haphazard arrests. Moreover, there were few hares still remaining in the area with which to course and it was important to find out who had been arrested.

The day had been an outstanding success despite the problems and disorganisation. Much was learnt by all involved and next year's operation can be improved by lessons learnt. Fifteen sabs were arrested and charged with 'action likely'. Nine accepted a binding over period of twelve months in the sum of £100 at a packed special hearing that night at Ormskirk Magistrates. Six pleaded not guilty. As usual the excellent Mancunian solicitor Rhys Vaughan defended the six at a two-day hearing.

The first two Colin Skilton (Reigate HSA) and David Rudd (Lancaster Animal Rights Group) were acquitted by magistrates. The prosecution alleged they attempted to run onto the coursing arena; nothing could have been further from the truth, and the defence proved that no threats were made, no shouts or gesticulating done and most importantly they were both arrested over one mile away from the arena, attempting to beat hares **away** from the

*Continued on pages 4 & 5*



Mercury Press

*Occupation and blockade of beating funnel*

***"I think you could desribe this as one up to them"***
J. McWilliam, Vet, Waterloo Cup Organiser

***"The tournament has been ruined"***
Coursing official

***"It has been disastrous. The anti-blood sport people have really ruined the day for us"***
J. McWilliam

**HAVE SHIRT WILL TRAVEL**
Mary Mashinter, sporting an H.S.A. sweatshirt, pictured here with a seal pup on the ice at Prince Edward Island, Canada. Just proves how warm our shirts are!



## North Cornwall Hunt Caught Out

The police and R.S.P.C.A. officials were recently called out to rescue a fox from the North Cornwall Hunt, (unfortunately neither organisation has taken up sabbing), on this occasion the fox in question had to be rescued from a sack in the hound van.

The hunters would have us believe that they never drop bagged foxes for the hounds to chase and kill, so the only possible explanation that the masters could come up with was that the fox had been planted on them by antis. It did not occur to them that anyone concerned with the welfare of the hunted animal, would bag one and then put it into a hunt hound van.

**QUANTOCK VANDALISM**

**Disruption and damage caused by followers of the Quantock Staghounds may lead the Hunt to abandon Saturday hunting altogether. This example of the increasing irritation in country areas in the face of hunt arrogance, has led to the rejection of hunting in a region that is one of its traditional bastions. Opposition in the West Country is demonstrated by the recent, much publicised vote by the villagers of Holford, on the northern edge of the Quantocks, to ban hunting in the area controlled by the village council. In a secret poll the village came out overwhelmingly in favour of a ban. After numerous incidents, the matter was brought to a head by an invasion of motorised hunt supporters in October 1982. A minor torrent of complaints to the Village Council alleged arrogant trespass and vandalism – commonplace to Quantock huntsmen and supporters alike.**

**A series of meetings of councillors with Police, landowners and huntsmen are being held to try to prevent further incidents. In an attempt to avoid a total ban, the Hunt has condescended to keep away from Holford, and refrain from killing deer inside the village. They will also, apparently, urge their supporters to act with a little civility; recently their stupidity has led them to interfere with the hunt as well as with local residents.**

**One cannot have much hope of improvement, however, when despite the presence of B.B.C.'s Nationwide cameras, the Staghounds ignored 'No Hunting' notices to invade a League Against Cruel Sports Sanctuary.**

**Credit to Nationwide for showing rare and horrifying film of a kill, which demonstrated better than words the brutality of the hunt, discrediting the 'minimum suffering' blandishments of a hunt spokesman.**




**Dear HSA,**
I've been in the HSA for a while (about 2 years) and I've always had the welfare of the cause at heart and it is to this effect that I write. We all want to live in a clean, happy world, there is one way that the HSA could help. I've noticed that in certain places in your writings that you play around jokingly with swearwords. The main example apart from HOWL is 'For Fox Sake Stop Hunting' – I'm sure this puts off certain people – yes me too.

Can you not go part way to meeting eye-to-eye with people who think it's just cheap meaningless humour unworthy of your noble cause, by 'phasing-out' stocks of the aforementioned parts which offend?

You may argue that it is just people like me who are at fault for being too touchy. In answer I'd say surely in the peace to which we all aspire, there is no need for innuendo – but just truth.
Sincerely,
**Arthur Martin**

*We would appreciate readers views*

**Dear Editor,**

May I make use of HOWL to remind your readers, particularly at this time of the year, what they should or should not do if they come across what may appear to be abandoned fox cubs.

A vixen will never abandon her cubs, they may wander off, or she may leave them for a while to go hunting for food, but she will always come back to them if she can. The only problem is when the vixen gets killed or injured.

Far too many people come across what they consider to be lost or abandoned cubs and pick them up and take them home, which is a disaster for all concerned.

The reason for me bringing this up is that recently I was asked to take in four fox cubs of approximately five days old to hand rear. I was contacted by a neighbour of a man who had found the cubs in an earth under his garden shed. By the time I was contacted, the earth had already been filled in, and the cubs had been taken to a local vet, who after examining them, had said that they were healthy. The owner of the garden shed eventually agreed to let us put the cubs back near the shed in a cardboard box to see if the vixen would return to her litter. At about midnight the vixen returned from her hunting trip (after an absence of approx. ten hours) and removed all her cubs to another earth.

I hope that this illustrates why people should leave fox cubs alone.

Yours faithfully,
**ANNE AUGUST**

*The following letter was received by one of our members from The National Trust.*

Dear Mrs. Sherman,
In reply to your letter of 6th January, I can only refer you back again to my earlier letter of 17th December in which I explained that the Trust is seeking to place before its membership the matter of field sports and members may then, if they wish, express their views on this matter at the annual members' meeting.

Yours sincerely,
C.D.Pearse
Assistant Chief Agent

**Dear HOWL,**
I would like to say that I enjoy reading HOWL very much and especially I am interested in the small items e.g. The E.T.B. booklets and the piece on writing to the Spanish Tourist Office – so more of them if possible.
Best wishes
**John Quirke**

**Dear Friends,**

I was pleased to see in the latest edition of HOWL, that readers' attention was drawn to the obnoxious phenomenon of "death" videos or "snuff movies" as they are called in the States. It is entirely appropriate in my view that a paper like HOWL should spotlight this psychopathic malignancy, since it is the same blood lust that gives hunting its "thrill", just as watching the sufferings of fellow human creatures provides the "charge" that people derive from these abominable videos.
Yours sincerely,
**Dave Godin**

**Dear HSA,**
While out sabbing with Birmingham University group we had an interesting conversation with a farmers wife near Quatford, Shropshire. She recounted how the Albrighton Woodland (the hunt we were sabbing) had dug out a fox in a wood near her farm. They put the fox alive into a sack and then waited some time for the hounds to arrive. On the arrival of the hounds the fox was thrown to them live. She admitted that she was pro-hunt but had been disgusted by their behaviour that day. We did not get her name and address and I suspect that she would have been reluctant to give it.
**Graham Leick**

**Sir,**
Your article entitled "Hunting Ban Would Cause Unemployment" (Howl 23) was the first bit of sense I have seen in your magazine.

When are the long haired left-wing student layabouts who belong to your organisation going to realise that 20 million people in Great Britain participate in field sports.... every **DAY?**

To ban our activities would cause enormous unemployment, and don't be fooled by the prospect of 'saboteurs' having lots of money if hunting is banned.

The antis won't have any money because the Commie Russians won't need to pay them any more. Anyway, what little money they do have will be spent on drugs and such like.
Yours
**Major Ian Hornbill (retarded)**
**Press Officer, Bloodsports For Sick Sadists**

## HUNT MOURNS SHOT STAG!

*"I know people don't think it's true, but we hunters really love the deer. We like to see them and we look after them."* This extraordinary statement was made by Mrs. Norah Harding, Joint Master of the Devon and Somerset Staghounds after the recent shooting of a six-seven a 'top' stag, near Dulverton.

The huge stag was destroyed by local marksman Terry Moule of South Molton – a well-known animal executioner – after becoming entangled in barbed wire and losing a foot. "It was a great shame it had to die," said Moule, "I was hoping to have been given the head but somebody else has it and you'll never see another as big as that – not in my lifetime anyway!"

Over the last couple of seasons, the stag in question had become something of a local legend, escaping death on several occasions. Last year at Hawkridge, on the Southern fringe of Exmoor, it evaded the hounds by dashing into an enclosed farmyard; the farmer's wife promptly shut the gate before the hunt could enter and released the stag after dark. It would also avoid the usual grisly end by the old trick of dashing into a bunch of hinds, causing the pack to scatter in all directions.

Amid much weeping of crocodile-tears, Mrs. Harding – known to her more irreverent followers as 'Lady Head-Hunter' – said she hadn't seen such a large stag around for a couple of years. "It was a bit of a freak. I remember it from last summer. We never *tried* to hunt or harbour it. It jumped up right in front of hounds while we were hunting up the water. We stopped the hounds as soon as it went into the farmyard. *We respect other people's views.* Our members will be *very* upset to hear that its dead!"


**HOWL MAGAZINE**

This edition was produced by:–
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Contributions by:–
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The points of view expressed in HOWL do not necessarily reflect those of the Hunt Saboteurs Association.


## CAMPAIGN FOR COUNTRY SPORTS

The bloodsports brigade are mobilising their forces in readiness for the next General Election campaign.

A co-ordinating body for the 'Killing for Kicks' people has been formed with the title 'Campaign for Country Sports'. The membership of this organisation is fairly predictable, the usual motley crew of hunters and shooters plus some token trade unionists.

The presence of some anglers is, presumably, an admission by anglers that their sport is as cruel as stag hunting and hare coursing. If you are associated with any of the political parties or trade unions represented on the C.C.S. committee, then write to the relevant General Secretary and your local representative/M.P. expressing your concern that a fellow member should join such a committee. The list of organisations and activities represented on the main committee is as follows:

*Anglers Co-operative Association.*
*Angling Trade.*
*British Association for Shooting and Conservation.*
*British Equestrian Trade Association.*
*British Falconers Club.*
*British Field Sports Society.*
*British Horse Society.*
*British Show Jumping Association.*
*Country Landowner's Association.*
*Deer Hunting.*
*Farmer's Union of Wales.*
*Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group.*
*Farriers, Blacksmiths and Agricultural Engineers.*
*Fell and Moorland Working Terrier Club.*
*Foxhunting.*
*Gun Trade Association.*
*Hare Coursing (N.C.C. coursing supporter's club and National Whippet Coursing Club).*
*Hare Hunting.*
*Horse Trials.*
*Kennel Club.*
*Lurchers.*
*Mink Hunting.*
*National Federation of Anglers, London and South West Region.*
*St. Hubert Club.*
*Salmon and Trout Association.*
*Shooting Sports Trust.*
*Standing Conference on Countryside Sports.*
*Thames Fisheries Council.*
*Timber Growers Association.*
*Water Authorities.*

**Individual Members of the Main Committee**
*The Ref. J.M. Ashley – Chairman, Belvoir HSC.*
*Ian Balding – Racehorse trainer.*
*Bill Benyon, M.P. (Conservative).*
*Christopher Brockleback-Fowler, M.P. (SDP).*
*Willie Carson – Jockey.*
*Jack Charlton – Manager, Sheffield Wednesday F.C.*
*Gareth Edwards – Ex-Rugby player.*
*John Farr, M.P. (Conservative).*
*Robert Hardy – Actor.*
*Dick Hern – Racehorse Trainer.*
*Jimmy Hill – T.V. megastar.*
*Barry Hills – Racehorse Trainer.*
*The Rev. Graeme Longmuir – Minister of United Reform Church.*
*Hector Munro, M.P. (Conservative).*
*Brian Pheasey – K. H., Bicester and Warden Hill Hunt.*
*John Ryman, M.P. (Labour).*
*Dick Saunders – Joint Master, Pytchley Hunt.*
*Ken Storer – Member, National Union of Mineworkers.*
*Peter Walwyn – Racehorse Trainer.*
*George Woodrow – Member, AUEW.*

**Observers**
*British Deer Society, Countryside Commission, Game Conservancy, National Angler's Council, National Farmer's Union.*

## SABBING FOR BEGINNERS: LESSON ONE

**How NOT to fold your banner.**
–demonstrated here by Cee & Dave Wetton




## LESSER OF TWO EVILS?

It wasn't the Animal Liberation Front who raided the mink farm of James and Susan Waye, at Foxley in Norfolk, recently – it was the vice-squad!

Trading under the name of Pastel Productions, the Wayes had established a profitable sideline in porn-by-post to help eke out their incomes from the unpopular mink trade. While locals thought the Wayes were simply supplying furs for the fashionable 'set', they were also secretly selling hour-long videos filled with the 'delights' of – as their catalogue succinctly put it – "discipline, female domination and bondage – all completely explicit and totally uncensored".

The Wayes had originally intended to breed pigs in the grounds of their whitewashed village bungalow but, lacking funds to build an intensive breeding-unit, had sought other ways of making a (loose?) living from the land – firstly with mink and then by cash-on-delivery hard porn.

After the couple were fined a total of £175 by Dereham magistrates their respectable Norfolk neighbours professed to be stunned by the awful deeds going on up the road: "Our children went to school with theirs," said one outraged Foxleyite, "We thought it was **just** a mink farm!"

## PRIZE IDEA

Colchester Borough Council's Amenities Committee may decide to grant licences for events on council land only on the condition that live animals are not offered as prizes. Councillor Gordon Scotcher feels that animals, and particularly fish are often subjected to a 'traumatic experience', being given away in plastic bags. He pointed out that Ipswich had already banned performing animals on council owned land.

## FOX-SHOOTERS OF ULSTER

Despite the overwhelming presence of the Security Forces a new-type of cross-border war has broken out in the trouble-torn 'bandit' country of South Armagh. Fox-shooters from Ulster, equipped with high-powered rifles, have accounted for a number of bullocks on the Republic side of the border: the hunters are thought to use powerful torches to dazzle foxes prior to shooting but have, presumably, mistaken the reflection of the cattle's eyes for foxes in the darkness – one particular bullock was shot through the eye.

As farmers in Counties Cavan and Monaghan mount vigilante patrols, the fox-shooters continue with their foul trade, assured of a ready and profitable market on the British mainland.

*THE HSA CONTACT SYSTEM*

*The strength of the HSA lies in its local groups. The more organised and active they are, then so the movement progresses. The last two years have been a comparatively stagnant period for the HSA, but the last six months have seen a remarkable growth in activity all over the country. There are over 100 contacts now, representing something like 75 regularly active groups. This last season has seen very well-organised groups emerge in Humberside, Gwynedd, Nottingham, Cambridge, Bucks, Wiltshire, Oxford, Dorset, Manchester University, Bradford University and Warwick University. In addition there are encouraging moves in Cumbria, Cheshire, Derby, Norwich and Northampton where there should be active groups next season. However there are still big gaps in the distribution of contacts, so if you live in any of these areas and would like more info. on the setting-up of an active group, please drop me a line; Northumberland, Durham, Cleveland, Wales, Lancashire, Salop, Lincolnshire, Northants, Gloucester, Somerset and Cornwall.*
*D. Callender, 5 Dungeon Lane, Hale, Liverpool L24 5RH, Merseyside.*

# SEA SHEPHERD NEWS



Glasgow Hearald

*Sea Shepherd Sea Rider confronts a sealing vessel*

Every year now since 1962 the Scottish Office has issued licences for the killing of around 2,000 Atlantic Grey Seals *(Halichoerus grypus)* pups by about a dozen "hunters". These seals are killed, using .22 rifles, (clubbing is not allowed) for their fur which is used to produce tourist trinkets, their carcasses are dumped in the sea.

When announcing the issue of licences, the Scottish Office persistently refers to the slaughter as a cull. This is not the case, as the aim is not management of the seal population but purely commercial gain. We are not fooled by the use of the word cull and would point out that seals and fish have co-existed since pre-history without a management plan and left alone would very probably co-exist for ever.

The Scottish Office believes that it has the right to issue licences to kill seals so that their fur can be turned into key rings and purses despite growing public outcry. The Sea Shepherd believes we have the right to take non-violent direct action to protect the seal colonies. Sea Shepherd as a co-ordinating body has 3 years experience of direct action in support of the seals we are now in a position where with large numbers of people we can stop the slaughter going ahead. The animal liberation movement has learnt the value of large scale direct action and with enough people we can ignore the police, out manoeuvre the sealers and position ourselves as a physical barrier to protect the seals.

With a two pronged campaign we hope to harrass the sealers when they are on the sea and have people waiting for them when they land on the colonies. The police have in the past stated that they will arrest anyone who is on the seal colonies unless their purpose is to kill seals. To counteract this we must be in a position of strength where it becomes impossible for the police to do that. Faced with a well organised campaign the police know they do not have cells or police officers to carry out that threat.

We urge local groups to form Sea Shepherd Support groups and to finance a local contingent to travel to the Orkneys in late October or early November. Although the slaughter can last up to a month it is only necessary for individual groups to commit themselves for 10 or 14 days or even just for a week.

For further details contact Sea Shepherd, 12 Royal Terrace, Glasgow. 041 332 1503. Donations or loan of equipment (e.g. force-ten tents, cookers, vegan food, wet-suits, good quality sleeping/survival bags and general survival equipment can be taken to NALL office, Second Floor, Raven Press, 8-10 Gt. Ancoats St., Manchester 4 (061 236 0544) or via BUAV 01 434 2512 or via Sea Shepherd. Donations of money or loan of marine radio equipment, plus information on cheap hire or loan of transport for local groups to use to get to Orkney, via Sea Shepherd.

### Letter Writing

HSA members are asked to write to their own MP asking him/her to ask the Scottish Office to call off the Orkney seal-kill this year. Sea Shepherd is presenting evidence to the Scottish Office trying to achieve this and the more letters they receive from MPs the better.

# Tactical Tips

*This regular column (which can be cut-out and kept) is a supplement to the Tactics Book.*

### MINK HUNTS

*The hound bloodsports are now over for the season, with the exception of so called 'mink hunting'. This does not mean sab groups should become redundant for the summer. There is unfortunately always some nasty little perverted bloodlusting practise that warrants the attention of the hunt saboteurs.*

Mink hunting should be tackled in the following way. Only use a small group of sabs to pre-meet the river especially on rivers where otters are known to live. A small group of say 3 or 4 people on each side of the river can spray and beat without causing excessive disturbance to wildlife, but will give enough warning to mink and otters to enable them to escape. Pre-meeting should be carried out 1-2 hours before the hunt is due to start. Travel up stream for 3-4 miles from a position near the meet if possible. Take great care not to be seen. The pre-meet group should not be spotted by the hunt, if they are, the meet may be changed.

If a scent trail is to be used, do not spray, however, do beat, and at the same time lay the trail parallel to the river for some distance. Then turn the direction of the trail 90° to the river and lead it away. Repeat this a few times on each side of the river. Remember, always pick a safe area to do this, **i.e. not near main roads etc.**

When the hunt moves off they will often walk down stream for a while then turn about and proceed up stream (as otter hunts used to do). Serious hunting now starts as the river will carry the hounds scent down stream away from the hunted animal.

There are important differences between otter hunting and mink hunting, in the nature of the quarry, the hounds and therefore the methods. The overnight scent of the otter used to be followed back to the holt, the otter bolted with staves and terriers, then the hunt proper began. The otter would then seek refuge in the river and in its swimming strength in this milieu. It follows therefore that otterhounds were bred to be strong swimmers and good followers of water borne scent. Mink, however, will often tend to seek escape away from the river, even up in trees. Mink hunts seem always to have more terriers and are probably not interested in breeding strong swimming hounds. Remember that the otter and mink, like the fox are not prey species.

If you are sure that there has been a good pre-meet then it does not matter if the hunt moves off without the full group of sabs trying to delay the start. This is, of course, decided on the day. When moving with the hunt there should be a small group ahead of the hunt, but not too far, on both sides of the river. The main group should walk with the hunt. Delegate a few people to engage the huntsman in continuous conversation to distract him. Like most huntsmen you will find he has a limited vocabulary, but do not be put off by this.

Sabs should try to keep together and the transport should move along the nearby roads to be ready if needed. After lunch the hunt often try the old trick of quickly moving off while their supporters block the road, so watch out for this manoeuvre! If you do lose them in this way, it is often posssible to find them miles away on the same river.

Some mink hunts seem to hunt almost all the year round and at times meet very early in the morning. Unfortunately otter/mink hunts cause a massive disturbance and destruction along river banks. Apart from killing hunted otters and mink they quite often kill wild fowl, cause bitch otters to desert their young and are the only 'individuals' known to derive enjoyment from hunting a South American aquatic carnivore in Britain, having contributed to the decimation of Britains otter population.

**JOHN HALE**
**Tactics Officer**

Tactics Booklets, Hunting Tapes available from P.O. Box 19, London SE22.

# YOUR COMMITTEE

### RESEARCH OFFICER

Few of us who regularly read the pro-bloodsports press can fail to have noticed the recent emergence of the CCS (The Campaign for Country Sports), believed to have been the brainchild of Stephen Hastings MP (Con) and his BFSS and BASC colleagues. Its significance may well be misunderstood by many anti-bloodsports campaigners, used to the apathy and behind-the-scenes fiddling of the BFSS in Parliament, but its emergence could ensure the survival of bloodsports for many years to come. Backed by money, self-interest and considerable influence, (it has representatives from the sporting world, television, politics – all the major parties – and the church plus a fair sprinkling of what we might term 'influential' personalities such as Jimmy Hill and Robert Hardy), the CCS is determined to improve the public image of fieldsports, remove the issue from politics and to promote the view that a ban on hunting would have serious implications for British wildlife, conservation, industry and even unemployment!! Having studied the pro-hunt arguments for several years I believe the CCS could produce a fairly convincing case for the preservation of field-sports: a case based on threats, lies and over-estimation of the importance of fieldsports. The CCS may even attempt to produce a counter to the claims of cruelty in hunting though such work would have to sink into gross distortions of fact to achieve this.

For many years now the anti-bloodsports lobby have relied upon sensationalist media coverage of demonstrations, hunt atrocities and sentimentalism. Together with much determined campaigning by a small number of individuals this has brought the blood-sports issue into the centre of the political arena. Today with the growing activity of our opponents such media exposure will not be enough for us to win our case. The anti-bloodsports lobby while continuing as it always has done, must become more sophisticated, it must be able to counter pro-bloodsport arguments without mere repetition of allegations of cruelty.

It is true that fieldsports should be banned on cruelty and animal rights grounds alone but in a pragmatic world, we have to face facts, hunting etc. will only be banned if our case is more convincing than that of the CCS.

The role then of the Research Officer as I see it is encapsulated in the following quotation taken from The Horse and Hound 18 September 1981.

"The fox and other British wildlife get no serious detailed attention in the 'anti' propaganda. Presumably some authentic articles by impartial naturalists on mammal ecology would destroy the cosy little world of make believe in which it is so easy to gnash teeth at 'Barbarians in red coats' etc."

Unfortunately for the Horse and Hound this presumption is wrong and it is the work of the Research Officer to use latest scientific research work to prove this and then disseminate the information to all those who wish to see bloodsports abolished.

Here is not the end, however, fieldsports do make a contribution to conservation, albeit a rather misplaced and selfish one and here lies the pro-bloodsporter's strongest case. The research officer by careful study and understanding of the requirements of fieldsports, can show that fieldsportsmen are the last people to whom we should entrust the British countryside and that they in hand with agriculture and industry have destroyed and are continuing to destroy what was once one of the richest natural environments in the western world.

I feel that the research officer has two other important tasks; the first is to gain a thorough understanding of hunting, its methods and traditions, for here lies the bloodsports fraternity's Achilles Heel, they are basically individualistic, rural in outlook and traditionalist out of touch in a fast changing world; the second is to encourage fellow anti-bloodsporters to gain in-depth knowledge of wildlife conservation and the threats posed by the modern world to them.

Research of this sort often has practical implications for hunt-sabotage, i.e. during the cub-hunting season pre-beating of a covert should be fairly low key, too much noise will send young and inexperienced cubs into their natal earths where they will be easy meat for enquiring hounds and the terriermen. Finally the Research Officer should be well-read, have a good "book" memory, be able to speak clearly in debate, and have an organised mind to maximise proficiency. The officer should also be able to provide a store of detailed scientific fact with which to furnish at short notice any anti-bloodsports campaigner needing help. Personally I feel it is a rewarding job although regrettably contributions from other saboteurs are rarely received and since the Research Officer is there to serve you it can help to receive ideas, articles and information from whatever source pertinent to the task just described.

**Ralph Cook**

*Continued from page one*

arena. The magistrates decided that this tactic did not constitute a possible breach of Her Majesty's peace and fell within the confines of the law. However, after this decision, all three magistrates were changed, the prosecuting solicitor was changed and later the remaining four sabs arrested doing virtually the same thing, at the same time were bound over. This decision **has to go to Crown Court on appeal.** We must win the appeal to enable the Hunt Saboteurs Association to use the same tactic next year. Already we are faced with £145 costs, the appeal, if lost, may cost the HSA much more, but the decision has to be fought. It denies the HSA the fundamental right to take non-violent direct action against hare coursing. All donations, however small, towards this important court case to ALTCAR 4, c/o P.O. Box 16, Liverpool, 24 Merseyside. Cheques/P.O.s to Merseyside HSA.

Thanks must go to the League Against Cruel Sports, Animal Aid and British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection for supporting the demo., the hundreds of HSA members who travelled to Lancashire, the Northern Animal Liberation League for the tactical advice and Freshfield Animal Rescue who took in, cared for and released the exhausted coursed hare that collapsed in a ditch and was rescued by HSA members Karen White and Irene Williams.

# Scenes from Altcar



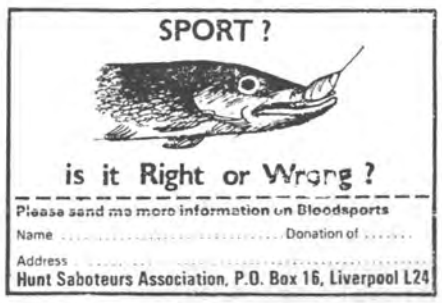
Steve Walsh

*Pete Skinner knocked unconcious by coursing supporters, being kept warm whilst waiting medical treatment*




### How desperate can they get?

At the time of the Waterloo Cup Demos., Merseyside HSA ran this hare-coursing advert in the local Lancashire newspapers, the Lancashire Evening Post and Crosby Herald. Response was fair and the money spent recouped. However, we must have offended some wise crackpot in the coursing fraternity as a second advert costing £120 was placed in the Lancashire Evening Post along the lines of the coursing advert but with the fish head and hook replacing the greyhounds. The bill was sent to Hunt Saboteurs, although the paper eventually paid for it. Three weeks later that pornographic hunting magazine the 'Shooting Times' also carried the advert with appropriate comments about how antis are attacking fishing. How desperate and underhand can they get in forcing fishermen to support hare-coursing and stag hunting. Whilst some fishing organisations may have come out in support of hunting with dogs the majority of fishermen couldn't care less about the fate of hare-coursing. Local Lancashire hunts realise this and the dirty tricks brigade have now moved in to dupe fishing folk into supporting their bloody pleasure. Whoever placed the second advert should be pleased to know that three people have joined the HSA since seeing it!






Mercury Press

*Police action at Waterloo Cup*





Liverpool Daily Post & Echo

*One Hare that didn't make it*



Liverpool Daily Post & Echo

**ALTCAR COURSING CLUB**

The chap who organises this club of morons is one James McWilliam, practising vetinary surgeon in Nantwich, Cheshire. Anyone wanting to have a chat with him, why not give him a ring:

Wilson & McWilliam,
Barker Street, Nantwich.
0270 625349/624518

In 1982 after the running of the Waterloo Cup he proudly stated to the press:

*"If a hare dies, it's asked for it."*

Would you take a sick dog to this man of compassion?

How many coursing events are attended by antis and/or press apart from the Waterloo Cup? I can't think of any other. Yet there are hundreds of greyhound, lurcher, saluki, deerhound and whippet coursing clubs in the country, each with at least three meets a year, whilst thousands of these dogs are coursed privately, often illegally every day of the year. How much of this is witnessed by press or public? In all likelihood thousands of hares die in the jaws of coursing dogs – the Waterloo Cup is just the thin end of a very thick wedge. Hare coursing is on its very best behaviour at Altcar during the month of March in a poor attempt to deceive the press into believing it a well-organised, harmless sport.

The mortality rate at coursing meetings depends a lot on the state and size of coursing field used. At Altcar, the Withens field is probably the most notorious killing coursing field in Britain, purposely designed to ensure the deaths of coursed hares. It is far longer than most coursing fields, frequently muddy, making it heavy going for fleeing hares and confusing for hares; at the bottom end of the Withens is a small patch of rhododendrum to which all hares aim once the greyhounds are loosed, but because the field is so long few hares make it that far and have instead to effect an escape out the sides of the Withens. In addition coursing officials allow yobbo spectators to line both sides of the field, thus preventing hares from escaping this way. On the first day of this year's event, many spectators were seen lobbing empty beer cans and stones at hares attempting to flee out the sides of the field.

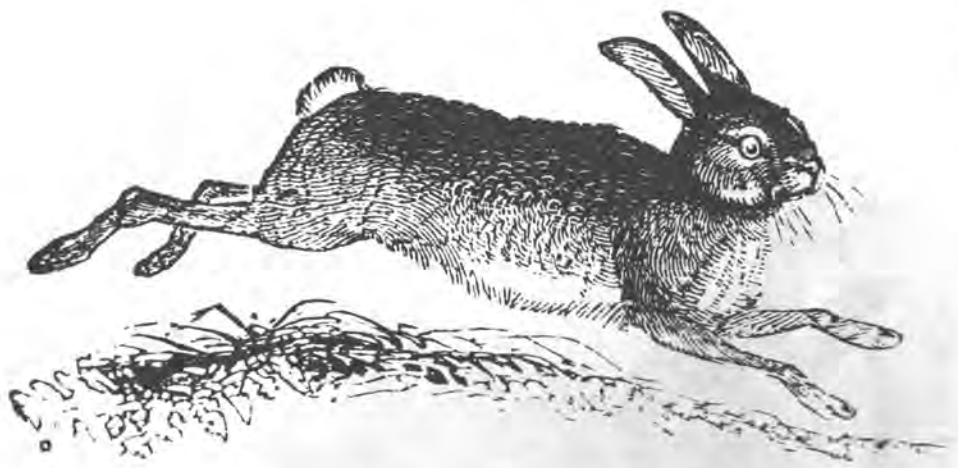
For the first time we now have proof that Altcar Coursing Club imports hares specifically for coursing. The club spends £350 p.a. on importing hares from Yorkshire or Scotland, usually at the end of March – up to 100 hares are involved. It really does make a mockery of this so-called sport. The Altcar area is so intensively farmed with an over-indulgence of chemical sprays and fertilizers, and a policy of grubbing out every bit of scrubby sheltered ground, that it could only support a very small hare population. Lets not fool ourselves the hare courser is **NOT** doing hares any favours. Any they do not kill in the name of sport the farmer will soon finish off.

**NOTE 8 — SUNDRY EXPENSES**

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Hare re-stocking | 363 |
| Insurances | 216 |
| Postage | 80 |
| Room Hire | 73 |
| Accountant | 40 |
| Photocopies | 21 |
| National Coursing Club | 20 |
| Engraving Trophies | 20 |
| | £833 |

*Extracts from the Waterloo Cup Report Accounts 1982*

The density of hares per acre is ridiculously high; they are grazed virtually like sheep, despite the unsuitability of the terrain. High density stocking prevents territorial instincts developing, tenant farmers leave vegetables in the ground to provide food in the winter, gamekeepers establish regular feeding locations to prevent dispersal of surplus hares and encourage them to remain near the coursing fields and they have no fear of predators which are vigorously exterminated (fox, stoat, weasel, birds of prey, etc.). For six months of the year, Altcar hares are having a long Butlin's holiday in completely artificial surroundings -- the killing for fun brigade are fattening them for the slaughter.



# HARE DECLINE

An apparent attempt to keep hidden new evidence about the decline in the Brown Hare population in Britain, by the established fieldsports press came unstuck recently when an obscure little rag titled "Shooting News and Sporting Landowner" which appeared in newsagents for the first time in January this year and whose writers show even less understanding of basic animal ecology (if that is possible) than the staff and correspondents (and probably readership) of the 'Shooting Times', gave the subject front-page coverage.

The evidence is contained in a Game Conservancy Council Report, the joint-work of a Dr. Stephen Tapper and a Dr. Richard Barnes, which was financed by a grant from the Natural Environment Research Council and contributions from the British Field Sports Society and the Shooting Times!

According to Dr. Tapper, "Figures from the National Game Census Survey, conducted from 1962 onward, showed a general pattern of decline in hare populations in all major regions, although there were a few individual pockets and farms where the numbers of hares remained stable," reported the 'Shooting News'. He went on to say "A careful analysis of the figures in 1979 showed us that more investigation into the situation was called for and a three-year project was commenced."

It is not just national surveys that have raised the alarm about the current status of the Brown Hare, articles by Shooting Times correspondents have also referred to an apparent decline in the hare population. John Buckland (Shooting Times 1980) wrote, "Many countrymen are convinced that there is an overall decline, and certainly in the Wiltshire/Hampshire border area where I live there have been few hare shoots this year, and those that have been held have not produced anything like the figures of the last decade."

John Humphreys (Shooting Times 4 March 1982) wrote "Once so prolific as to have assured plague proportions, hare populations seem now to be much more patchy. Coursing meetings have been cancelled or been obliged to change venues: a single hare in the bag on a partridge shoot has been cause for comment; 10 years ago, the same day would have produced a dozen."

While Dr. Stephen Tapper commented to the 'Shooting Times' (11/3/82) that although in some areas hares are maintaining more or less stable populations and in a few areas are even increasing, "We do have good evidence of a gradual decline in numbers of brown hares over the last two decades. This decline we believe is real, substantial and serious — though it does not put the hare population in danger of extinction . . . . Taking all this data together, the average rate of decline of the hare bag (on hare shoots) is about 3% per annum . . . we can show that those farms and shoots where hares have declined significantly over a period of 12 or more years more than outnumber by 4:1 those farms where there has been an increase."

The blame for all this, however, cannot be placed on the hunting and coursing fraternity although in areas where hare populations are dangerously low and unstable these fieldsports could prove detrimental. "Whereby the effect of hunting is negligible since so few animals are actually killed (which means beagling, cannot claim to be a form of population control). Shooting, however, is quite different and in many cases it is in fact designed to reduce the hare population severely," was Dr. Tapper's comment on this issue.

Returning now to the lead article of the 'Shooting News', we are told that the study has revealed one major and two minor probable causes for the decline in the hare population in Britain. The first and major cause is the trend of modern agriculture towards simplification rather than diversification in crops. Dr. Tapper claims that hares over a period of eight to nine months will normally graze on between eight and ten crops. In Britain large acreages of single crops are grown, after a few months these become too tall for hares and they then require something else to eat which means that the hares are forced to starve or move to other areas where they compete with resident hares for available food probably to the detriment of both the resident and the incoming hare populations.

Dr. Tapper's report showed an inverse relationship between the size of the hare population and the size of fields. Large fields tended to mean less diversity in crop growing and thus smaller hare population. Where there were small fields, crop diversity tended to be great and some kind of rotational crop growing existed — in such areas hare populations tended to be high.

Dr. Tapper considered that the suggestion that chemicals and pesticides were to blame should be ruled out because the hare's decline as shown in the National Game Census Survey began before the introduction of these relatively new chemical weed-killers. However, I do not think this takes into account the possibility that the trend towards intensification in modern agriculture, (hedge removal, large fields, simplification of crops and use of chemical weedkillers and pesticides) may be combining to create a habitat totally inhospitable to the brown hare and indeed to many other forms of wildlife.

Dr. Tapper cited as one of his minor causes of the hare's decline as being increased predation by an increasing fox population. Although reference is made to unattributed, or unpublished studies carried out in Hampshire which show that local foxes are living "to a great extent on hares," it is rare to find support for this in any published study that I have so far come across. There may be special factors which govern this trend in Hampshire, (it is mentioned that the rabbit population is low due to intensive night shooting — human interference disturbing the balance as usual) but in general, because of its speed the hare is rarely taken by the fox as prey,whereas rabbits figure prominently when they are available.

The second minor cause is the change in climate, hares require warm weather around April, a dry summer and good weather in September in order to thrive. Climatic cycles are natural occurences, however, with the other factor of agricultural intensification (and if Dr. Tapper insists) increased predation conditions which would not normally seriously endanger the hare might lead to increased mortality and slower recovery rates.

Dr. Tapper, however, offers some hope, although since it relies upon sacrifices by farmers, the future hardly seems secure for the hare. There are many farmers who are sincere in their concern for conservation but they are fighting a losing battle in a world where hard currency, profit and efficiency rule and thus most farmers, interested or not in conservation do little more than pay lip-service to the practicalities of it. Farmers could, according to Dr. Tapper, move in the direction of diversifying crops, planting horse gallops through their fields which provide extra vegetation, stop pulling up their hedges, increasing the size of their fields and leave stubble in the fields a little longer until there are beginnings of green on it. This would he said "not only help our native brown hare from becoming an endangered species, but would benefit many other forms of countryside wildlife as well."

It is extremely dangerous for anti-bloodsports campaigners to harp on about the declining hare as being a good reason for abolishing bloodsports such as beagling and coursing. The only reason required to ban these so-called field sports is the cruelty and deprivation of animal rights involved. Moreover in only exceptional areas do these bloodsports threaten the survival of the hare. However, fieldsports interests often claim that they are concerned with conservation and have good relations with farmers so no doubt we can expect to see a large part of the BFSS Capital Fund (the old Fighting Fund) being spent on promoting these changes in farming and compensating farmers who make them for the losses they may incur.

Nevertheless we should be concerned that a report partly financed by the BFSS and The Shooting Times Magazine should on its completion, receive virtually no publicity in any of the established fieldsports magazines. We can only conclude that this has something to do with the reports contents and an example of closing one's eyes to unpleasant facts. Clearly the 'Shooting News' has not yet developed this "sophistication".

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## RIGHT TO PROTEST

In September 1982 a small number of animal rights campaigners organised a banner/leaflet protest outside Yeovil showground, over the visit of the so-called Spanish National Circus. The circus was in fact part of the Roberts Bros. organisation and employed (without pay!) performing animals.

Although not informed of the protest, the police turned up to watch and all was so quiet that the police got bored and went away. Five minutes later a circus van roared up, its occupants jumping out and attacking some of the protestors. At the same time, other circus employees (in pretty red shirts and dickie-bows) ran across from the Big Top and waded in. The result was that two of the protestors were injured and required hospital treatment. It was an extremely frightening experience, and took place on public land.

The protestors assumed that the police would take action against those responsible but when called to the police station the next day to make statements, it transpired that the police had other ideas. During questioning, which was quite aggressive, they were treated unsympathetically and asked whether they thought they were 'provoking' the circus employees. "Didn't you expect a reaction?" the police asked. "Don't you realise you were affecting their livelihoods?"

A few weeks later the protestors were told that there would be an attempt to prosecute the man or men who had seriously injured one of them, but that there was a chance that they themselves would be prosecuted due to the provocation they had proffered.

At the end of December 1982 five of the seven were summonsed to answer a complaint by the police that they had acted in an offensive and threatening way under the 1361 Act. This is a very minor civil complaint and were it not resisted would result in a bind over. The five had no wish to be bound over and felt that they had committed no offence, but it was still decided to plead not guilty and a fund was set up to help pay legal costs. This was called the Right to Demonstrate Fund, as this was really what the whole case was about.

The case came up in court in February 1983, and the prosecuting solicitor painted a very black picture of the protestors. 'Provocative', 'challenging', 'waving red rags at a bull', 'giving as good as they got', 'stood their ground with no retreat', were all skilfully woven fabrications directed at the protestors as he made his opening speech to the Bench. Then two policemen read excerpts from their notebooks of defendants' remarks when initially questioned in September. When questioned they had no idea that they would end up in court, and some of their statements had been unguarded. Luckily however nothing which could be construed as incriminating had been said. Nevertheless it was a great relief when the defence solicitor took his turn to speak. He made it quite plain to the Bench that the protestors were acting lawfully and properly in making a peaceful protest and had offered no provocation. He maintained that the prosecution had made no case and that the case could quite properly be dismissed. Therefore before hearing the defence's case, the Bench took ten minutes' recess and when they returned the chief magistrate stated that 'this country was built on free speech' and dismissed the case! Then the defence solicitor sprang up to request that the police pay the defendants' costs. The Bench had another recess and came back and awarded the costs to the police.

The defendants were extremely pleased but acknowledged that it had been a close shave. None had been aware when questioned that their every remark was being recorded or that they may later themselves be on the receiving end. The police questioning had been deliberately provocative, intended to make them react in a way that could sound bad in court.

Many generous people have and still are, contributing to the Right to Demonstrate Fund. Because no legal costs were incurred, these donations are being returned when possible, if the address of the sender can be ascertained but if not the Fund will be closed later and all anonymous donations forwarded to the Sea Shepherd Fund to help pay legal costs for their active members involved in legal proceedings against them. Anonymous donors who would prefer their money returned, please send sae to 'Little Moreton', Long Burton, Sherborne, Dorset. Thanks again for your support in this case.

**Jenny Perkins, Wessex Animal Rights**

## HUNTSMAN TAKES THE PLUNGE

Huntsman Jonathan Eaves takes his hunting seriously. When a hare he was following swam 25 yards across an icy river last December, he plunged in and swam after it. When he reached the other side, the hare turned and swam back again. Undaunted, he dived in again to follow the hare back.

Such dedication is hard to understand. If the hare had attacked his family or savaged his best friend or even damaged his property in some way, there may be some justification in his behaviour. When one considers the size of the creature whose numbers are dwindling fast anyway, it is amazing that anyone could muster quite as much enthusiasm as Mr. Eaves. His hounds refused to take his example and swim the river.

Mad as a March hare! How about Mad as a December Huntsman.

# GROUP NEWS

## INTRODUCTION

The recent fox/hare hunting season has been a very successful, although often violent, one for us. New groups are springing up all the time, particularly in universities and colleges and existing groups have continued to refine their techniques – CB radios are being used by several groups now to speed sabs to where the action is. Press coverage has been excellent. Even pro-hunt reports produce an anti-response. Reporters have mingled incongruously with sabs to experience hunt violence at first hand and the hunts have usually come up trumps. It's usually minor stuff like letting sabmobile tyres down but it's often worse. On the 11th December 53 year old drayman Cedric Oliver Gill, a supporter of the Bramham Moor FH, was fined £120 after admitting unlawfully wounding sab Patricia Cockrem. He'd punched her to the ground, breaking her nose in the process – she also needed 4 stitches in a face wound – an unprovoked attack (she was leaving the hunting field at the time). At the trial he unsuccessfully asked the bench to rule against any publicity being given to the case. This season has also seen an upsurge in the number of guns appearing in hunt supporters hands and occasionally being loosed off at sabs.

Even if the hunt officials' inevitable disclaimers are true it's a clear indication that they themselves are totally unable or, worse, unwilling to do anything to stop such violence. It is now totally apparent that their veneer of discipline has almost entirely gone in the face of the overwhelming forces ranged against them – they don't even bother to investigate incidents of hunt masters being found by the police with live foxes in their vans. They attempt to discredit us more and more as Election Day approaches with their eternal stories of sabs luring hounds to their deaths over railway lines and roads and we must have driven thousands of foxes back into the hounds if their propaganda is to be believed.

Our own discipline could be better. Some group leaders have complained of a flippant and sometimes verbally aggressive attitude on the part of some sabs out with them. Observations have been made that jackets with "Anarchy" scrawled on them "do tend to attract the attentions of large men with sticks." We would therefore remind all active sabs that you are one of the main spearheads of the UK animal rights movement. Sabbing can be fun of course but we must never forget its true purpose. It does not befit us to swear at hunters. Remember that physical and verbal abuse are the hallmarks of those with weak arguments – let's leave them to the hunters shall we? They, after all, are experts at it.

## EIRE

The **Irish Council Against Bloodsports** protested outside the Spanish Embassy in Dublin in January "to draw attention to the ill treatment and killing of domestic animals for amusement in Spain." Again in January 60 demonstrators protested at the first coursing meeting to be held in the Dungannon area for 53 years.

Later in the month a delegation of 6 **Clydeside** sabs and sabs from **Merseyside** shipped in to Eire to help with the formation of a new active **Dublin** based sab group. Seven **Sea Shepherds** staged a sit down in the lobby of the Canadian Embassy in Dublin in March in an attempt to get Canada to revoke its seal killing licenses.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

In addition to the Crebilly hare coursing demos (see elsewhere) Belfast's **Queens University Anti Bloodsports Society** were also involved in a sit down demo during a hare coursing meeting at Eglish, Co. Tyrone in January. 2 hares were killed during the 60 courses.

The group's activities and their resultant publicity were, without doubt, the main reason for hare coursing to be debated by the Northern Ireland Assembly on 27th January. The Assembly came out in favour of banning park coursing of live hares in Northern Ireland. It now remains to be seen whether the NI Office responds to the Assembly's call. In the debate Assemblyman Alan Kane defended coursing by reference to the Bible's arguments about "man's God given dominion over the animal kingdom" (when is someone going to update that book?) The debate cut right across Party lines.

50 demonstrators, mainly from **Q.U.B.**, picketted Belfast's Jaffa Furs in December. They exhibited a snared hare to shock passers-by into reality.

## SCOTLAND

**Stirling** sabs report that Linlithgow FH huntsman Tom "Chamber" Potts, when he's not jumping on sabs' cars or riding at sabs, often comes out with little gems like "what about the poor cabbages that you lot cut up" and "you think I'm cruel – look at you bunch standing on the grass."

**Clydeside HSA** reports its best season so far in its 3 year operational life. With a hardcore of 20 experienced sabs they have now sabbed most foxhunts in Scotland (plus a few south of the border) – a new effective tactic has been the dragging around of fox guts, obtained from an early kill, in a gauze – at least this fox's death has helped to save the lives of others.

The group's main target has been the Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire FH which has only managed to account for four foxes when sabs were out (all were at dig outs where sabs were outnumbered). The hunt has responded with its usual aplomb. Early in the season a sab was chased through woods by supporters wielding staves. He was subsequently treated in hospital for a face wound – he needed 3 stitches below his eye when his glasses broke.

Later in the season 16 year old Susan Dunlop was trampled and viciously whipped by L and R huntsmen who left her with hoof marks on her back. Two redcoats were subsequently charged by the police for assault. As a result of the assault every remaining Saturday meet of the hunt was attended by 60 sabs – no kills were made and, on the final day of the season, the huntsmen ended up leading only one hound.

The new Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act allows the police to hold suspects for up to 6 hours without charging them. Their response has been enthusiastic. On one occasion two pupils were among 9 protesters arrested in a public park – in the police cells their personal possessions and shoes were removed before they were released, uncharged, 5 hours later. The arrests had taken place a mile away from where the hunt was taking place. On another occasion a sab's tax disc was taken by the police "because they thought it might be stolen or forged."

As a result of a such harassment the group initiated a meeting of Scottish Hunt Saboteurs with the Scottish Parliamentary Labour Group in the House of Commons. Further SPLG investigation has been undertaken by Neil Carmichael MP. Fellow MP Martin O'Neill wrote to the Chief Constable of Central Scotland about the victimisation.

In January the group organized a strategy tactics/strategy meeting incorporating a discussion on the philosophy of animal rights, at Glasgow University. 40 invitees attended.

The group's message to local hunters has been "Beware – Clydeside HSA is here. We'll keep the Red Fox running free."

**Fife and Kinross** sabs were joined by experienced **Stirling** and **Clydeside** sabs when they hit the North Fife FH on 19th Feb. 20 sabs totally outwitted the hunt's 30 riders and 24 supporters. After a fruitless 3/4 hour attempt to hunt a halt was called for 1/2 hour until the police arrived. The pack was later split continuously with horns and voices until the hunt finally called it a day, after only 3 hours hunting. The sabs were able to assist the police in some unrelated hotel robbery enquiries after finding some discarded items of jewellery in a ditch by a parked sabmobile.




*Q.U.A.B.S. demo*



*Cheshire Beagles followers launch an attack*

## NORTH WEST

**Kendal** anti Harold Taylor is an outspoken critic of hunting. As a result he's often been the target of local bully boy fell hunters. Dead fox cubs have been left on his gate, a decapitated fox left on his drive and three of his own free ranging foxes were poisoned last year. In January hunters of the Lunesdale FH allowed their hounds to trespass in his several acres of woods at Spring Hag. The fox they caught there, in front of Harold, was literally torn in two. Rather than apologize hunt followers abused him. In his temper he kicked out at a hunt car, breaking an indicator. In March he was fined £5 with £16.44 damages by Kendal magistrates. No arrests for trespass by the hunt of course so now the LACS are backing Harold in his civil action for trespass.

Further South hunt sabotage has been on a wider and larger scale than ever before. Whilst the main activity is still centred on **Liverpool** and **Manchester**, well run and successful groups have emerged at **Liverpool University** and **Manchester University**. In addition groups are starting to come together in **Macclesfield, Crewe, Chester, Bolton and North Wales.** Prospects for next foxhunting season look very hazardous for local packs.

Once again action has been concentrated against the Holcombe Harriers, Cheshire Beagles and the Royal Rock Beagles. Violence from hunt supporters has escalated in the last 3 months as a result, particularly from the Royal Rockers. When their pack was totally split by members of the **Manchester University Animal Rights Group** (MUARG) and the **Northern Animal Liberation League** (NALL) in March a lone sab was singled out by 10 heavies. He was head butted and kicked in the head whilst on the ground before 30 other sabs and 2 policemen could reach him. Other heavies later threw rocks at a sab van. Friendly police later took the names of some of the hunt thugs but were called away before another assault by more thugs on **Bangor** and **Liverpool** sabs which resulted in significant facial injuries. At least no hares were killed.

The normally "controlled" behaviour of the Cheshire Forest FH terriermen has changed dramatically. Just before Christmas they tried to overturn one sab car and later threatened a pregnant woman at Congleton who was out collecting evidence for the proposed Cheshire County Council hunting ban vote.

On the 26th March **Sheffield HSA** joined **Merseyside** and **Manchester** groups to hit the Holcombe's last meet of the season. A placid affair at long last in which the hunt spent the day trying to evade the 40 sabs and after a race round some lakes, the presentation of a cup to the wettest sabs.

A lot of time and money (£250) has been spent on campaigning for local council hunt bans but with great success. This season hunting has been banned by Lancashire County Council, the Greater Manchester Council and Wigan and Bolton Borough Councils. The sab campaigning has included a picket of "vampire" redcoats outside Bolton Town Hall in support of the Labour led ban. The Holcombe will be the most affected and plans are now afoot to police the affected areas with cine camera patrols as the hunt are not renown for respecting other people's property.

Meanwhile the long running attempt to get hunting banned on neighbouring Cheshire's 16,000 acres still goes on. Delaying tactics by the Council's Tory members have been designed to give the hunters more time to organize themselves. The ban would affect 6 hunts in the county who kill between them 450-500 animals per year. The **Cheshire Anti Hunting Group** has supplied councillors with evidence of false fox earths on Cheshire FH territory and the councillors have also been deluged with letters in favour of the ban. Pickets of up to 80 banner waving demonstrators, including Animal Aid members, have lobbied the various debates. Shotgun crazy BASC members handed in a 10,000 name petition against the ban. The latest council decision was to put the question to its tenants before a final decision is made.

*Violence at the Cheshire Beagles hit*



In January more than 60 banner toting, booing and hissing antis greeted the arrival of guests at the Cheshire Farmers Hunt Ball at Nantwich. Fur wearing guests were given special attention. **HSA** members were joined by local members of **LACS, NALL** and the **North West Anarchists Federation.** Chanting was kept up for the four hours of the dinner.

**MUARG** has been active virtually every weekend with a hardcore of 15-20 sabs, mostly vegetarians and vegans. When not sabbing hunts the group has been very active against the fur trade particularly with **NALL** – activities have included pickets and occupations of fur shops in Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield city centres. Fur coats have been burnt. On one occasion 23 people were arrested.

Both groups demonstrated against Sir Andrew Huxley of Babraham animal torture centre fame when he spoke at an open meeting organized by the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society – after being assaulted by members of the Society they were allowed to speak against vivisection from the stage. Officals of the GMC later apologized for the assault and offered **NALL** the use of County Hall free for meetings. A sponsored 36 hour fast was staged outside the University's Medical School which achieved much publicity.

**MUARG'S** much achievement was to get an overwhelming Student Union vote of 194 - 4 in favour of sabbing hunting which means that minibuses and petrol are now financed by the S.U. campaign funds. "Animal Rights types" now form a significant section of the Union, highly likely to affect the membership of next year's Union Executive. The group has many positive plans for

next season and is clearly going from strength to strength.

2 days after the mass Altcar demo 30 **Sea Shepherds** and sabs demonstrated against Canadian Arts Minister, John Graham, who'd come from London to open an exhibition by 3 fellow Canadians. After being hit by well aimed bags of flour he stated "we all have our loonies." When the demonstrators later moved to Binns department store to chant and pull furs off rails they were accused of "terrorizing the customers" by the general manager. He showed no concern for the terror inflicted on the coats' original owners. 8 demonstrators were arrested for breach of the peace.

## NORTH EAST

50 **Tyneside** sabs demonstrated against the Morpeth FH on Boxing Day. A sab car was deliberately damaged by a pick axe handle and a car door almost ripped off when a rider deliberately steered his horse at a sab getting out of it – the hunt had been hit a number of times in the preceding two months. Joint Master Michael Cookson "knew nothing about any trouble at the hunt" of course.

Meanwhile another 30 sabs were waving banners and shouting slogans at the nearby Tynedale FH's meet at Corbridge.



Cheshire Chronicle

*Demonstrators welcoming guests to the Cheshire Farmers Hunt Ball*

## NORTH EAST MIDLANDS

**Grimsby, Scunthorpe, Sheffield and Huddersfield** groups have had a busy season. The Bramham Moor FH were being sabbed successfully in December by 20 sabs until police arrived and confiscated their sprays. Boxing Day saw the hunt being hit by 30 sabs – at least one fox escaped when its scent was masked by chemicals. 3 sabs were arrested and charged with breach of the peace. Meanwhile the Brocklesby FH's Boxing Day meet was being attended by **Humberside** sabs and **Grimsby Friends of the Earth.**

The Brocklesby has been hit so many times that things suddenly snapped in February. A sab car with 3 people inside was shunted 40 yards into a hedge by a berserk hunt supporter driving a Transit van. Several other sab cars were damaged in the fracas. The sabs' tactics were no different than usual but hunt master Cliff Dawson "explained" his supporter's behaviour by suggesting that another hunt supporter's Range Rover had been damaged by sabs and its owner told that his farm would be burnt down if he complained to the police. Dawson, of course, "had not actually seen what happened" to the sab cars. A girl in the shunted car had to be treated in Grimsby hospital for a gashed hand.

Further south **Lincoln College of Technology's** newly formed 28 strong **Students Against Bloodsports** have been making themselves felt especially with the college's CB radios. After a successful day against the Blankney FH with the **Boston** and **Scunthorpe** groups they issued a challenge to Lincolnshire hunt followers to chase people instead of foxes, offering to provide a team of runners to lay artificial trails for the hounds. There are no takers yet. **SAB's** £200 grant from Union funds has upset a few people, notably co-student Anthony Brockbank (any relation t Robin Brockbank, Director of the BFSS?), but a national spokesperson for the NUS said that "the law is that the purposes should be charitable or in the interests of students. Many hunt saboteur organizations are registered as charities and if this is the case in Lincoln it would make everything above board."

After 30 sabs had successfully prevented the East Lincs Hare Hounds bassets from making a kill in March a sad stroke of misfortune led to a sab van accidentally striking a hunted hare as it leapt across a track. It was left to the van's driver to put it out of its misery by bashing its head on the road. Hunt master Giles Crust's reaction when he arrived on the scene? "I'm afraid my sense of humour got the better of me. I fell about laughing."

On 12th March 60 sabs from **MUARG, Sheffield, Huddersfield, Manchester, Bradford and Liverpool** managed to disrupt all the Badsworth FH's attempted draws. Horns effectively split the pack. In a desperate attempt to lose the sabs the huntsman galloped his hounds to a far flung covert only again to be met with another cloud of antimate and more sabs than hounds when he arrived. Police eventually evened the balance by confiscating some sprays.

A month earlier, after sab sprays and strong winds had prevented a kill, the hunt's spokesperson Ernest Bird was aghast. "Some of these fellows have pink spikey hair" he said. "I don't think anybody has been seen like that in Kirk Smeaton before."

## WALES

The **South Wales Animal Activist** group has been active in the Gwent area not only against hunting but also circuses, the fur trade and vivisection. After 20 sabs scented the hounds and addressed the crowd at the Gelligaer Farmers FH's Boxing Day meet joint master David Poulton threatened violence if the incident is repeated. "A lot of the hunt consists of miners who are big strong boys and they are not going to put up with this sort of thing" he said. No mention of course of trying to prevent such violence or precisely why miners need to go foxhunting.

The horsewhipping of a woman sab at the meet was video recorded. The sabs were told never to set foot in Nelson again and the owner of the house where they had met beforehand was visited and warned of action against her.

In January members of the **Gwent Animal Rights Group** demonstrated outside County Hall, Newport, before the successful council vote to declare a ban on foxhunting over the authority's 6000 acres of smallholdings. The additional ban on Gwent College of Agriculture's 600 acres at Usk met with the full support of the college's governors, even those with farming interests. HOWL readers will be sad to learn that fading show jumper David Broome, a joint master of the local Curre FH, was a bit peed off about it all. **GARG** was actually out against the Curre on New Year's Day when county councillor Paul Flynn joined them with his megaphone while they distributed leaflets to the ghouls.

Further west the **Vale of Glamorgan HSA** has been having a successful season, augmented financially by a £30 donation from the **Cleveland HSA** instigated by Cleveland sab Paul Ryan who's just moved to Ponty Poly. (thanks also to Paul Fairhall). This has helped ease the transport problem. The Cardiff based group has been active most weekends and has received enormous coverage in the local press – they also featured in a BBC Wales documentary on hunting. Occasional forays have been made to Mid and North Wales.

In January an unpleasant incident occurred on a Caerphilly and District FH hit. A 19 year old male sab was attacked by two men who tried to wrest his spray bottle away. He was pushed to the ground and then kicked in the face – a boot print was clearly visible on his face. The whole incident was witnessed at close range by several hunters and their lackeys. Both men ran off when the South Wales Echo's reporter and photographer appeared. The reporter, whose car tyre had been let down earlier by the hunt following the group's successful splitting of the pack, noted that a huntsman who was upset enough by the incident to offer the sab a drink from his hip flask made it clear that he didn't want such supporters around. A week later though, in time worn fashion, the hunt's secretary excused the violence as the result of the sab having allegedly sprayed the hounds and the foot followers themselves with his aerosol. The attackers were, of course, "not connected with the Hunt in any way" and the whole incident "was designed to achieve maximum publicity." Later in the day a sabs car was blocked in by a rider and Landrover, so ending an otherwise successful day.

The group recently held a concert for their "buy a van" appeal. Groups appearing included Flux of Pink Indians, Icons of Filth and Corruption. The Carmarthan Mink Hunt will be this summer's target.

## EAST MIDLANDS

10 HSA and LACS members were joined by 30-40 spectators in a demo against the Boxing Day meet of the Grove and Rufford FH at Retford. Meanwhile another small demo was being staged at the Belvoir's meet at Grantham.

A new group of 8 sabs has been formed in **Northampton** and further south the **Chiltern Animal Rights Movement** has recently been set up to deal with hunting, vivisection, factory farming and fur farming. The **Oxford** and **Aylesbury** HSA have hit the Old Berkley Beagles a few times with, on average, 10 sabs against 70 or more hunters. Tactics include antimate, whistles, foghorns and high decibel female voices. Violent resistance has been met. Tyres have been let down, sprays smashed and the sabs attacked with sticks – one sab's coat was ripped open by heavies who wanted his spray. On one occasion a gamekeeper and his friend threatened sabs with a shotgun if they stepped off the path. Further threats were made to return with more friends and some iron bars to smash their van.

## WEST MIDLANDS

Faced with the successes of **Birmingham University's Anti Bloodsports Society** the blood-sports brigade have been forced into forming their own 30 strong Country Sports Society. Their chairman, Charles Cable, is studying a very rural profession – accountancy!

On 12th March 10 sabs hit the Albrighton Woodland FH, dousing the road ahead of the hounds minutes after the meet. One sab was ridden at by 3 riders and his gallon can of antimate taken from him before foot followers waded in leaving him with a split lip, bruised face and a cut below his eye which needed 3 stitches. Meantime the other sabs wisely stayed inside the van as its back door was prised open, its roof dented and a tyre burst by other heavies who then laid in with fists and sticks.

Local police were "surprisingly" co-operative. They went looking for the culprits but the hunt was lost. A week later though four police cars and a police van met the sabs – individuals were then taken to the hunt's meet to identify the assailants. Two definate identifications were made and the police have promised that they will prosecute, despite some of them having pro-hunt sympathies. After the identification the police allowed the sabs to carry on with their work which they did, unhindered by sheepish looking hunt supporters. No kills were made.

The group has featured regularly in the University's "Redbrick" mag.

In January police were called when 50 sabs from **Birmingham** and **Warwick Universities** and **Wolverhampton Poly** formed a circle around an earth in which an exhausted fox had sought refuge from the North Warwickshire FH. A number of sabs were assaulted by hunt supporters trying to break the ring.



*Worcester sab pondering what to do next*

**Worcestershire HSA's** youngest active member, 8 year old Rebecca Wilford, blotted her copy book by telling her schoolmates that she'd been out with the "hunt slobs". Main target has been the Worcestershire FH – the hunt has assigned a supporter to follow sabs each time they're out, taking mug shots. False noses, specs and moustaches will be worn next season! The hunt's burly terrier man Chris Salisbury threatened sabs that he'd "pick them off one by one" during the summer. This followed his incarceration in a police cell one afternoon for pinching Brum University's van's CB aerial (not charged yet) – he cooled off though when it became known that he was worried about his mum finding out about the police incident!

He blocked a fox in its earth on one hunt, aiming to dig it out later. Sabs beat him to it!

The group has had local radio out with it – the hunt gave the reporter a nice rude pompous interview.

At the hunting debate at Worcester the BFSS's Conservation Officer Ian Coghill was specifically asked if he'd ever seen a live animal thrown to hounds. "No" he replied. A few weeks later his terrier man was thrown out of the Three Counties Minkhounds for throwing a live mink to the hounds in front of Coghill.

## HERTS & BEDS

**South Beds HSA** now has about 40 members out most weekends. With **Luton HSA** they've managed to force the Enfield Chace FH to change its normal hunting pattern.

The groups were joined by 1000 demonstrators from other HSA groups, **LACS, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and Animal Aid** for the annual Boxing Day demo against the Aldenham Harriers. Scuffles which broke out after provocative counter demonstrators waved pro-bloodsport banners about were quelled by police from the Tactical Patrol Group. One sab was later fined £40 for slapping a horse when it was backed onto his foot. No hares were killed.

**Luton HSA**, whose active membership includes a stores clerk, a computer designer, a solicitor and an unemployed fully paid up member of the Tory party, have saved a number of foxes' lives and been threatened with violence as a result – tyres have been let down. Albert Buckle, huntsman of regular target the Whaddon Chase FH, grudgingly admits "They are a bit of a nuisance" adding most responsibly, "We have up to 300 supporters who would get 'stuck in' if anyone tried to stop their Sport."

## SOUTH WEST

15 members of **Devon Animal Rights** protested at the East Devon FH's Boxing Day meet in Honiton High Street. They were jostled and shoved by hunt supporters and ghouls and later blocked in their cars for 40 minutes. Another demo was attended by **SCRAP (the Street Charade Resisting Abominable Pastimes)** performing their annual Boxing Day street theatre on a vampire theme.

Meanwhile **Swindon HSA** and sabs from **Oxford** and other areas were holding a banner demo at the Wantage Boxing Day meet of the Old Berkshire FH. The supporters became violent, trying to pop a sab tyre with a 6" nail and attacking one sab with a spade resulting in a badly cut hand. The hunt were having so little luck that at 2 pm some terrier men had to release two dazed, muddy foxes from a trap door in a corner of a field. 10 sabs saw this happen and were able to prevent the hunt from killing these foxes.

16 sabs in a van on a South Devon FH hit in January were boxed in by the hunt and a girl sab was punched in the face.

Chard based **Wessex Animal Rights** have been engaged in distributing 20,000 Animal Protection Alliance leaflets to homes in the Yeovil area. A.P.A. has been set up to advise voters on the "animal rights" commitments of each party at the forthcoming General Election. Marginal constituencies will be A.P.A's main targets.

The new **Bath HSA**, with a hardcore of 8 regular activists plus a larger pool on tap, has spent its first season out against 4 local foxhunts, two beagle packs and the Quantock Staghounds. Saturdays not spent sabbing are spent collecting funds in the city centre with a display board, collecting tins and loud voices, £50 was made one day.

The group has often combined its activities with those of the **Yeovil** and **Bristol** groups – some of the targets have hardly been hit before. Then Avon Vale FH runs away at the sight of sabs and the South and West Wilts FH are confused enough to have been giving sabs lifts in their cars, mistaking them (punks and all) for genuine hunt supporters. A favourite tactic is feeding the hounds dog biscuits (sorry - "hound" biscuits!)

The main joint hit of the season was on January 15th when approximately 60 sabs from the three groups hit the combined Devon and Somerset Staghounds/Quantock SH packs. The event was filmed by a BBC TV crew and subsequently shown on SW TV and later nationally on "Nationwide".

A large quantity of antimate was used in the first woods and very soon riders where whipping sabs in the rides. Police fortunately arrived in time to prevent 60 riders charging 15 sabs trapped in a field near the LACS St. Nicholas Priory sanctuary. 2 sabs were clubbed by the first wood's "owner" but the arrival of more sabs calmed the situation. LACS sanctuary manager John Hicks was hit with a riding crop whilst protesting about the hunt trespassing on four League sanctuaries that day and he was subsequently roughed-up by four hunt supporters. Rowley Ford, the hunt's chairman, made it clear that he believed the sabs were paid to be there by the LACS. He naturally "didn't see any trespass on League land or assaults on League Staff." "But if hunt saboteurs come down here looking for trouble and they find it then it's their hard luck" he added.

The hunt was sabbed effectively for two hours - at least one hind was saved despite every effort by supporters to scare deer away from the LACS sanctuaries but eventually a hind was "taken" in Pixton Park - the deep rivers around the park prevented sabs from keeping up. After hearing the shot the sabs arrived at the scene of merrymaking but were refused permission to leave by the only bridge by a blockade of horses. One sab who ran the gauntlet was violently abused and only saved from serious assault by the less savage women supporters. A full scale assault on the sabs was only prevented by the arrival of 2 policemen - even the girls were kicked in the back by mounted females as they recrossed the bridge.

The following month the joint groups were out again against the Ilminster Beagles, sticking with the hounds and master as much as possible. The huntsmen wrestled a girl sab, a male sab rushed in to help and was kicked in the head by supporters. A hare was torn to pieces before the sabs were eventually ordered off the land to carry on sabbing with the horn from adjacent fields - the pack was effectively split for half an hour. One supporter fired a gun at them. They later found another hare dead of exhaustion.

The **Swindon HSA** has had a 100% success rate against the Old Berks FH forcing them to switch their Saturday meets to Fridays. The hunt is now losing support. No kills have been made whilst the group's been present. The main tactic has been pre-beating and letting off bangers in the woods for three or four hours before the hunt and later keeping ahead of the hunt at a discreet distance due to the extreme violence of the supporters and many riders. The local police told the sabs that if they get beaten up they don't want to know about it.

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## ESSEX

Boxing Day saw a number of demos in the county. 25 sabs from the **Maldon Young Liberals** and **East London, Colchester, Southend and Mid Essex HSA** groups staged a banner demo in Maldon High Street against the Essex Farmers FH. There was a spectacular start with a dozen sabs spraying the High Street ahead of the pack as it moved off. The hunt were trying to avoid the sabs so much that no kills were made. Some sabs went off to successfully disrupt a nearby pheasant shoot, using CB radios to keep in touch.

YL Michael Dodd was fearful that photos taken of sabs at the meet by leading Tory district councillor Rodney Bass will be used as part of a black list to stop them getting jobs etc. Bass later admitted that "if the pictures reveal acts of hooliganism I certainly will not be delivering them to Mr. Dodd, but to the Essex Farmers Hunt." A bit ominous!

Meanwhile another dozen protesters were out against the Essex and Suffolk FH's meet at Frinton's Lodge Hotel – it would have been the last time they met there if the local Labour Party's petition to ban them had been successful – the petition followed the killing of a cat by the hunt last year.

**South East Essex HSA** were out with a large banner demo at the opening meet of the East Essex FH. Other animal groups joined in. This hunt has been the group's main target. A 100% "no kill" record has been achieved. The hunts are not happy and have been accusing sabs of being "violent" – strange when they themselves have managed to kill a cat, savage a dog, kill a pheasent, knock down an old lady and deliberately ride down two female sabs, one needing hospital treatment. The Essex FH are having an injunction taken out against them because they insist on riding over a farmer's land despite having been banned from it for 15 years.

Although the group's funds have been low its membership has been steadily growing under the enthusiastic watchful eye of Bob Allen. Meetings are held once a month and a full sab van has been going out each Saturday. On 26th March the first sab was arrested – a 17 year old girl who was brutally pulled out of the van by a police officer and thrown into a police car with unnecessary force. A hunter had said she'd sprayed the hounds. She was later released uncharged.

The group were joined by 5 **Norfolk HSA** members and sabs from **Essex University, East London and Colchester** groups to stop the Essex FH making any kills on 26th February.

After being shot at by a nutter with a shotgun in March 20 **SE Essex** sabs had to hide in a wood until the master of the Essex and Suffolk arrived.

The group aim to spend the summer demonstrating against factory farming and the fur trade. Hopefully it'll be more peaceful than an early season all night vigil outside a Canewdon mink farm when protesters were attacked by another nutter claiming to be a bloodsports supporter. He kicked their kit about and threw chairs around. The demonstrators had earlier set fire to a fur coat and laid a wreath outside the farm.

## EAST ANGLIA

20 members of the **Bury Action Group** held a silent protest at the Boxing Day meet of the Suffolk FH. The **Norfolk Animal Rights Society,** an offshoot of **Animal Aid,** has turned its attention to hunts in the county. On 22nd January they were joined by **Norwich BUAV** and an experienced team from the **Essex HSA** to put 40 sabs in the field against the Norfolk Beagles. The sabmobile organized for the day was a double decker bus! It arrived as the hunt started – the field of 15 stood agog as the bus' complement disgorged itself, complete with banners, and came thundering across the fields at them. An active day followed, with sabs soon well strung out by the fast pace. Nevertheless the hunt were kept up with all day and the hounds were pulled off at least three certain kills – in fact no kills were made. A van load of heavies who were pottering around kept referring to the sabs as "Michal Foot Supporters."

In February **NARS** picketted the British Association for Shooting and Conservation's road-show when it called at Norwich to instruct local wildlife killers on how to do it more effectively.

**Cambridge Animal Aid** have been sabbing fox and hare hunts. They were given a nice surprise by an anonymous lady who sent them £1000 towards their transport costs for next season. Thanks to them, two farmers have now banned all hunts on their land and one has offered to "put up sabs for the night." Four foxes and two hares have been saved. The group held an Animal Rights Week in Cambridge in April which was opened by Richard Adams, ex-president of the RSPCA.

A new animal rights group at **Cambridge Tech.** has been helped with a £200 donation from the SU.

## SOUTH CENTRAL

Fox, hare and deer hunts in the New Forest have been the targets for the **New Forest, Portsmouth and Southampton** groups. Several hares have been saved – one, only twenty feet from the huntsman, was masked from his view and its scent covered with antimate and garlic. CB radios have been used. Holloaing and horn blowing have proved most effective on New Forest FH hits but the hunt tend to dig a lot of foxes out, even ones that haven't apparently been hunted by the hounds. When 5 sabs "sat in" at one such dig after an earlier dig out, at which the fox's body had been fed to the hounds in front of them, they ended up in Ringwood Magistrates Court. They were each fined £10.

In March the hunt was seen to stampede cows. Earlier in the month **Bournemouth** and **Fareham** HSA groups joined in to completely split the pack with garlic and antimate. Hounds were spread over several miles of the forest. The redcoats tend to ride away so fast when spotting sabs that they invariably lose most of the pack and the field. The hunt's new terrier man rides round the forest on a motorbike with his spade on his back – presumably to dig himself out judging by the number of times he's been stuck in the mud.

HSA members were joined by others from **LACS** and **Animal Aid** to protest at the New Forest FH's Boxing Day meet. There were numerous scuffles and the antis were thanked by the police for their co-operation in not scaring the horses with their banners.

One sab was arrested for breach of the peace. A runaway horse on its way back from the hunt was killed when it collided with a van.

The **Surrey and Hants Border HSA** and the **Farnham Animal Rights Movement** have been very active against a number of fox and hare hunts between them, often joined by groups from **Guildford, Reading, Woking, Aldershot, Reigate and West London.** Hursley/Hambledon FH's obnoxious master, Michael Poland, has threatened sabs with a whipping when their horns have split his pack and a horn was bent in two by a hunts-woman reaching through a sab's car window on a Hampshire Hunt hit. Sabs were warned off army land by two mounted redcaps (military policemen) on one hunt. On another police warned sabs that "Major Cummings will have a heart attack if he continues to puff and blow."

Once again though the Aldershot Beagles have proved to be the most popular target having been "done" at least 20 times this season, including mid week sabs with as many as 12 sabs and 10 police matching the hunt's dozen supporters. Its kill record is way down on previous years – the hounds have sometimes been seen chasing chickens instead. It's certainly been a season which hunts-man Roy Clinkard would rather forget. Three meets were cancelled because of his mystery illness but he emerged for the final meet looking pale, weak and glandular. The following Saturday he tried to slip out for a quiet bye-day but, finding both his kennels' exists covered by sabs, he had to drive across a ploughed field in order to escape. He didn't escape. He lost 2 hounds killed on the M3, he smashed the front of his Landrover in, he keeps losing supporters in his attempts to shake the sabs, his pack regularly riots after deer, his whips have been warned by the police for threats and actual assault and, all in all, it's just not been his year. Police have been generally OK although on one occasion they sent a sab driver off to the garage "to get more air in his tyre." On the last meet a sab was actually paid £2 out of the "cap" money for an air horn that had been vandalized by a "whip".

**Reigate HSA** have also been very active mainly against the Surrey Union FH, often with sabs from the **University of Surrey Anti Bloodsports Society** and **Basingstoke HSA.** Anything up to 50 sabs are usually involved. Tactics include pre-spraying, whistles, horns, air horns, shouting, blood trails and digestive biscuits.

There's been an increasingly hostile reception from the hunt – female riders pulling male sabs' hair and kicking them, a gamekeeper threatening to ram a sab car, a 16 stone supporter on a tiny Puch moped trying to ride people down, etc. Sometimes it's been nastier. In March a rider called Ron was permitted to insanely ride down every **Reigate** sab in sight – his horse went right over one tripped sab, a hoof clipping his back. The following week **Reigate** and visiting **Essex** sabs were attacked by 20 unknown heavies obviously recruited by the Surrey Union. Their sprays were broken and poured over them and most were punched or kicked – the last laugh was on the hunt though because minutes later the whole pack came trotting through the spilled antimate. At the next meet a sab car was spray painted "Fox – no parking" by a hunter. The sabs have fought back though. On 19th February at a scuffle, as usual started by the terrier men, one terrier man was thrown down a hill and another given a bloody nose. The hunt still believes that the sabs are paid £5 a day. They also admit that "they completely ruin our days" and suggest that the sabs are only there "because they can't get any women."

One of the hunt's whips is a police officer who still persists in flashing his credentials and threatening sabs with arrest. Generally the police have been OK though.

On one occasion a **USAB** member actually put his foot on a tired fox which jumped up and ran off. Its tracks were successfully covered. A fox killed by the terrier men in January was retrieved – in addition to the bullet hole it had at least 3 spade blows to its head – one through its eye, one by its right ear and one at the back of the skull.

The Surrey and North Sussex Beagles have also come in for much attention. They tend to vent their rage on the hounds – one beagler threw his whip at one and, on another occasion, a whip kicked a beagle 4 or 5 times as it lay on its back in fear after showing reluctance at re-boxing. In March two whips with two mates parked by a **USAB** car to watch the reaction when the sabs found the dead hare that had been placed on their bonnet. One whip was dragged from his car and forced to remove the hare. One sab, asked to take their car number, did so – literally. The whip's number plate was thrown over a hedge – after retrieving it they retreated with the smirks well and truly wiped off their faces.

Other activities in the region include the setting up of a women's combined peace and animal rights camp outside Porton Down chemical warfare establishment near Salisbury where animals are mercilessly exploited. The aim is to keep the camp going for at least 6 months. All the women are vegetarians.

**ALF** members raided the Ministry of Agriculture's Infestation Control lab in Guildford to liberate two foxes – both are doing well on a West Country sanctuary after being given veterinary clearance.

## SOUTH EAST

**Reigate HSA** has also been active with the South London based **Wild Animal Protection Society (WAPS)** against the Old Surrey and Burstow FH (known affectionately as the "Old Sods and Bastards"). 27 sabs were out with them on Boxing Day, managing to cover every hound with antimate as they filtered through a gateway. One sab had to hide in a holly bush to escape 4 pursuing redcoats. The hunt got "nasty" a couple of times – terrier men tried to roll a full sabmobile over on one hunt. Huntsman Jack Champion's claim that WAPS had lured several hounds to their deaths on a railway line in October 1981 was dismissed when it was discovered he was talking about a Wednesday – they were all at work that day!

The Sunday Times sent a reporter out with both sides on 26 Feb. The story appeared in a ¾ page spread a week later. Charlie "The Spade" Canfield, the hunt's decrepit terrier man, ran true to form with quotes like "I don't like antis. In fact, I call a spade a spade, I hate the buggers." When two policemen once told him not to use his spade he told them "You're too late. I've already rammed one in the ribs with it." **WAPS** have been using rookies and chemicals in the woods. 3 **Reigate** sabs out with the OS+B in January were confronted by a farmer who loaded his shotgun in front of them and waved it around John Wayne style. Fortunately police arrived and let them go – all before the hunt had started! They later noted a terrier man killing a fox without a humane killer.

Boxing Day saw a demo by **Hastings HSA** at the Battle meet of the East Sussex and Romney Marsh FH – the hunt's master refused to say whether a fox had been found. "That's immaterial" he said (funny – we thought that's what hunting's supposed to be about). 30 sabs from the **Horsham Animal Rights Group** and **Brighton and Worthing HSA** were meanwhile giving the Crawley and Horsham FH a vociferous welcome. The hunt decided not to distribute those silly BFSS leaflets at the meet "because it might have been inflammatory" with the sabs there – they waited until they reached the first wood before giving some leaflets to the few car drivers there.

The **Brighton and Worthing** group and the newly re-formed **Sussex University** branch have been active every weekend against each of the Sussex hunts often with **Hastings HSA.** Several foxes and hares have been saved by effective spray-ing and horn blowing. The Chiddingfold, Leconfield and Cowdray FH's supporters have twice immobilised sabmobiles in desperation at being unable to catch their quarry. Sabbing has been stepped up against the Crawley and Horsham although the hunt's country is so well stocked with foxes and the hunt so eager to dig out that sabbing is sometimes difficult. Horn blowers have needed good camoflage and fast shoes. Whilst out against the Eridge FH sabs discovered a dead snared badger with other snares nearby. Police are investigating.

An employee of a Surrey paper where a sab works was approached in a pub in Maidstone by a hunter offering £5 and drinks afterwards if his friends would come and beat up sabs hitting the Tickham FH.

Sabs didn't need to get involved with this year's demo at the Grosvenor House "Horse and Hound Ball" – when Princess Anne and Foggy arrived (for the Ball, not the demo!) they were met by a jeering crowd of hotel employees protesting about the sacking of 27 workers.

10 female sabs from various SE groups made up this year's **Wellies and Co.** hit against the Southdown FH. The hounds soon picked up a scent – the fox was simultaneously spotted by four sabs, mingling discreetly as supporters, and the whip's young side-kick who tried to keep the hounds on the scent. Luckily the fox bolted across the sabs' path and, with their cover blown, effective spraying masked its scent. The whip + his side-kick went bananas when they smelt the garlic. One girl was punched, another roughed up and a spray pinched. The whip repeatedly rode his horse into one sab who had the sense and courage to grab the reins – all this on a public right of way! Fortunately the sabs escaped with no more than a few cuts and bruises. A fresh fox was spotted later in the day with hounds almost on top of it. The sabs sprayed behind it and the huntsman had to dismount and toot his horn to encourage the hounds back onto the scent. The hunt packed up early due to bad weather without making a kill.

Now for the mink hunts!

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## THE ANGLO-IRISH CONNECTION

Back in October 1982, two English Sea Shepherd members and four HSA members travelled over to County Mayo, Eire to assist the new-formed Dublin-based Irish Sea Shepherd oppose what was to have been a Government-organised cull of the grey seal population centred on the Inishkea islands off Mayo. The eight-week operation, well-organised, financed and with tremendous public support was a total success. After two government counts of seal numbers, officials backed down and stated there would be no cull in 1982. The Sea Shepherd volunteers, living in tents and a roofed ex-police barracks that had not seen human habita-tion for over 50 years continued the vigil to prevent local fishermen carrying out an illegal massacre of the seals. Enduring primitive living conditions, Atlantic storms, frequent food short-ages and veiled threats from angry salmon fisher-men they stuck it out until the last seal pups left their rocky outposts for the open sea, and laid the beginnings of the animal rights movement in Eire.

Irish bloodsports in the past have enjoyed relative tranquility. Hunts still advertise in the dailies and they have enormous coverage in the Sports Columns of all coursing meetings. At long last however hunt saboteurs have arisen in Eire. In 1982 both the Meath Foxhounds and Fingal Harriers could not believe their eyes when antimate sprays and alien horn calls greeted their hounds.

So in January, 1983 a group of experienced sabs. from Merseyside, Exeter, Clydeside and Stirling travelled over to Dublin for a long weekend to give them a helping hand. In all, about twenty sabs. from Dublin and Navan were taken out against four different hunts. On the Thursday sabs. brought the Tara Harriers pack to a standstill just 20 yards behind their hare and the huntsman went berserk, hitting everything with two legs or four wheels. On the Friday the Meath Foxhounds spent five hours just looking for a fox without luck and sabs. kept them on the move all day; again their supporters lashed out at sabs. giving poor old Dave McColl a nice black eye and must have been practising their road-blocking tricks in the local children's playground. By contrast the Louth Fox-hounds on the Saturday found sabs. quite amusing and gave no trouble at all, sabs. secured the escape of two foxes and split the pack far and wide before they finally gave up. To finish an exhausting week-end the Goldburn Beagles were hit hard early Sunday afternoon with a classic interception between hare and hounds before having to leave for a short tactics discussion with the Irish group in Dublin. Sabbing Irish hunts is not going to be an easy task; violence, a sparse road network, terrain and public tolerance of bloodsports are major obstacles which will be hard to overcome.
Since then the group have been out several times and met with increased violence from hunt supporters, the worst probably being the West Meath Foxhounds when seven sabs. were attacked by a mob of 40 supporters, with sticks. Irish hunts will have to learn that it will take more than just sticks and fists to stop hunt saboteurs going out.




Bob Allen

*S.E. Essex & Norwich sabs with their sabmobile*

# FOX TRAP

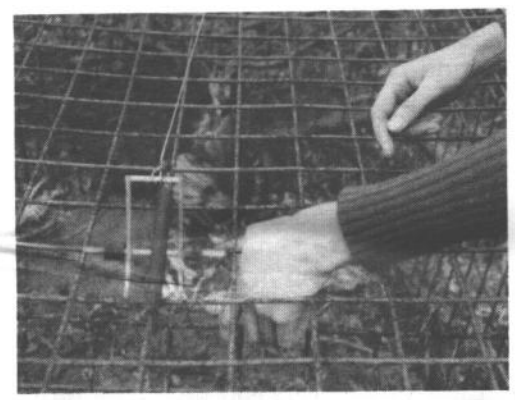


*Cage trap with dead chicken as bait*

**A fox trap was discovered during a joint end-of-season hit on the Badsworth Hunt carried out by several groups in the North and North West. The trap was found in a small copse and consisted of a heavy metal mesh cage about 6 feet long, 3 feet wide and 3 feet high, inside of which was a dead chicken suspended by a wire which in turn was connected to a spring catch releasing the heavy metal door, thus trapping the animal (presumably a fox).**

**The question is what was to happen to the fox afterwards? It would have been trapped alive but for what purpose? All the indications were that the trap was being used by the hunt to catch foxes for that 'rainy-day' when they can't find with hounds. Strictly against their rules of course!**

**The sabs took some 'direct action' against the trap by tipping it on end so no fox could enter. Further action wasn't possible due to the proximity of pursuing hunters and police.**



*Spring clip and wire to release door*

## MERSEYSIDE HSA AND THE POLICE

The last three months have seen a disturbingly peculiar difference in attitude to hunters and sabs. from local police. Over the Christmas period several sabs. were arrested; Bill Lamb, a member of the public who joined the Boxing Day protest against the Royal Rock Beagles has now been charged with criminal damage and Assault with Bodily Harm (ABH) against the huntsman (alleged injuries a cut lip and bruising to the ribs). Two other sabs. have been charged with 'action likely' – they were arrested walking down a public road. The results of these cases will be known by the end of May. On New Year's Eve at the children's meet of the Royal Rock Beagles near Bebington local sab. Paul Jones was arrested for possession of an offensive weapon; a half-brick that was wedging a speaker on a loose shelf at the back of his car. On 24 March, the case came before Bebington Magistrates and was thrown out with costs being awarded to Paul. In the morning police attempted to bribe him into accepting a binding over order in return for dropping charges, when this was thrown back into their faces, the two police prosecution witnesses lied through their teeth. They alleged he told them:

*"A brick can stop a horse and rider."*

The Magistrates preferred to believe defence witnesses not connected with the HSA, tell the court that the brick was merely weighing down a rattling shelf that was shaking the speakers of the tape deck.

These alleged offences are somewhat trivial compared to the assaults that have been launched on sabs. by members of the Cheshire Beagles over which police are still dragging their feet.

The first serious incident occurred at a joint meet of the Cheshire, Royal Rock and the Irish Pack – the Goldburn Beagles at Tremerchion, near Denbigh, Clwyd on 29 January. Police from St. Asaph were content to sit back and refuse to act or take statements from sabs. over numerous incidents; the smashing of a hired van windscreen, the smashing of a Manchester sabs. glasses by a whip handle whilst wearing them, two sabs. were punched and kicked to the ground by supporters of the Cheshire Beagles and freelance photographers threatened and jostled by the same yobs. Although statements were later taken by CID, police present on the day refused to arrest a beagler who boasted of smashing the windscreen.

The second more serious incident occurred again at a joint meet of the Cheshire and Royal Rock Beagles at Haughton, near Tarporley, Cheshire on 18 March. Again, although perfectly civil, Nantwich police were loathe to act after three serious assaults on sabs. Mike Killian from Manchester HSA whilst on his own was kicked and punched to the ground by a group of supporters until rescued by fellow sabs.

In a separate incident, Chris Evans of Bangor HSA was surrounded and used as a football twice within half-an-hour, receiving substantial bruising, losing a tooth and having several loosened. At the same time Andy Austin from Liverpool University Group was attacked, a check-up at the Royal Liverpool Hospital later in the day revealed a triple fracture of the jaw. He spent five days in hospital, underwent a three-hour operation and his jaw is now wired up for six weeks. What was the police reaction? Take a private prosecution sonny! They took the attackers name and address, and various statements from sabs. and that was it. What has happened to justice in these rural police forces? It is to be hoped that there will be police prosecutions coming. This last assault was probably one of the most serious in the twenty years of HSA's existence.

**D.P. Callender**

## UNION DEMAND

Brighton HSA members who are active in the Brighton & Hove GMWU (General & Municipal Workers Union) branch have managed to obtain a national policy from the Union demanding the abolition of the hunting and shooting of animals for sport. They have also managed to get the Unions executive to ban bloodsports over land owned or controlled by the Union Pension fund. All HSA members who are also trade-unionists should try and do the same with their own trade-union.

All one has to do is get their local union branch to pass a Motion demanding the abolition of hunting and shooting of animals and asking that bloodsports be banned from Union controlled land. Once it has been passed by the branch, the resolution is passed to the regional secretary by the branch secretary. He/she then contacts the Union executive and asks them to adopt the resolution as policy. If the trade-union is affiliated to the Labour party, which has an anti-hunting policy, the branch resolution can become Union policy very quickly by this route. If the Union is not affiliated to the Labour party it will be more difficult and will probably have to be passed at the Union Conference.

# Badger Watching

There has been a lot written, and a great deal more talking over the past few years about badgers and bovine tuberculosis but to many people still little is known about this delightful creature. In this short article I do not wish to continue this sad saga, only to state that the badger has taken the brunt of the battle because of all the carriers of the disease it is the badger that is the easiest to catch and control. For those people who are interested and wish to learn more about the private life of this nocturnal animal the rewards are worth the effort of going into the woods at night.

Before one can start their studies they have to know what to look for and where, when and how to look for the badger. It is also important to know what to wear. Taking each aspect in turn and putting it into field practice will, I am sure, give many hours of pleasure and a peace that has to be experienced because it is far beyond my limited powers of expression.

The badger is widely distributed throughout the British Isles with the greatest densities in the south east, south, and western areas of England. Their sets are dug in a wide variety of habitats, woodland, scrub and hedgerows being the most common. Other places include open hillsides, rubbish dumps, natural caves or even under buildings. They prefer good cover with an abundant food source nearby. Most woodland badgers live within 50 metres of the edge of the wood. The choice of site being either in a bank or under the roots of trees. They favour an area where there is a change of strata with a softer and easy to dig soil underlying a harder rock. The harder rock supports the roof. In the absence of such a site a situation under the roots of trees is chosen.

The signs to look for are numerous, from a few hairs caught on a strand of barbed wire fence to the great mounds of earth excavated in the building of their sets. The entrance of the set is roughly 20 cm high by 35 cm wide, this can be much larger if the set has been dug in soft sandstone. The mound of earth dug out by the badger usually has hay or other bedding material mixed in with it, (a fox never has bedding in its earth). Close by the entrance will be a number of dung pits dug and left uncovered. Droppings are fairly loose but depend a lot on what has been eaten. Animal and plant remains can sometimes be identified in the more firm scats but the most usual diet of earthworms leaves a dropping that is muddy. Well worn paths radiate from the set. It is common for sets to have a number of entrances, not all will be in use at the same time but the signs of fresh digging and the recently worn path will indicate what entrances are in use. Depending on the time of the year there may be bedding out for an airing or small piles of bedding dropped on the paths to the set, this is particularly noticeable during the spring months when there are likely to be cubs around.

Badgers can be seen out and about throughout the year although they may stay below ground for a day or two in the worse days of winter. They will venture out even in thick snow to forage for food. Their trails can be followed with ease at such times, but winter is not the best of times to go badger watching. Out in the woods on a cold wet night in January is not the most comfortable of pastimes, the best time to watch is from April until October.

The badger being a noctural animal makes its appearance soon after sunset, although in the more remote areas they are sometimes abroad in the daylight hours often laying out and sunning themselves just as foxes do. When going to watch badgers it is advisable to arrive at the set about one hour before sunset and settle down comfortably and quietly wait for them to emerge. Badgers more often than not sit just inside the entrance of the set for quite some minutes before making their appearance. This is only to make sure that the coast is clear and it is safe for them to come out. Any noise, even the slightest one at this time will send them scurrying back to the depths of the set and you may not see them at all for the rest of the night. Once they have ventured out noise is not quite so important although you should still be as quiet as you can. The most important sense, to the badger, is the sense of smell, it is therefore most critical that notice is taken of wind direction and any approach must be made down wind of the set. The wind does funny things in woodland, one can never be sure which direction it will come from as it is deflected from tree to tree. For this reason it is best if possible to get above ground and watch from a suitable branch up a tree if such a tree be available.

Even on a pleasant summer evening it can turn quite cold so it makes sense to wrap up warm if you are to stay comfortable. The choice of clothing is important, it has to be warm, soft and of a neutral colour that will blend in with surroundings. Anything like nylon that is stiff and rustles when you move will immediately give your presence away and spoil your chances of a successful watch.

When you are starting to watch badgers it is not advisable to try to get too near the entrance as you are almost sure to be discovered. A distance of about twenty feet is quite near enough. If possible sit or lean against a tree or some other natural feature so that you do not show up in silhouette against the skyline. Once the animals are out and about keep still, if you must move then move very slowly. The badgers eyes are not very good and they can walk right up to you before they know you are there. The badgers usually stay around the area of the set for quite a few minutes before moving off. After they have gone and it's time for the watcher to return home, a silent retreat is just as important as the silent approach. It is advisable to take a torch with you as it is usually quite dark by the time you leave the woods.

For the quiet patient watcher the rewards are manifold, not only will they see the badger but also many other animals and birds of the night.

**Arthur G. Hoare**

# Social Scene

The chinless wonders of the notorious Bullingdon Dining Club – whose members are all students of Oxford University and usually the children of major establishment figures – have been wreaking havoc once again, this time in the sacred surroundings of a hunt ball. The St. John Ambulance Brigade watched in amazement as bottles were smashed, couples made love and brawls broke out. The entrance hall was said to resemble a casualty clearing station.

Prince Lal Dalamal, who 'organised' the shindig said that the club committee has nothing to do with beagles or hunting "I must confess I'm not even sure of what a beagle looks like – except snoopy!" Despite this assurance, one Bullingdon member is well acquainted with bloodsports: Tommy Leigh-Pemberton is the student-son of Robin Leigh-Pemberton, Governor of the Bank of England and active BFSS member as well as Governor of Wye College in Kent which has its own beagle pack.

The Royal Family have spent the last few months forging a new humane relationship towards animals (I was only joking!!). They have been giving wildlife a good seeing too. Prince Charles is now out weekly with the Quorn often accompanied by big sister. At Christmas Philip, Anne and Mark Phillips were out bagging pheasants in their backyard at Great Windsor Park. The very next day they all went for a holiday at Sandringham and guess what they got up to there? yep, your right out shooting pheasants again, up to five hours a day. Prince Andrew "bagged several birds" (Is that several hundred? thousand?) but commited the heinous crime of carrying the dead birds by the wing and not the neck which is proper shooting etiquette. I thought everybody knew that. The Royal Crew made a few bob on the side as well by selling pheasants to local people. (Who said they don't care?). Princess Diana is still not joining in all the fun according to Nigel Dempster of the Daily Mail, although a recent report stated she enjoyed a day out following hubby and the Belvoir. Mind you Diana must be somewhat perturbed by Charles' growing and voracious appetite for hunting.

Warmonger Michael Heseltine was recently seen serving tots to members of the Bicester and Warden Hill Hunt during their meeting at his home, Thetford House. Indeed the Minister was photographed encouraging members of the local constabulary to partake while on duty. Yet more displeasing was a photograph of Mrs. Anne Heseltine, posing on her horse – or at least I think it was that way round. Don't forget, where blood flows, clots form!

Lady Lyell senior master of the Aldenham Harriers has decided to retire after 25 years at the post. She has been hunting for the last 67 years and has 'enjoyed every minute of it'. Her retirement will be spent 'breeding'. Not more like her we hope!

The 'Moronic Sadist' award goes to J.J. Broadman of Oxford, who exposed himself in a local newspaper. Broadman described the fun of shooting starlings, particularly his ability in shooting 3 or 4 with one shot, and his ecstacy when once he massacred 600 in just one hour. Apparently, 'there is no plague of unwanted birds that a dozen shotguns will not cure.'

We all know and have heard about the strange sort of people who go hunting, but the hunting fraternity must be really embarassed about the publicity they have recently had. A Bogus Doctor who carried out a series of operations on different women, used the Holcombe Harriers to establish himself socially. Mind you, he probably fitted in very well with some of the types that we have all come up against.

Captain Ian Farquhar, MFH of the Bicester and Warden Hill Hunt, is giving up – not hunting unfortunately, only having a puff. The former 50-a-day Captain, who recently accepted a wager that he could give up smoking for a year, admits that it has been a tough struggle so far "there are times when I want a cigarette quite badly, especially while having a drink or meal and, strangely, after exercise."

Any sab. who can catch Captain Farquhar having a crafty drag in the Bicester coverts – especially if they can produce a photograph – could cost the pink-coated foxhunter dear; he stands to lose £1,000 at the first provable puff.

# MINK HUNTING FUTILE

**When Mr. John Williams (formerly of the Masters of Otterhounds Association), wrote in The Field (6 October 1982) that minkhunting is "the only form of hunting whose declared object is to eliminate rather than conserve the quarry" he outlined the only possible justification (in the eyes of a conditioned general public), for the existence of minkhunts, but following a visit to the meet of the Three Counties Minkhounds which he described as an "efficient pack" he wrote; "I felt sure, however, that, whatever their intention, minkhunters will not eliminate the mink." It would be fair to congratulate him on being astute enough to recognise this fact, however, he lets himself down in the same sentence by concluding; "but they are certainly a means of limiting the menace. As such they deserve the support of all riparian owners and fishermen."**

Most fieldsports writers have come to terms with the fact that their efforts cannot eliminate mink from mainland Britain. Waddy Wadsworth, former huntsman to the Courtenay Tracey Otterhounds and now a principal follower of the Devon and Cornwall Minkhounds has this to say about its role: "The D and CMH is doing a good job, a really good job, but its efforts are futile, when you come to think of the miles and miles of rivers in the two counties, and the thousands of mink which live in and on them." (Shooting Times 28 May 1981). It is good to note that such a famous bloodsporter recognises that his efforts are futile. Once again, another fieldsports writer, alias "Dabchick" of The Field (12 March 1980) wrote, "Otterhounds are very welcome in doing their bit to keep them (mink) down. But the operative word is "bit". Their incursion into the present half-hearted anti-mink measures seems unlikely to make a significant difference. Pack hounds were not very effective at catching otters when there was still a need (a need?) or a desire to do so." Once again the writer recognises that as a means of eliminating mink, mink-hunting will be ineffective, yet he still believes that hunting may help to control mink.

## CONTROL METHODS

This must be shown to be a lie, hunting with hounds, whether the quarry be hare, otter, fox, deer or mink and coypu is simply not efficient enough to have any impact on a population of animals unless that population is so fragile (like the otter, and increasingly the hare) that hounds' intrusion into their habitat threatens their stability and breeding success. As both fox and mink are still increasing in numbers despite massive tolls taken by various "control" operations it is obvious that the combined efforts of trappers, farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture and the like are having little effect on these animals' populations, and that hunting with hounds by its very nature is totally unable to have any greater impact.

Indeed these so-called control methods can only have any significance if their toll is additive to natural mortality. In other words if the numbers of animals that die as a result of "control" measures has no effect on the numbers of animals that die by natural means. The evidence suggests that this is not so. Taking mink as an example (and this applies to foxes as well), it can be shown that "control" operations merely kill one animal and ensure the survival of another which would probably have died fairly soon anyway. Mink are basically territorial animals, however, a large percentage of the population — on the river Otter in Devon it is estimated to be six out of every seven (Chanin 1981), are unable to establish a territory because all the suitable habitat is occupied, these animals are condemned to wander along the waterways in search of either a vacant territory, an uncolonised river system or a territory whose resident owner they can displace. It is likely that if a mink cannot find a territory its chances of surviving the winter are slim indeed. Of the young born each year less than one-third survive to breed in the following year, doubtless the other two-thirds will have died mainly through an inability to establish a home-range prior to the onset of winter.

Thus it can be seen that for every one mink taken by some form of "control measure" there are at least six homeless animals doomed to die without territory, one of whose lives will be ensured by the death of the first animal. The chances are that this is what always happens when man embarks upon casual control attempts (shooting, trapping, hunting by individuals) rather than whole-sale slaughter (seal culling and the like which is organised and therefore seriously threatens the species), and if this is the case then "control measures" merely replace mortality by natural means and thus have no real impact upon the animals' population. Because hunting with hounds is so inefficient its impact must be much less even than any of the serious control attempts carried out by the MAFF.

## HUNTING FUTILE

If we now look at the minkhunts themselves it can be shown that efforts are indeed "futile" to use the word of Waddy Wadsworth and that minkhunting is merely an excuse to chase and kill animals during the summer when no other hunting is available, and that the minkhunts have a deleterious effect on the countryside itself. There are possibly fifteen mink hunts in Britain today, certainly there are thirteen known to exist, no doubt more will emerge in the next few years. They vary greatly in type and success, some being no more than glorified rat-hunts having an assortment of hounds including terriers, beagles, foxhounds and sometimes otterhounds and killing less than twenty mink a year and having as few regular supporters. At the other extreme there are hunts (quite often former otter hunts) which are well-organised, may have as many as 60 supporters out each hunting day and have an annual tally of nearly 80 mink a year. Most hunt over wide areas; the Devon & Cornwall Minkhunt hunts in those two counties; the Tandridge Minkhunt hunts in Kent and Sussex, and the Three Counties Minkhunt, hunt throughout most of the Midlands. Thus their "success" must be taken in the context of the area they cover. Clearly the forty-odd mink the D and CMH killed in their 1982 season represents an insignificant proportion of the mink population of Devon and Cornwall. Meanwhile the effects of fifty to sixty foot-followers tramping up and down the banks of our rivers in the spring and summer must be catastrophic for the breeding populations of birds and mammals inhabiting the banks and waterside cover along our rivers.

A report in The Daily Telegraph on the 16th August 1982 illustrates the problems. A landowner, along with other local riparian owners invited the West Yorkshire Minkhunt to hunt along the river Kent at Kentmere. During the ensuing hunting one mink was killed, silage and riverside flora was trodden on and a bird "sanctuary" was disturbed by the fifty to sixty followers. Many other examples of such hooliganism must exist but are never reported. Meanwhile hunts continue to claim that they never disturb otters (which are extremely shy of human interference and will often leave an area after minkhounds have been present) yet Arlin Richard, Master and Huntsman of the D and CMH admitted to the Shooting Times (27 August 1981) that he had found evidence of two otters on "his" rivers during the summer, while the author has been told of an occasion when his hounds "rioted" on an otter during the 1982 season, but fortunately he was able to stop hounds. With the otter population being so sparse and low such harassment could prove to be the last straw for the otter despite the existence of so-called otter santuaries.

## PAST CONTROL ATTEMPTS

Finally, let us look at the attempts to control mink since they first began to establish themselves as members of the British fauna. Between 1964 and September 1967, at the height of the MAFF mink control programme, 3054 mink were trapped in England, Scotland and Wales, this at a time when mink were not yet fully established anywhere in the country. Between 1961 and 1967, despite the control operation, mink caught in MAFF traps continued to rise in number each year and whereas prior to 1961 mink had only been trapped in seven counties in England, Scotland and Wales, by the end of September 1967 every county had seen trapped mink. In Devon 889 mink had been trapped between 1962 and September 1967 and yet despite this the Devon mink population continued to expand and increase in number. Today with greater numbers and a greater range the mink population would be extremely costly to remove.

Sir Christopher Lever (New Scientist 1978) gives us figures for the cost of mink control operations of a limited and singularly unsuccessful nature between 1965 and 1970, they are about £80,000 for England and Wales and £25,000 for Scotland. Clearly a successful attempt to eliminate mink would cost considerably more and would be unjustifiable when compared to the limited amount of damage caused by mink. If control operations removing some 1000 mink a year throughout the country (1965, 1165 mink; 1966, 1084 mink; 1967, January to September, 805 mink) at a time when the mink population was not fully established anywhere cannot control the population, how can minkhunts, operating at a time when mink are more or less established in much of the country, and killing less than 80 a year over several counties hope to limit the population? In Devon in the two years 1965 and 1966, before mink were fully established in the county, MAFF operations killed 265 and 276 mink respectively each year, compared to those figures the D and CMH, hunting 18 years later, and killing about 40 animals a year over both Cornwall and Devon looks stupid and yes, "futile".

Meanwhile other countries are experiencing similar problems while killing even greater numbers of mink a year. Norway and Sweden for instance, (where mink are fully established and had reached that position by 1967, Gerell 1967) are removing 14000 and 20000 mink respectively without gaining any headway against the mink population.

Another example from Devon may settle the issue on both the question of the feasibility of controlling the mink population and the role of mink-hunts in this context. Chanin (1981) describes how in 1973 an attempt was made to trap mink on the river Otter. Between April and September 28 mink were caught in traps set on a 27 km (16½ mile) stretch of river between Upottery and Newton Poppleford. Up to 40 traps were set at a density of less than two per kilometre which required 51 days setting and checking the traps. During the year a further 19 mink were killed by other individuals including eight killed by the Culmstock Otterhunt, a total of 47 mink killed on just 16½ miles of river.

Clearly this operation had removed in 1973 more mink in one year from just one stretch of river than the Devon and Cornwall Minkhounds kill in the entire counties of Devon and Cornwall, yet still the river homed a small number of mink who formed the nucleus of the following year's breeding population, and since the tributaries and the upstream and downstream sections of the river could not be trapped, there is no doubt that itinerant mink quickly discovered the vacant territories and proceeded to establish themselves on the river prior to Winter, (September and October is the peak time for dispersal of young mink and this was when the trapping programme ceased).

This illustrates the ineffectiveness of the minkhunts and also of traditional control attempts, the stupidity of the situation is further emphasised by a consideration of mink eradication. Even if all the mink on the Otter had been trapped the tributaries (and there are 20 of them) would have to be trapped to prevent reinvasion from neighbouring river systems (Clyst, Culm, Tone, Axe, Yarty and Sid). To eradicate mink, trapping would then have to begin on these other rivers and their tributaries but is is obvious that as the "mink-free" zone increases in size the problem of preventing recolonisation from further afield will increase rapidly and if just one pair of mink or a pregnant female invades or remains in a supposedly clear area, all work previously carried out will be undone. The cost of such an operation would be unjustified.

Since mink have not shown themselves to be the threat to native wildlife that it was once feared, and that as they become fully established in an area their population becomes regulated by normal natural controls that are exerted on all our wild animals, and that control is a waste of time, they should be left in peace and enjoyed as a part of Britain's fauna. Meanwhile, minkhunts because of their disrespect for life, their ill-treatment of the countryside and their very real threat to otters should be hounded out of existence — and that's our job. Minkhunting serves no good for anything and the control argument is just an excuse, a facade to disguise a cruel sport.


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## HUNTING IN JERSEY IS A DRAG

*It is by now hardly a surprise to see the inconsistency of those who argue the case for fox hunting. For instance, R.I. Mackenzie, regional P.R. man of the B.F.S.S. (Valley Farm, Stoke, Andover.), claims that draghunting must be uninteresting as it has not grown to replace the traditional form, while in direct contrast, the hunt proper has more followers than ever before. Such is the nature of ignorant conservatism. In contrast, one Michael MacEwen of 'The Field' (15th Jan. 1983), has difficulty concealing his enthusiasm in the report 'Draghounds round the Daffodils' in which he describes the activities of the Jersey Draghunt.*

*The Channel Islands have few foxes, while birds are protected under the law. MacEwen praises the adaptability of the hunting fraternity in adopting the drag. Stressing the importance of intensive cropping on the Island, he says, 'It is easy to understand how organised and controlled a days hunting must be, for woe betide the member who treads on the parsley or the daffodils'. Hence draghunting. Of course, it is easy to see that on the mainland, crops are far less important to farmers!*

*Even during its early, military history, the hunt has always found the source of scent materials a problem. Once from London Zoo, evaporation and leakage seems to have caused difficulties. To the rescue came one William Headdon, who by discovering that distilled Pernod was a suitable alternative, illustrated that when necessary the hunt will find methods to enjoy themselves without killing.*

*In Jersey the course of the hunt is decided by an experienced committee. Difficult conditions, in particular rain, accentuate problems, but the committee ensures that affected farmers are visited during a reconnaisance. During the chase, two whippers-in ensure that no one leaves the planned route. These are usually farmers who appreciate the importance of their jobs in minimising damage. In this way feelings and property are not impinged upon unnecessarily. Furthermore, a hound van ensures than the hounds may cross narrow lanes in safety, the route being previously known to officials, thus avoiding what is a common situation on the mainland, with consequent reduction in the possibility of accident, injury and irritation to people not involved in the hunt.*

*The hunt staff, with a significance perhaps beyond their comprehension, are distinguished by green coats!*

*As to enjoyment and variety, more than fourteen lines are possible on the small, 45 square mile island. On the mainland, with a generally more open field system, almost infinite variation may be envisaged. Apart from natural hedges, obstacles in the form of timber fences are used, placed to fit in with the farming pattern. The particular line discussed in 'The Field' covered eight miles of varied and interesting country, with six planned checks and even an unscheduled change of line by 'the foxes'. A grass bank and wall, left over from the German occupation, was seen to unseat some riders! But, true to form, all this is decried in ordered to maintain the reader's ignorance. MacEwen comments "draghunting can never be a substitute for the real thing". He quotes one exiled septuagenarian Meltonian (!) as saying that Jersey is "not quite Leicestershire". How fortunate.*

*Thus, having admitted that draghunting is safer for riders, public and property alike while maintaining enjoyment and excitement, it is still, apparently, not as good as the pursuit and destruction of a fox, which involves rampaging over the countryside, often regardless of landownership or the feelings of residents. So we are to take it that it is the thrill of the death in prospect, or the possibilities for cavalier behaviour that attracts the keen huntsman. The majority participate for a good ride, companionship and perhaps some glamour. So many of these people would be happy with the disciplined draghunt as described in 'the Field' – that is if it had been their idea!*

*Draghunting would be more likely to prosper if the internal propoganda of the B.F.S.S was not so destructively dishonest about its nature and value. But maybe it is hoping too much to expect huntsmen to give up their barbarism voluntarily.*

# WOC Hunt Havoc Hunt Havoc Hun

*As the hunting season has now drawn to a close, the hunters of hares, foxes and stags can look back upon another successful period of pet killing, trespassing and general bedlam. The killing of pets and livestock by hounds last Winter has once again demonstrated how little control hunters have over their packs.*

### Sheep Deaths

Although fox hunters love to condemn the fox as a savage lamb killer, it appears that sheep are in fact at much greater risk from hounds. A ewe was savaged by hounds of the Essex Farmers' FH which had already mauled her lamb to death. Huntsman Terry Badger, in his enthusiasm to put the unfortunate animal out of its misery, tried to shoot her but only succeeded in embedding the bullet in his own left arm.

Ten-year-old Karen Fieldsend hand-reared a pet ram on the farm owned by her parents at Ardingly, Sussex. She was therefore understandably distressed when hounds of the Old Surrey and Burstow FH attacked it. The ram had its tail completely bitten off and its back legs were badly mauled; it had to be destroyed. Old Surrey and Burstow huntsman, Jack Champion, wasn't even aware of the incident until he returned to the kennels. Joint-Master, John Robson, said the idea of hounds killing a sheep was 'beyond my ken'. However, later in the day Mr. Robson was busy apologising to the Fieldsends and offering compensation. Eye-witnesses to the killing were particularly impressed by the rude and unapologetic behaviour of hunt supporters who were present at the time.

### Favourite Quarry

Dogs and cats have proved to be particularly popular quarries. A pet cat belonging to a 78 year old widow had to be destroyed after a fox-hound belonging to the Essex and Suffolk FH attacked it. Mrs. Hilda Farrow of Hadleigh was so disgusted with the behaviour of the hunt that she refused to accept an apology from Joint-Master, Jeremy Pembroke. The cat was basking in the sunshine when it was attacked by the hound which wrenched and dislocated the lower part of the cat's body. One of the hunt followers wrapped the cat in some newspaper and another offered to shoot it. This offer was refused by Mrs. Farrow who sought veterinary advice instead. At the time of the incident hounds were out of control, Mr. Pembroke admitting that "the Hunt staff could not keep up with the hounds."

Meanwhile, another Essex based hunt, this time the East Essex FH, have been busy pet hunting. About ten hounds ran into a private garden and chased ducks and geese before turning on a pet collie. The owner of the dog, Mrs. Linda May, stated that it was only the animal's thick coat that saved it from being badly injured. The huntsman's attitude was predictably rude, he ignored Mrs. May's protestations and refused to apologise. Joint-Master, David Nott, said he knew nothing of the accident; he was with hounds all day and didn't see any such incident. The East Essex pet-hounds also killed a pet cat in Finchingfield early in the season.



Bob Allen

*East Essex F.H. looking for pets*

### Go Back To London

Hounds from the Warwickshire FH rampaged through a private garden in Shipston-on-Stour and terrorised a cat belonging to a family who had recently moved from London. Joint-Master of the hunt, Charmian Green, summed up the welcome which ex-city dwellers can expect from the friendly hunting set. She stated, with open arms and a heart of gold, *"these people should go back to London."*

Even the famous Quorn FH which claims to have some of the country's finest hounds and is a favourite of Prince Charles killed an unfortunate dog. One wonders if they had attacked a Royal Corgi, would our favourite Prince still enjoy fox hunting so much? Instead, however, the victim was a Yorkshire terrier which was tossed around like a rag doll by three hounds. Hunt spokesman Michael Clayton said *"the whole hunt is most distressed by what happened."* Who does he think he's kidding? The only thing the hunt is distressed about is that the Press got hold of the story.

### Salukis Kill Bunnies

The coursing set have also joined in the carnage. Two prize Salukis belonging to breeder Mrs. Zola Rawson have killed guinea pigs and rabbits in an attack on pets kept in a greenhouse belonging to the Brogan family in Chaldon, Surrey. This was not the first such incident. Now seven families in the village have joined together to campaign for action to be taken over the continuing attacks. Most of the families have had pets killed by the dogs. An unrepentant Mrs. Rawson has stated however, *"they are all quiet, gentle dogs."* She has admitted that they have killed three guinea pigs and a rabbit but, after all, *"they are hunting dogs and it is in their nature to go for rabbits."*

### Cattle Frightened

An ex-fox hunting farmer persistently asked the Bilsdale Hunt not to trespass on his land. He even got them to sign a legal undertaking not to trespass. Unfortunately the hunt did not fully explain the legal niceties to their hounds which subsequently rampaged through the farmers livestock and caused a cow to abort her calf. Rosanne Pearson, daughter of the farmer, said "a lot of our neighbours have had the same problem but they are too embarrassed to do anything about it." The hunt were forced to pay £390 compensation and £50 costs when they admitted responsibility.

### Hounds in House

The East Kent Hunt let their hounds run amok over a couple's smallholding. The hounds felt so much at home that they romped into the kitchen and urinated over the back door. The hunt also tried to dig out a fox on the couple's land. The hunt followers were characteristically rude when asked to leave, and Master Reg Older commented *"The dogs were searching for where the fox went. They would not have gone into the house if the door had not been open."*

### Dogs go Shopping

Hounds belonging to the Essex Farmer's FH caused an estimated £78 of damage to furniture displayed on the pavement of Southminster's main street. Huntsman Terry Badger was ill at home at the time (probably still recovering from having shot himself). So the responsibility for taking the hounds shopping fell to 17 year old Steve, son of Terry. The owner of the furniture, Mrs. Lily Sage, said "there was not a word of apology" at the time of the incident (surprise, surprise).

It seems that hounds in the Bicester and Warden Hill Hunt prefer golf to shopping. They recently played around on the Cherwell Edge Golf Course. Unfortunately the accompanying riders behaviour wasn't quite on par, and gates and fences were damaged. Amazingly, the hunt apologised.

Gardening seems to be another hobby of hounds, this time the dogs being based in Cheshire. The foxhounds in question ran through a garden centre in Middlewich and also had time to rummage through some dustbin sacks. Cars had to screech to a halt to avoid the dogs which later went hunting in the local cemetery. All part of a good day's sport, no doubt.

Not to be outdone by their English counterparts, hounds of the Lauderdale Hunt in Scotland rampaged through Galashiels with huntsmen nowhere in sight. Acting Joint-Master Peter Wilson admitted *"We lost half the pack until we were told they had been seen in Galashiels."*

### Peacocks Pestered

The Suffolk Hunt allowed its hounds to terrorise prized peacocks belonging to a Chevington pensioner. The Master, Paul Rackham, said the peacock's owner shouldn't live in the countryside if he didn't want such incidents to occur. They killed a fox which led Rackham to state *"That's one less fox to chase his peacocks."* The Curre Hunt, of which showjumper David Broome is a joint-master, "took over" the village of Netherend. Villagers were apparently angered by the arrogance of the hunters, and owner of the local shop, a Mrs. Meredith, estimated that only two out of over one hundred shoppers that day approved of the hunt meeting in the village. Residents of Chearsley in Buckinghamshire are also fed up with the behaviour of their local hunt, The Bicester and Warden Hill. They killed a fox in the village street almost in front of children leaving the local school.

Another village, Holcombe in Somerset, suffered at the hands of the Mendip FH, which trampled across gardens and tried to get at a rabbit in a hutch.

The Vale of White Horse Hunt rampaged through gardens in Blunsdon. The landlady of a local guest house gave the hunt the sharp end of her tongue which sent the master grovelling in his pocket to offer her a meagre £10 compensation. Hounds and horses surrounded and frightened toddlers leaving a playgroup in Cropwell Bishop near Newark. Now hunts meeting in the area have been asked to avoid slaughtering wildlife when the local kiddies are leaving the village hall.



*The remains of a fox, ripped apart in a village garden*

### On the Wrong Track

Hounds have been wandering onto railway lines in several areas. A hound belonging to the Crawley and Horsham FH was electrocuted as it chased a fox across the busy London-Sussex Coast railway line. A heart-broken hunt spokesman claimed to be terribly upset and took the hound away for a decent burial.

The Old Berkshire Hunt lost hounds on busy railway lines twice in one month. In one case, hounds were sliced in two by a train. Michael Allsopp described the incident as *"extremely bad luck."*

The Worcester Hunt trespassed onto a railway line and forced a train to brake. Railway chiefs issued an alert to all trains to look out for the pack.

### Car Whipped

Hounds of the Brocklesby Hunt in south Humberside spilled across two busy roads in pursuit of a fox. Startled drivers had to stop and some tried to flag down other traffic to prevent a serious accident. An articulated lorry had to brake hard and the hunters, in their enthusiasm to get their fox, whipped one of the cars. The hunt tried to blame the pandemonium on saboteurs who, they claimed, had laid a false trail across the roads. Lies of course, as confirmed by 'neutral' eyewitnesses who saw a fox cross the road shortly before the hounds streamed across.

### Ulster Chaos

The Co. Down Staghounds caused chaos when they roamed onto Ulster's busiest motorway. Two dogs were killed, one being cut clean in two by a car. Master George Wilson admitted that he had lost control of the hounds, *"it sometimes happens"* he added. Many farmers in Co. Down have become so fed up with the hunt persistently trespassing that they have paid for public notices in the local Press banning hounds and riders from their land.

The Iveagh Harriers badly savaged a pet collie in Co. Down leaving the dog in agony surrounded by a pool of blood. The farmer who owned the dog was furious at the pompus attitude of the huntsman who *"just muttered something about a hare and rode off."*

### Quantocks Ban

The villagers of Holford, living in the heart of Quantocks Stag Hunt territory have voted in a secret ballot to ban the hunt from their village.

A series of incidents culminated in the death of a stag in a field owned by Mr. David Fineberg who had already banned the hunt from his land. This followed occasions when a hind was shot in front of tea-garden customers in nearby Kilve; a hind was stabbed with a penknife after it was trapped between two cars; and a stag was pinned down for twenty minutes until other hunters arrived to witness the kill.

The ban is voluntary and a number of ideas are being considered to minimise the trouble caused by the hunt, including an end to Saturday hunting and clear identification of hunt supporters vehicles. The Parish Council must clearly do something, since apart from the poll result, they have also been inundated with letters of complaint concerning the hunt's behaviour.

**Remember, for every incident of hunt havoc which reaches the pages of local newspapers, there are probably many more which are hushed up by the hunt or which are not witnessed at all. How many cats mysteriously disappear during a season's hunting, how many gardens are mysteriously trampled?**

WOC Hunt Havoc Hunt Havoc Hunt Havoc

## ANIMAL PROTECTION ALLIANCE

### PUTTING ANIMALS INTO POLITICS – HOW AND WHY

*From our correspondent*
*at the L.A.C.S. Offices*

It all started when the unelected, unrepresentative House of Lords threw out the hare coursing bill in 1976. Harold Wilson, Prime Minister at the time told us, very clearly, that he could not force the Lords to pass the bill because "he did not have a mandate from the electorate to do so." He explained that, in order to force the Lords into accepting the will of the elected House of Commons, the measure must be in the manifesto at a General Election. The House of Commons had passed the coursing bill be a majority of 117, a bigger majority than any other bill in the Commons for years! But because the matter was not in the Labour Party manifesto in 1974, the Government argued that they could not do anything about those old goats masquerading in the House of Lords as "protectors of democracy." So we set about ensuring that the abolition of coursing would be in the next manifesto, and while we were at it, why not foxhunting and staghunting? And why not factory farming and experiments on animals? If that's what they want, then that's what they'll get!

We had public opinion on our side in massive numbers, we also had the Labour Party on our side and most of the Liberals (except Clement 'Bloody' Freud) we even had 23 or so Tory MP's on our side, let alone 63 per cent of all Tory voters. During the campaign for a Labour Party manifesto commitment we (The League Against Cruel Sports) were joined by Lord Houghton, Clive Hollands, the BUAV and NAVS and CIWF, as well as the HSA. GECCAP was formed in 1978 to campaign for commitments and policies for animal protection in all of the political party manifestos, Liberal and Tory as well as Labour. Even the RSPCA joined in! The manifestos were published, the Labour Party said they would abolish hare coursing and staghunting, the Tories made some noises about farm animal husbandry and to "update" the 1876 Act which allows experiments on animals, and the Liberals said they would look at animal welfare. The publication of these manifestos was historic - we had, for the first time in history, persuaded political parties to include animal protection in their programmes and policies. This was no small achievement, in fact it was a major breakthrough when the history books are written on the animal question, the 1979 General Election manifestos will feature prominently in their pages.

The League decided that because only the Labour Party had promised to abolish coursing and staghunting, they wanted to see that party returned to office, therefore one Richard Course, League Against Cruel Sports Executive Committee member, proposed to the League's governing Executive that £100,000 should be given to the Labour Party's election fund in order to help the party campaign for election. The Conservative Party has millions of pounds to play with. Finance was therefore very important and still is. This highly controversial proposal caused one hell of a row, but Comrade Course was well used to that. The Conservative and Liberal supporters on the League's Executive could outvote the Labour members, but would they? Would they allow political bigotry to outweigh their opposition to hunting? A Tory proposed amendment brought the £100,000 down to £80,000 and in the end they unanimously agreed to do it.

Again history was made, for the first time, one of the "non political" animal welfare organisations had the guts to come off the fence. Mind you bottles began to pout when the Tory members of the League went absolutely beserk and called for the heads of the Executive Committee including Lord Houghton, who was the League's Chairman.

Lord Soper, the League's President, also came under attack. Then to crown it all, the damned Labour Party went and lost the Election. Oh dear, what do we do now? The Tories demanded an EGM to sack the League's Executive, the HSA came to the rescue and HSA members who were also League members came to this exciting EGM and many open minded League members who were traditionally Conservative voters listened to the debate and voted to support the donation.

Was it all over? No it wasn't. A postal ballot of all League members was called for and held. That's when the League really showed guts and determination, the vast, overwhelming majority of all League members voted to support the donation and the Executive.

But what next? Mrs Thatcher soon made it clear that her Tory band of hunting MP's would not abolish hunting and coursing, even though she had supported the earlier bill to abolish coursing that the Lords had cast aside.

The following year, the Labour Party had some magnificent victories in the county council elections. These county councils owned vast tracts of land and the Labour controlled councils set about prohibiting hunting on this land.

This was due entirely to the campaign to put animals into politics.

Meanwhile the campaigns against experiments on animals and factory farming were becoming intensified. A new organisation called Animal Aid put thousands of young people on the streets demonstrating and protesting. New public opinion polls all revealed that nine per cent of the electorate were prepared to switch their traditional votes to a political party that would abolish hunting with dogs, abolish painful and unnecessary experiments on animals and abolish factory farming.

One of these polls was conducted by gallup and commissioned by the RSPCA.

Comrade Course started to think, if we can muster this nine per cent of the electorate, particularly in the marginal constituencies where General Elections are won and lost, the animal vote can decide the outcome of the next General Election. More importantly if the animal vote is that big no political party could ignore it, and as a bonus if all political parties put the abolition of hunting, animal experiments and factory farming in their manifestos, we could not have to support any of them.

Even Tony Benn helped. If the hunting Tory squires thought that the animal vote could return Tony Benn as Prime Minister and nationalise all of their precious land and abolish their House of Lords they would drop hunting like a hot potato. Right then, we must mobilise the animal vote, what better way is there to stop the appalling cruelty and disgusting abuse of the creatures that share this planet with us, who cannot fight back on their own? Gentle feelers were put out to the other animal organisations on GECCAP. There was a lot of support for mobilising the nine per cent of electors, but of course the thought of supporting a political party caused a lot of soul searching, particularly after the League's experience when they supported the Labour Party in 1979.

Exploratory meetings were held and all implications were discussed in detail. The possibility of one of the political parties committing itself to, for example, radical reforms of experimentation while another party, the abolition of hunting while yet another promised the abolition of factory farming caused the biggest problem, because that would mean the various organisations would want different parties to receive the animal welfare vote.

This problem was overcome by general agreement that the animal vote could also remove political parties from office. One reason for wanting to remove a political party from office would be a failure by a party to deliver the goods it promised in its manifesto before it took office.

Thus if the present Conservative government does not up-date the 1876 Act on animal experimentation as it promised in its 1979 manifesto, then we can safely ignor any promises that party puts in its next manifesto. That would reduce any debate down to the Alliance manifesto and the Labour manifesto, and so the Animal Protection Alliance was born, formed by LACS, BUAV, NAVS, CIWF, AA and the SSPV.

The APA would advertise and campaign to build up a register of the nine per cent of the electorate who will use their votes on the animal issue and, after the manifestos are published, the APA would advise its supporters to vote for the selected manifesto of the major political party who undertake to protect animals from cruelty.

There is much you can do to help.

Fill in the coupon and send us a stamp, that is the minimum, organise a door to door leaflet distribution in the nearest marginal constituency is the best you can do. The latter is hard and boring and takes time, but the results will bear more fruit than anything else you can do. So how about it? The APA will supply all of the leaflets you want, by the tens of thousands. A leaflet is, hopefully enclosed with this newspaper, fill it in, give us a stamp and think about a mass distribution well before the Election, which could be in June or October.

## WE NEED HELP!

We need all the active members we can get but if, for some reason, you cannot come out on sabs due to health or work commitments, there is another way you can join in the active fight against bloodsports.

You can help us through a donation, no matter how small. You can be guaranteed that every penny will go towards our active campaign, since we have no office or staff to cost us overheads.

Please send whatever you can spare, filling in the attached slip if you wish.

**To: Hunt Saboteurs Association, PO Box 19, London S.E.22**

I enclose my donation of £ Date

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

# IRISH SABOTAGE



Belfast Telegraph

*Sab lifted from coursing field*

### DIRECT ACTION CROSSES THE IRISH SEA

Good news! HSA style direct action tactics have hit the land of Guinness and leprechauns, and in considerable force. The organisation behind this long-awaited development is the Queen's University of Belfast Anti-Bloodsport Society (QUBABS) which has sabotaged a number of fox hunts and has been particularly successful in the disruption of hare coursing events – a despicable activity which is nearly as popular amongst the Irish as downing vast quantities of a dark, evil-looking liquid famous in medical circles for its ability to painlessly remove stomach linings.

For many years previously the only protest against hare splitting, sorry, coursing, came in the form of the Irish Anti-Live Hare Coursing Society who held totally silent banner demos at coursing events. Just how this feeble tactic could possibly have saved a hare in the grip of a greyhound's jaws is anyone's guess.

#### Irish Coursing Different

Coursing in Northern Ireland differs from that in England, Scotland, Cork and Limerick in that it is of a park or enclosed type. Hares are gathered before the actual day of the event and kept in enclosures. On the day, hares are released from a tunnel when they are needed. If they manage to escape death they finish up in a compound where they may be coursed again (illegally). Coursing often takes place in the inner enclosure of a race track. One advantage of this is that insensitive spectators can watch the bloody carnage whilst sitting comfortably in a nice warm stadium. Betting on the greyhounds is big business with bets of £1,000 not unknown. What's wrong with fruit machines and bingo?

Enclosed coursing was banned 70 years ago in Britain (why did Ireland escape?) where open coursing is now practiced. Hares stand a much better chance of escaping than under the Irish system. They are coursed in their natural surroundings and are drawn towards the field by beaters just before the course. There are no artificial barriers to block their running.

#### Crebilly

QUBABS made the headlines last December with demonstations at the Crebilly hare coursing meeting near Ballymena in Ulster. The protests at this two day event were covered extensively and sympathetically by the media. However, violence against the demonstrators was common-place showing that unprovoked mindless thuggery perpetrated by bloodsport supporters of limited intelligence is indeed a universal phenomenon.

Matters got off to a dramatic start when the night before the event at least three attempts were made to sabotage the following day's coursing by cutting holes in the perimeter fence in order to release the hares. It is believed that members of the Animal Liberation Front (ALF) freed 50 hares as a result.

#### Illegal

The following day there were 60 courses and because 50 hares had been released this meant that less than 40 hares has been left, suggesting that a large number had been coursed twice. If so, this would have been illegal because hares are only allowed to be coursed once a day. A police inspector told campaigners that a file of their complaints would be sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

#### Thugs

On the first day of the meeting scuffles broke out almost immediately. Members of QUBAS were pushed to the ground and attacked with sticks and size 13 boots. The first attack occurred when 14 students sat down at the entrance to the Ballymena Coursing Club as members and spectators were arriving.

Later, 3 protesters were walking along a public footpath carrying placards when they were savagely kicked and beaten by 6 pro-coursing thugs. The RUC (Ulster's police) stood by watching and failed to press charges when requested to do so. One protester managed to run onto the coursing field but was removed by 3 spectators amidst cries of "Communist".



Associated Newspapers

#### Publicity

By the time the Crebilly meeting had finished QUBABS had successfully managed to focus public attention on this cruel and barbaric sport. The media responded well and came down firmly in favour of a ban.

Undoubtedly, it is the financial aspect of coursing which keeps it going. Pounds, not sporting principles weighed heavily at Crebilly. Although many local councils have passed motions condemning hare coursing and the new Northern Ireland Assembly has come out in favour of a ban on park coursing it remains to be seen if the Northern Ireland Office responds to the Assembly's call.

Since Crebilly, QUBABS have demonstated at a new 'killing ground' which opened near Dungannon. They also protest against other forms of animal abuse and they welcome new members, student or non-student, active or non-active.

The HSA welcomes the trend towards direct action and wishes QUBABS every success in its efforts.

### BERNADETTE MCALISKEY – TRAITOR

Bernadette McAliskey, a veteran campaigner against bloodsports, was seen a few months ago at a hare coursing meeting at County Tyrone, but this time on the other side! This one-time revolutionary has gone full circle since the days 12 years ago when she demonstrated with the Queen's Anti Bloodsport Group. Now an ardent pro-coursing fanatic, she would just '. . . . . love to train a coursing dog . . . . .' Good for her.