"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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MOOR TROUBLE FOR SHOOTERS

SHOOTERS SERVE SUMMONS ON SABS

At the beginning of August this year, while plans were still being made for the disruption of the grouse shooting season, eight members of the HSA, including national executive committee members Dave Callender and Aubrey Thomas were each served with a summons to answer an attempted injunction preventing them from interfering with this year's grouse shooting season. The plaintiffs included two bloodsporting tycoons namely Sebastian De Ferranti and Sir Thomas Pilkington.

Another one of the eight, Chris Williamson, League Against Cruel Sports national executive member and former HSA Press Officer has been the target for such injunctions and similar actions every year since 1978.

A similar injunction last year included an attempt to win substantial damages against six of the people named on this year's injunction. At the time of writing we are awaiting a further hearing to resolve this particular issue one way or the other.

The latest injunction was heard at Mansfield County Court on August 12 at 2.30 and lasted for some three hours. Counsel for the plaintiffs argued in his submission that unless the eight were enjoined there was a substantial danger of them trespassing onto the plaintiffs' land. He then went on to list the anti bloodsporting activities of all eight and the positions they held with the HSA. He even dragged up a prison sentence that one of the named served back in 1977 for refusing to be bound over following an anti bloodsports demonstration. After hearing the submission of the counsel for the defence the Judge wasted no time in granting the injunction against the eight named members of the HSA. He then proceeded to grant a further injunction restraining any member of the Hunt Saboteurs Association from entering these particular moors to interfere with grouse shooting for an indefinate period.

As it turned out all the legal machinations proved futile in preventing demonstrations from taking place, with the first two days of the grouse shooting season seeing the biggest anti grouse shooting demonstrations in history.



The emergence of GBAG (Game Bird Action Group) was a direct result of the injunctions against the HSA and members. At very short notice GBAG took on the organisation of the grouse shoot sabs on 12th and 13th August. Presumably next year *they* will be receiving injunctions.

Press coverage of the grouse week was good and anonymous groups wrecked all shooting butts on 2 Peak District moors causing thousands of pounds worth of damage. Butts were also damaged on moors in the Trough of Bowland and the Duke of Westminster's Estate. Yorkshire and national paper coverage was excellent.

On the Glorious 12th three TV camera crews and an assortment of national papers greeted 120 animal rights protestors. Unfortunately a move had to be made to the Duke of Devonshire's moors at Bolton Abbey, N. Yorkshire, due to the cancellation of all shooting in the Peak District. All shooting was stopped by sabs from 2.00 p.m. after counter-beating and blockading the shooting party with boulders and bodies. Northern nationals, Granada TV and local radio covered it well.

Again, shooting on the 13th August was cancelled in the Peak District but Derbyshire police were once again in no mood to tolerate hunt saboteurs. A total of 55 arrests were made and yet a hit-and-run shooter who mowed down 2 sabs with his land-rover has still to be dealt with by police. Twenty-one sabs spent over 50 hours in custody (one celebrated his birthday inside). Most were charged with 'action-likely,' two with criminal damage after a shooter's car window was accidently broken, and all bound over or fined. Clearly Derbyshire police intend to physically stop hunt saboteurs operating on grouse moors. The courts have now licensed the police to go on with their treatment of sabs. Next year could see an even worse police over-reaction. It is important however that the HSA continues to support GBAG grouse shoot hits.







HSA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1983

This years Annual General Meeting was held in Liverpool on Saturday July 3rd, and about one hundred members attended.

After the Chairpersons opening remarks from Colin Lewis some considerable time was spent on discussing the new Committee — it was decided by the meeting that on this occasion the members present would elect the committee. The meeting then elected individually all twelve people who had submitted nominations.

The meeting then continued with reports from officers of last years Committee which lasted until the lunch break.

After lunch there was a lively discussion on the proposed amendments to the constitution. A copy of the new constitution resulting from that discussion and subsequent voting should be enclosed with this mail-out.

The meeting finished up with a discussion led by Research Officer Ralph Cook on deer control, and then an open forum session which spent a considerable time discussing fishing.

The meeting ended at approximately 5.00pm and afterwards there was a disco arranged by Merseyside HSA which everyone who attended enjoyed. As we did last year in Glasgow a horn blowing contest with a "Cotswold" horn as the prize was held during the evening, the standard of the contestants was so good this year that it was decided to give two prizes of "Cotswolds", the winners were Martin Benson of Clydeside HSA and Kevin Bush of Huddersfield HSA.

At the first meeting of the new committee the following officers were elected:-

Chairperson	Kim Milledge
Secretary	Bob August
Treasurer	Colin Lewis
	Paul Brown
Press Officers	and Dave Callender
Tactics Officer	John Hale
Legal Officer	Flod Pamment (Co-opted)
Sales Goods Officer	Fiona Callender
Education & Research	Ralph Cook
Hon. Membership Sec.	Dave Wetton
Recruitment Officer	Iain Brown
Student Liaison Officer	Steve Williams

So if you wish you can now write direct to the appropriate member of the Committee on any specific points.

COGHILL STILL ALIVE!

Many sabs will be disappointed by the message contained in yet another letter from Ian's verbose pen. This one was printed in the Shropshire Star and begins...."*I would be grateful if your abolitionist correspondant Roger Palmer would stop referring to me in the past tense, July 8. I am sorry to have to disappoint him but I am alive and well and still defending the traditional freedom of the countryside".* Oh well, at least he apologised!

COUNTRYSIDE POLL

A Gallup Poll, sponsored and published by the Surrey Advertiser (July 8th.), shows up some interesting attitudes to the countryside. The most popular activity was walking (74%), followed by picnics (40%), and photography (23%). Angling was popular with a mere 6% of the sample, less than that which preferred painting!

In the same Poll, affluent Guildford gave fox-hunting the thunbs-down. 65% of the sample disapproved, an opinion spread evenly between the sexes and throughout the age groups.



Dear Sir,
Thank you for HOWL, recently received. A record of so much cruelty and cowardice, made bearable reading only by the courage and compassion of Sabs.

HOWL is handed around and passed on here: always the same disgust at antics of the Hunt individuals – dressed up to go out on such dirty business... With so many four and two-legged animals in pursuit, what sporting chance the victim? The sickening, nauseous photos of remains of what was once a beautiful, living animal? Disgusting outrage!

And England claims to be a nation of animal lovers! Well it seems its claim to this lies with those wonderful young men and women who go out to try to save the unfortunates, risking their own safety in so doing. Set upon by armed thugs not content with animal killing savagery! A GIRL punched, horsewhipped – presumably by one of the "gentlemen." What gentlemen! What MEN! what SPORTSMEN!

From the other side of the world, the whole exercise fills me with shame. As for the hare coursing, this cruel, obscene spectacle to whet the lust of the blood-thirsty, was banned here many long years ago. Barbaric "sports" of the past belong there.

You seek readers' views on comments by writer Arthur Martin? I do truly agree with him. Both your cause and brave endeavours spell nobility of purpose. Please don't sully this with innuendoes – obscenities are what you are fighting!

V.M. Cliff
Melbourne, Australia.

Dear Howl,
A situation arose at this year's Town and Country Festival at Stoneleigh which put the League in a very difficult position and it is felt that perhaps some clarification is necessary.

The organisers of the show threatened to close the League stand on the second day if a run on took place against any of the various hound displays. Some of the organisers clearly were using the League as a lever against the HSA, and any excuse to bar the League and/or the HSA was seen as fair game, no matter how unfair.

Hunt Saboteurs were asked by myself and Trevor Williams not to enter the arenas during the hound displays, as it was felt by us that a three day stand showing films and disseminating literature was, in this instance, of greater value to our cause. However, the position of Saboteurs, who in some cases had travelled long distances to the show, was also appreciated and I stress that they were only *asked* to comply. The League does not control the HSA and has no wish to be seen to be doing so.

In the event some Saboteurs ran on, though others did not and instead held a ring-side demonstration. I believe this action allowed the League stand to remain open.

One important point should be remembered. This show is organised by the Royal Agricultural Society of England, who, if it wishes, can exclude any society or group for a variety of reasons and there is no comeback. An anti hunt stand at this show is an embarrassment to certain organisers and also to the BFSS who would clearly like to see it removed. However we have a surprising number of supporters in the ranks of officials and staff members at the showground. They have in the past argued for the position whereby we have obtained a stand. It would undoubtedly be a setback to lose both the ground they have helped us achieve and a very valuable link with the public at a show where it is most needed.
Yours sincerely,
James Barrington
League Against Cruel Sports.

Dear Sirs,
Along with a writer to your columns a few months ago I feel concerned about the extent of the political emphasis which seems to be being given to our attempts to help the fox. It is vital that we make clear to the hunting fraternity that the well-being of the fox is our prime concern.

As long as we attack "them" on the political front, we are feeding them with ammunition with which to attack us; their best means of defending their activities – and of putting off the day when fox-hunting is banned is to be able to associate, in the minds of the uncommitted public, disapproval of fox-hunting with a desire to see a left-wing government in power.

I am quite sure that political bias, whether real or imaginary, whether self-inflicted or attributed to us from elsewhere causes us to lose support and credibility.
Yours sincerely,
Margot Brownsword
Byfield, Daventry.

Dear HSA,
I read the group news from N. Ireland with great interest (Howl Spring 1983).

The biblical reference "and man shall have dominion over the earth" has been thrust at me many times, on one occasion on my weekly wildlife programme (British Forces Broadcasting Service).

My stock answer is to refer the persons concerned to their dictionaries.

The word dominion comes from the Latin dominiori which in turn translates as "Harmonious Authority" there, friends, I think you can truthfully say "I rest my case!"

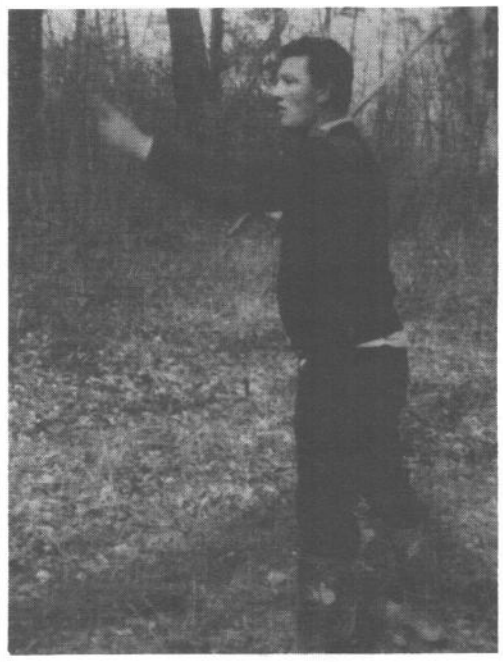
Although not a member of HSA I offer my greatest admiration for your work and ideals.

I mention your activities frequently on my radio programme, and recently defended you against these ridiculous claims about, financial support from the Kremlin.

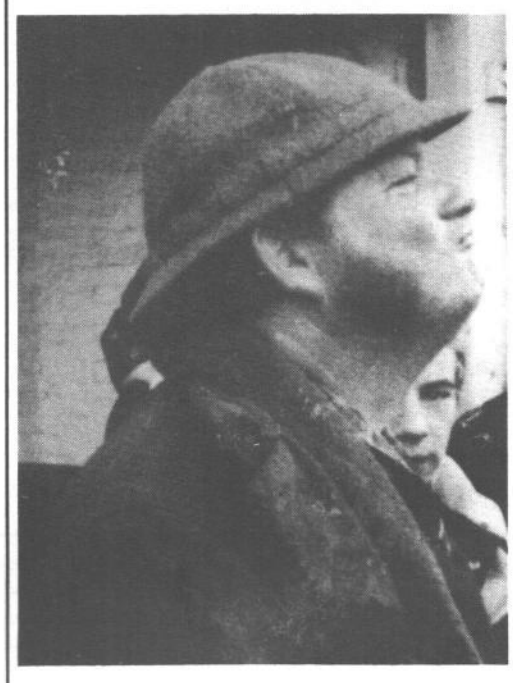
I wish all the very best for the future.
Debbie Dewhurst
West Germany.

Fashion Scene by Philipa

As we find ourselves once more at the beginning of a hunting season all fashion-conscious hunt heavies will be asking themselves that same old question, "what shall I wear around the coverts this season?" The Howl Fashion Correspondent has, with the help of two much-loved heavies, sought to answer this question.



Model No.1, who prefers to remain anonymous in order to avoid a deluge of fan mail, was snapped at a meet of the Crawley and Horsham FH whilst exchanging witty banter with some antis.
*Our fashion correspondent was particularly impressed by the shirt-tucked-outside-the-back-of-the-trousers 'penguin-look' rarely seen these days (except on real cretins, of course). Note also, the Herman Munster shaped head which lends itself perfectly to the 'oy-you-get-off-my-f***ing-land' pose. The stick, of course, is a vital part of this young gent's apparel. The wagging finger completes the picture of a truly unpleasant hunt follower.*



Model No.2, an enthusiastic follower of the South Down FH, was snapped at a splendid Boxing Day meet. The hat, the sideburns and the red cheeks say it all, "I'm a hunting man and proud of it!". This model lacks the style and sophistication of No.1, but is still obviously a keen follower of hunting fashion.
However, our correspondent would not advise the twelve pints of beer a day necessary to develop and maintain such a robust and portly physique.
Yes, hunt heavies all over the country will follow the lead set by these two charming and well-dressed gentlemen.

IN MEMORIAM
We regret to announce the death of HSA member Mabel Grace Baudot at a Sussex nursing home on 19th May at the grand old age of 99. She was just 322 days short of her telegram from the Queen.

Mabel had been with us, as a non-active member, since 1975 after watching our Open Door programme on BBC2.

She hated hunting and war and became a life long vegetarian in January 1915 after hearing that her husband had been killed in action in the Vouspe Mountains.

We'll miss her.



Mabel on her 99th birthday with her niece Irene Marshall, also an HSA member.

HOWL MAGAZINE
This edition was produced by:–
Bob August, Nigel Bellamy, Ralph Cook
John Hickman & Phil Shore.
Contributions by:–

John Bainbridge	Richard Farhall
Ian Brodrick	John Hale
Dave Callender	Sue Lloyd
Harry Cross	Chris Williamson

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All contributions should be sent to HOWL P.O. Box 19, London SE22 9LR to arrive no later than 15th January 1984.
The points of view expressed in HOWL do not necessarily reflect those of the Hunt Saboteurs Association.

A TALE OF TWO FOX CUBS

We first heard about "Vicky", the young vixen when an article appeared in the West Sussex Gazette some months ago about a family who were rearing an orphaned fox cub and were hoping to keep it as a pet. Being curious we called round and the Binstead family (who live in Littlehampton, Sussex) allowed us to see Vicky who was quite tame and seemed as happy as she could be.

We were told that her parents had been shot and that Vicky was one of 3 cubs brought into the local pub by some terrier men. The second cub was with Mr. Binsteads' step brother-in-law but they did not know what had happened to the third. However, they did say that the terrier-men were keen to have Vicky back when she was bigger and stronger so they could train the terriers on her! Naturally the Binsteads were shocked at that idea and were still determined to keep Vicky as a pet. We warned them that they may have some trouble as she got older because obviously they cannot be treated the same as a dog. As we left we gave them our 'phone number as we told them we knew of an animal sanctuary that would probably take Vicky if they no longer wanted her.

Several weeks later we heard from Mr. Binsteads' step brother-in-law who was rearing "Trixie", the second cub. He said that Trixie had bitten their son and they no longer wanted her. We called round to see the situation for ourselves and learned that this man was one of the terrier-men who killed the parent foxes! He explained it was his job to "clear foxes" and supposedly hadn't realised that these had cubs. He said he felt sorry (!) for the cubs and took one in. Trixie was very nervous and appeared semi-wild and was kept in bad conditions. Her cage was of wire mesh and kept in a dark hallway under the stairs with soaking wet newspaper on the floor. She was also being constantly teased by their son.

After numberous enquiries the RSPCA wildlife centre near Taunton agreed to take her and eventually release her back into the wild.

A few weeks later we heard from the Binstead family with Vicky. They realised her natural instincts were becoming more obvious and they knew they could no longer keep her. She was too tame to be taken to Taunton and the owners did not want her caged for the rest of her life. They said they would try and keep her. They contacted us about a month later with some rather sad news.
A local animal welfare worker said she had found Vicky a home (where she would *not* be caged) but only on the condition she was spayed and her scent glands removed. The animal welfare worker assured them this was not cruel and it was the best thing to do. The Binsteads thought this rather a drastic step to take but they trusted the judgement of this woman and went ahead with the operations at a cost of over £100. Only then did this considerate animal welfare (!!) worker let them down by saying the home had fallen through. The fox was now incapable of leading a natural life in the wild as obviously its scent glands and the ability to breed play a major part in its survival.

Through a member of the HSA we were able to place Vicky on a small holding where she will be able to live in a semi-wild state which is the best solution under the circumstances.
We will be visiting her later to see how she is settling in.

Jane Salmon.
Nicky Driver.

FOSTER-A-FOX
Ferne Animal Sanctuary, in Somerset, hopes to set up a fostering service for orphaned fox-cubs. Because of pressures from the hunting fraternity and snaresmen, fox-cubs stand little chance of survival if released back into the wild. Ferne have also set up a 24-hour wildlife rescue unit, telephone Chard 61505 or 5214.

TIME TO TACKLE ANGLERS



In the angling controversy the fact that fish are able to suffer, tortuously discovered by the RSPCA in 1980 following the publication of the "Report of the Panel of Inquiry into Shooting and Angling" carried out between 1976 and 1979 which was initiated and sponsored by the RSPCA, is from an animal rights point of view, largely irrelevant, although useful as back-up material for debate, simply because fish belong in water – their natural environment, and fishing necessarily deprives them of their right to remain in that environment. Fish, whether they be sticklebacks, pike, sharks or martins, by virtue of their mere existence have the right to be free of interference from man whether for sport or food.

Clearly, however, in the light of the Report's findings it is obvious that current practices in both angling and trawler fishing for food cause considerable cruelty and demand more attention by animal welfarist and protectionist bodies than has hitherto been given. The Report contains within its voluminous pages the clear statement that:

> "All vertebrate animals should be regarded as equally capable of suffering to some degree or another, without distinction between warm-blooded members."

As the BFSS has been proudly drumming into the media of late, and as we are all now aware, as many as 3,000,000 people spend their recreational hours luring unsuspecting sentient creatures onto sharp-barbed hooks and hauling them out of water; the only significant point to arise from such a figure is the incalculable toll in animal suffering that it represents; cold-blooded in more than one sense. Anglers are involved in a wide-variety of slaughter, ranging from the innocent looking, one man and his green umbrella sitting on the bank-side to the organised slaughter involving hundreds of people at a time in match fishing. At sea there is the once-in-a-lifetime thrill of catching fish from a holiday charter boat and the machismo of the professional boat-fisherman with his six-inch hooks, twelve-inch gaffs (which are embedded in a big fish's flank in order to facilitate its being brought onto the boat) and his oft-repeated tales of the shark with row upon row of razor-sharp teeth.

Angling is something of a respectable pastime, conjuring in the minds of many non-anglers the image of peace and enjoyment of the countryside; few see the struggles of the fish in water at the end of the line as an indication of terror or pain, even fewer care. Local newspapers who refuse to publish hunt fixture lists or reports, happily carry photographs of any Tom, Dick or Harry proudly holding aloft his latest record catch; angling magazines abound with tales of the conquest and the vanquished, while describing the latest innovation designed to better the chances of the would-be sportsman. Sales of fishing equipment amount to millions of pounds a year and river authorities and local councils which have forbidden hunting on their land make profits out of the sale of fishing permits on their waterways. The one political party, committed to the abolition of "hunting with dogs" intends to help fisher-people with grants if it is ever elected into government, while the BFSS places great store on the affiliation of the National Angling Council to the Campaign for Country Sports – something we should all applaud as it is an admission by anglers themselves that their sport is cruel and that they are all of one ilk.

In my view angling is probably one of the cruelest of bloodsports in terms of the amount of suffering involved in total. So where lies the cruelty? Firstly there is the pain involved in the initial hooking of the fish, if it is caught in the "correct" place, just inside the mouth, pain is probably minimal which explains the long fights that some fish give when caught in such a way. Too often, however, fish are "miscaught", the hook impaling itself in the body of the fish when an angler has mis-judged and "struck" his hook too early or when the hook is swallowed. When a fish is caught in such a way it shows little inclination to struggle indicating considerable suffering. Then there is the deliberate maiming of a small fish to be used as live-bait for a larger more desirable catch. Following the removal from water the fish immediately begins to suffocate, and handling by inexperienced, or careless anglers can cause considerable damage to the fish's sensitive skin. Sea-fishing involves even greater atrocities, which would take too long to go into here, but which are discussed in full (in reference to shark-fishing) in a small publication which can be purchased from Sea Shepherd, (Glasgow).

Secondly, there is the stress caused both during and subsequent to the hooking and playing of the fish. This aspect of angling has been studied in some depth by a Dr. Gabriele Peters in Germany, (University of Hamburg, Institute of Hydro-Biology and Fishery Studies), who found that fish, like other vertebrates (including mammals) display similar reactions to disturbance and danger; typical symptoms of stress are, among others, a contraction of the blood vessels (preventing proper flow of blood and oxygen to the brain) and a shrivelling of the spleen and stomach tissues which are very sensitive indicators of stress in all fish species. Her work demonstrates that the whole process of catching and containing fish (perhaps having some relevance to inadequate containing of pet fish in fish bowls and jam jars) causes a disordering of the fishes metabolic processes.

Peters found that carp which have been caught and keep-netted, suffer a shrinkage of their spleens of as much as two-thirds of their original size which results in an increase in their production of stress hormones. This indicates that the fish is in a condition of extreme alarm, which, if it continues for a long period uses so much energy that the victim's resistance levels are so lowered as to make it vulnerable to disease and predation. She concludes that in the case of small fish such disturbance of their metabolic organisation often leads to death even if the fish is released apparently unharmed. Damage, often invisible to the human eye, to the fish's skin leaves it vulnerable to infection.

This evidence is to some extent borne out by the work of David Solman who was employed some years ago by the Devon Water Authority to carry out fish counts on a Devon river (personal communication with myself), during his study he captured 6,000 fish of various ages, mostly trout and to his surprise encountered less than fifty which showed signs of having been caught by rod, hook and line. He was surprised because his sample, caught in fish traps, represented a considerable proportion of the river's population, and the river was used by a large number of fishermen most of whom released their catch before going home. Clearly many fish must have succumbed subsequent to their release probably as a result of their weakened condition.

Fishing is not only cruel and contrary to the animal rights ethic but some of its practices may even be illegal. The 1911 Protection of Animals Act does not actually deal with river fish since they are considered wild animals and as such are not granted protection unless they are captive. However, once caught, the storage of live fish in keep-nets, which as Peters has shown causes considerable stress, could be described as captivity and the suffering of the fish in this state is quite clearly unnecessary since they could be released immediately after their removal from the hook. The 1911 Act, in theory at least, protects captive animals from such "unnecessary suffering".

It is time, therefore, to act against this cruel sport; the League Against Cruel Sports, is at present precluded from opposing fishing since their current policy is to, "persuade politicians to act on public opinion" in framing legislation on bloodsports. In the past the League's policy was primarily one of education and campaigning but now that the public opinion war over hunting with hounds has been won by the abolitionists the League's efforts are devoted towards putting public opinion into legislation: since public opinion is not yet against angling for sport it is our job as hunt saboteurs to provide the lead in this issue which may one day gain the well-deserved reputation of being an abhorrent cruel sport.

RALPH COOK

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FISHING TACTICS

For far too long fishing has escaped the hooks of our anti-bloodsports activities. This is virtually virgin territory, for us, but the tactics below, hopefully will enable us to begin a campaign in this area.

Fishing is the largest participation degradation in this country and thought to be generally acceptable to most people.

However the cruelty and exploitation of fish is as great as any animal endures in other bloodsports. Though death might not necessarily occur, the angler's delight is in the sheer number caught and as long a fight as possible to land the fish. Once caught it is then placed in suffocating conditions in a keep net with X number of others for hours on end before release. A glance through any fishing magazine makes 'Shooting Times' look meek in comparison.

Match fishing is thought to be the area where we can be most effective. This being fixed time fishing on a concentrated stretch of river from around 10.30a.m. until 3.30p.m. Anglers arrive two hours before the start to draw for the pegs, on average 100, though there can be up to 400. Matches are advertised in local papers or in 'Angling Times' and other fishing magazines.

Before fishing commences

Pre-feeding Grain-based ground bait in massive quantities. This is boiled the night before until mushy enough to be formed into balls, Enough has to be used to ensure the fish are satisfied and not merely kept in the area to be fished. Reading about feeding patterns in fish farms, where fish are fed at set intervals, can help.

Ultrasonics Purchased from old Navy Surplus stores and powered from a car battery, it is dropped into the water and used at low frequency. The theory being, that this will scare the fish down river. Thoughts on practicality and likely success rate are welcome from the more scientific of you.

Weed, Straw etc. to be put in the water where lines will be cast to cause the line not to sink.

No Fishing Signs erected the night before warning of fish disease (preferably fungus disease). These have to be of a professional appearance, with local fishing authority or Minister of Ag., Fish and Food, stated. Anglers are extremely law abiding and will not ignore official looking notices.

Entrance to some private ponds will be through a locked high gate, this being to keep out other anglers. The gate can be chained and padlocked the night before a fishing match.

When fishing commences

Match fishing on rivers takes place along one bank only. Saboteurs can occupy the other bank, armed with a large supply of rocks, stones, pebbles etc., (or one rock tied with string), to pepper the area around where the floats rest.

A boat taken up and down the river is an obvious idea but to keep going for five hours may not be practical.

Lone Fisherman A nudge in the back works wonders.

These tactics have been put forward to give us a starting point. Your thoughts and ideas are essential and required now so that we can combat, fishing effectively.

We have to move into the areas where, on the day, most life is at risk, such as shooting and fishing, bringing them into the sphere of our normal work.

Harry Cross

SWAN ABUSE

In 1982, out of a total of 630 known swan deaths; 18% were the result of collision with power cables, 5% were shot by farmers (illegally), 5% were victims of crossbow, air gun and knife attacks, and a staggering 72% were the result of coarse fishing, including lead poisoning and line entanglement.

Facts such as these contributed to the formation of the SWAN RESCUE SERVICE – a dedicated group of people committed to saving swans which have fallen victim to man's callousness.

They are doing an excellent job but desperately need more helpers in the following areas; Suffolk, Kent, North Wales, Herefordshire, Hertfordshire, Merseyside, Chester, Northern Ireland, Eire and Scotland. Microscopes, agricultural tools, inflatables and other pieces of equipment are likewise urgently needed.

The Service also has a sanctuary where swans can live unmolested. There is clearly an urgent need for such 'safe' areas. Out of 62 healthy swans released in April of this year *60* are now dead.

If you can help in any way please contact:

The Swan Rescue Service,
Hill Farm House,
Sparham,
Norwich,
Norfolk.
NR9 5PP.

GROUP NEWS

SCOTLAND

In June the Kennel Huntsman of the Dumfrieshire Otter Hounds had "one hell of a shock" when he attempted to leave the kennels. He found vans, belonging to 60 sabs, parked across the road preventing the Hunt from even getting to the meet. The sabs were from **Scotland, Macclesfield, Huddersfield, Liverpool, Manchester** and **Newcastle** groups. Later on the hound van keys were mysteriously transported 200 yards away and deposited in the middle of a wood. Four policemen turned up but did nothing. There were no heavies and the Huntsman was fairly reasonable — he didn't even swear!

Clydeside HSA (members were present at three otter hunts during the summer. On two occasions the Dumfrieshire Otter Hounds did not deign to come out, but on the third occasion they did appear, but no kills were recorded. Grouse shoots in Central Scotland were cancelled because of a lack of victims —(how unsporting of the grouse.) A flag day in Paisley raised the sum of £350. Quote of the month: Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire Huntsman, Martin Morgan, in earnest discussion with sab: 'I'm being diplomatic, you prick.'

NORTH WEST

Sabs and NALL members from **Macclesfield** have been joining forces with **NALL** members from **Manchester** and their success in helping hunted animals has rather upset the opposition on a few occasions.

The Badsworth FH was sabbed at Carlton near Doncaster. Tactics worked well and no kills were recorded, though Carl Jones was punched by a hunt supporter for his trouble. A large baited cage trap was found and also a gin trap which was removed.

The Cheshire Beagles parade was the target of 25 demonstrators from the **Macclesfield** group and **Manchester University** at the Cheshire Show, near Knutsford. The commentator became very upset and suggested that the demonstrators spoke over the tannoy if they had something to say. But the poor chap seemed to have changed his mind when they went to take-up his offer. He also tried to sabotage the demo by using the "come along children and meet the hounds" tactic.

The run-on was reported by many local newspapers and the Manchester Evening News kindly quoted all the slogans on the sabs banners and the fact that they chanted "bloodsports out"!

The Cheshire Beagles were given this special attention after one of their supporters broke the jaw of a sab last March.

Cubbing started early for the **Merseyside HSA** group this season with the joint hit on the Devon and Somerset staghounds near Dulverton with the German magazine 'STERN' on 25th August. Pre-beating moved the harboured stag from the area and hounds were still drawing at 4.30 p.m. Sabs then moved on to the very nasty Tiverton Foxhounds evening cub-hunt, which was totally disrupted. Since then **Merseyside** sabs have been out every week to hit amongst others, Mr. Goschen's Foxhounds, Warwickshire FH, Grove and Rufford FH, Cheshire FH, Cheshire Forest FH, and the first two meets of the Lancs. based Holcombe Harriers.

Violence is certainly on the increase and very large regional joint hits have been the order of the day.

The last 6 months has seen the emergence of some well organised active local groups in **Macclesfield, Altrincham** and **Oldham.**

Animal Rights groups in the north-west and Yorkshire have also carried out some very successful mass tresspass on animal abuse centres. So far 'visits' have been made to Hy-Line Rabbit Fur Farm near Warrington, Hazeltone Animal Research Laboratories, Harrogate and ICI 'Smoking Beagles' Laboratories, Alderley Edge. Valuable film and file evidence has been gained as well as excellent local publicity.

SOUTH WEST

Groups in the south west are building up their activity against all hunting in the area. In August the Devon and Cornwall Mink Hunt was hit by 50 sabs from **Devon Animal Rights Group, South Devon Animal Rights Group, Bristol, HSA** and **London HSA** when they met at North Bovey in Devon.

National Park warden, Tom Pridmore, was asked by a sab to prevent the hunt from going further downstream to an area inhabited by otters. He refused and said he had followed the hunt himself. The river was pre-meeted with sprays and false trails but the most effective action taken was by Aubrey Thomas. Using his horn and voice he took the hounds from their huntsman and lead them away for walkies — about three hours worth! The hounds were retrieved at around 4.30 p.m. and were taken home with a police escort. Not surprisingly no mink were killed.

The **South Devon branch of DARG** have been showing their versibility by sabbing the D & C mink hounds, Silverton Foxhounds and Taw Vale Beagles. Using horn and voice they pulled hounds away from the 1st covert drawn by the Silverton FH at Cullompton and kept with them for a couple of hours. The Taw Vale Beagles needed less attention. For the first 1½ hours the beagles chased around excitingly in all directions. Later in the day, horn and voice were needed to pull them off a hare. **Devon Animal Rights Group** have also opened a stall in Sidwell St., Exeter, selling animal rights goods for funding HSA & Sea Shepherd. Back in court. Early in May the Master of South Devon Hunt, George John Hyatt, was fined £100 by Teignbridge Magistrates after pleading guilty to two charges of assault occasioning actual bodily harm to two women sabs. The incident occurred when the sab van was blocked in by two hunt vehicles. Hyatt walked over to the van and started to let one of the tyres down. Sab, Margaret Sheehy told him to stop it. He grabbed her by the hair and struck her face and punched her. He then punched Emily Sanderman twice in her face.

After the case, Brian Toon, of the Master of Hounds Association, public affairs officer, said "it is time these saboteurs were taken on one side by the Authorities and told what constitutes an acceptable form of protest".

Yeovil HSA contact, Mark Gallop, and his colleagues are so fit from sabbing they have been winning races. Amateur athletes are having to cope with new opposition in the form of a team called hunt saboteurs. Mark and Co. run in HSA T-shirts and have been attracting the attention of the press. I wonder if they get sponsorship!

On a hit of the Duke of Beaufort FH in April the **Bath Animal Rights Group** and members from **Bristol** and **Gloucester** sabbed well but the hunt did, unfortunately, kill a rabbit. The sabs were at one point attacked by a drunken farm worker who also had a go at a hunt rider after he had whipped his horse.

SOUTH CENTRAL

The **New Forest HSA** have had problems finding out the meets of their local hunts and have had to "stake out" various hunt people's premises. On one occasion in August the hounds of the NF fox hunt were heard at the smallholding of the whipper-in, Jim Loader, as he was preparing for the cub hunt at 4.45 a.m. The hounds had been moved there earlier from the kennels. A total of 8 sabs were waiting in various locations and were contacted by phone and CB radio. Four hunters and a dozen supporters followed the hounds to hunt in the Frogham area including gorse and bracken on the roadside. Sabs kept ahead and used various tactics to good effect. Whipper-in, Jim Loader attempted to ride down sabs twice and huntsman, David Herring, became very angry and abusive — "he wasn't having a very nice day"! One hunt member was heard to say "I wonder who the mole is". It seems they suspect they have an informer!



Sabs at the South of England show at Ardingley.

On several occasions they have intervened in dig-outs and once a girl member was grabbed and restrained by Newton Rycroft whilst a fox was being shot. She received bruising to the arms and later contacted her solicitor.

Whilst the **Luton and North Herts.** group were sabbing the Puckeridge & Thurlow FH they saw a young hound chase a cub out of the covert that was being drawn. The pack didn't follow and as the cub crossed a field it stopped and faced the hound, who also stopped. They both approached each other and sniffed around. The fox cub finally ran off and the hound returned to the riders. The remainder of the hunt followed more traditional lines with horn calls, holloas and police intervention.

SOUTH EAST

Philip Shore on a hit with **Worthing HSA,** encountered his old friend again recently when he heard Graham Farmer, terrier man with the Crawley and Horsham FH, saying to his driver "stop the van, Stan, I'm going to get this one". And then was heard to say "this is for taking me to court last time". Farmer, who was convicted of assaulting Phil at a hunt last October, sprayed him in the features with garlic. Then knocked him to the ground and kicked him in the head. This wasn't enough, thought Farmer, and he proceeded to beat Phil with a drain rod (normally used to flush out foxes).

ESSEX

The new **Cambridge HSA** now have their own mini-bus and all 30 members are ready for action — have bus will sab!

Essex Animal Liberationists and hunt sabs were very busy on the day of the Essex Show in June. The first stop was a demo. at a battery hen farm in Romford. Later they went on to Chelmsford where 30 protestors tried to educate crowds of people going to Austin Brothers Circus, on the exploitation of performing animals, by handing out leaflets.

The highlight of the day was to be the Annual demo. at the Essex Show. However, the police turned away two coach loads of potential demonstrators at the gates, though 15 of them did manage to invade the grand ring as huntsman, Terry Badger, paraded the Essex Farmers' Foxhounds. The commentator came back with the most humane way of culling... etc., etc.

In the past police and stewards have attempted to halt the protest but this time allowed them to carry on for a few minutes. Organisers of the Show described the demo. as "insignificant — carried out by a couple of teenagers" and were promptly quoted in reports of the demo. in half a dozen or so newspapers!

WALES

With confidence, following the success of last winter, the **Vale of Glamorgan HSA** were determined to keep up the pressure and began with the Tredegar Country Sports Fair. As the Tredegar Farmers Foxhounds came into the central arena, so the sabs sprang into action, displaying a large Welsh flag with "Vale of Glamorgan HSA" on it. On two occasions the Master of the Hunt lost his cool and tried to ride down the sabs, which the crowd found very distressing. No-one was hurt, however, and the protest was a success.

Two weeks later the group received an invitation for one of it's members to take part in a debate on foxhunting on Cardiff's CBC radio. On the defence was John Carter from the BFSS who babbled his way through some very awkward questions posed by the DJ.

The group met with violence from the Caerphilly and District FH when cubbing. After the pack was split the whipper-in took to whipping sabs and cars. A fine start to the season.

WEST MIDLANDS

Over the August Bank Holiday members from various groups (including **West Midlands, Cannock, Wolverhampton Poly., Nuneaton, Huddersfield, Liverpool, Essex** and also **Nall)** demonstrated at the Town and Country Festival at Stoneleigh.

The hound parade in the grand ring was the main bloodsports' event and included local beagles and foxhound packs. During the parade there was an attempt by the hunters to desensitize the public to the cruelties of hunting by staging a childish mock fox hunt with, of course, the fox (a prat in a fox suit) getting away.

The run-on received a good reaction from the crowd and the League Against Cruel Sports made an unusual protest at the same time; they flew a light aircraft around the showground and over the grand ring with a banner trailing behind advertising the League Against Cruel Sports. The LACS were not very popular with the sabs though: they tried to persuade the sabs not to do a run-on as they were afraid of not being allowed to have a stall at the Festival in the future. Sabs also dodged the cameras of hunt photographers trying to get mug shots.

70 sabs turned out for what was thought may be the Annual Hunting Festival near Worcester. The sabs were from **(Worcester, West Midlands, Cannock, Wolverhampton Poly., Telford, Cardiff** and **Bath** groups. This Festival of death, including a cub hunt, a mink hunt and a hare hunt is normally held on the second or third Saturday in September but it is never actually advertised. Therefore, it cannot be confirmed until the sab has begun. As it turned out this was not the Festival and it is most likely that there isn't going to be one, due to the attention given to it by sabs in the past. Not even Coghill's Three Counties Mink Hounds turned up on the nearby streams.

The **WM HSA** pre-meeted the cub-hunt of the Warwickshire FH before the joint sab on the Croome and West Warwick. After the sabs had successfully defended foxes at the first covert the hunt moved onto a large wood on Ministry of Defence land. Sabs followed the hunt and the police followed them. Sabs saw one fox killed here. No sabs were removed from the MOD land by the police but sabbing equipment was seized and given back later that day.

The police constables were found to be quite pleasant but Chief Inspector Redding from Evesham Police Station was on the war path. He was obviously intimidated by the large numbers of sabs, half of which he said were CND and anti-nuclear people, a quarter anti-vivisectionists and the other quarter hunt saboteurs. He must have got his information from the two policemen who thought they had infiltrated the sab ranks wearing what they assumed was sabbing gear! The Chief Inspector drove around the country lanes searching sabs vehicles and taking names saying many sabs were from a long way off and may commit some offence, whereas the hunters were locals and he already knew their faces. He poured antimate away as it was "a breach of the peace" and threatened all in sight with arrest. John Hickman had his film seized by the Chief Inspector as he said John may have photographed the MOD radar installations. When John told the Chief Inspector he was not photographing the installations the reply was "you shouldn't point cameras". When the film was returned and developed it was found to be fogged and completely blank. (Very fishy). During the sab the Wolverhampton Poly group's van had it's tyre damaged and let down and a supporter's headlamp was smashed but the culprits have not been apprehended.



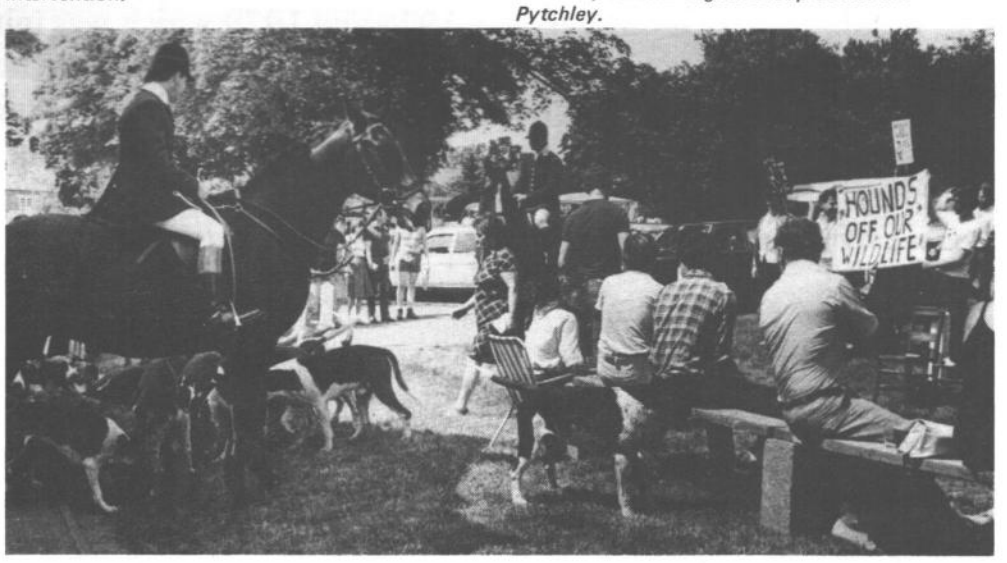
John Hickman.

Wolverhampton sabs van tyre being repaired after damage by hunt supporters of the Croome & West Warwick FH.

EAST MIDLANDS

The Pytchley FH were taken by surprise as they took part in the Newnham Village Festival. As the hunt paraded toward the village green there was a stirring in the crowd. Banners were unfurled and within moments 30 members of the **(Daventry Animal Rights Group** were marching toward the hunt. There was one flash of violence when a man in the crowd took a swing at a demonstrator holding a banner. The Pytchley Hunt was later escorted from the scene of the protest by the police.

Daventry Animal Rights Group demo. the Pytchley.



NORTH MIDLANDS

Hull University Union Animal Welfare Society have been encouraged by supportive comments from the public and by coverage in the press and on the radio of their fur demos. The Society is hoping to get Union policy against bloodsports and are collecting information on painful research experiments carried out on campus in the University's Wolfson Laboratories.

In the Peak District 16 sabs have admitted causing a breach of the peace on the grouse moors in August. Two sabs were fined and ordered to pay compensation for damaging a shooter's car. The Court heard that other demonstrators had built brushwood barricades across the road leading to the moor. 4 women and 7 men were bound over in the sum of £100 for 18 months.

Meanwhile in Pontefract 12 sabs were cleared by magistrates of causing a breach of the peace at the Badsworth FH. Other sabs held a banner demo. outside the court and got their pics in the Pontefract and Castleford Express.

In court:

The police officers said: They saw the defendants run into a field spraying antimate on the hounds and the grass. They said the hounds became difficult to control and horses bolted. Then there were angry scenes between hunt followers and protesters.

The sabs said. Their aim was to stop, by peaceful means, the killing of defenceless animals. They had seen a fox running from the hunt and sprayed the ground, to mask the foxes scent, but did not spray the hounds. They said there were only two hunters in the field and no followers and there was no confrontation as they were ignored by the hunters.

The magistrates said: Although their action was not condoned, the evidence did not show that it was likely to cause a breach of the peace.

Huddersfield HSA are a keen lot and have been very busy. During last season they went out 25 times and hit a total of 17 different hunts.

Sea Shepherd have received £200 from the Group which was raised from pub and street collections and a stall in Huddersfield.

In July a sab from Huddersfield joined two sabs from Sheffield to take part in a debate on bloodsports on a Sheffield radio programme. The opposition included a gent from the National Federation of Anglers (also regional BFSS advisor) and a member of the Rockwood Harriers. They evaded hunting issues by concentrating on fishing and trying to get anglers interested in defending bloodsports.

Sabs from **Cheshire, Yorkshire** and **Derbyshire** were kicked, punched and dragged by the hair when they demonstrated at the Chatsworth House Game Fair. During the hound display, police turned a blind eye whilst the hunters attacked the banner carrying sabs. When it was all over Maria Siddikigandar was taken to hospital with damaged vertibrae whilst the police arrested the remaining on breach-of-the-peace charges.



Animal Rights Campaigners trap fur traders.

EAST ANGLIA

Six members of **Norfolk HSA** attempted to Sabotage a Beagle Hunt on 10th September at West Acre, High House. Luckily the Hunt turned out to be a training session for 13 very young beagle-pups, possibly another pack to be made. They succeeded in splitting the Pack several times and by the end of the day the Hunters and supporters were very upset and the sabs were confronted by about 20 supporters, but no violence arose. The land being hunted on is owned by Mr. Birbeck, son of the infamous Captain Birbeck. But he is nothing as bad as his father. (Yet).

Campaigners in **Norfolk** have been very active against the fur trade this summer. They attended a demo., organised by the **West Norfolk Animals for Action**, against a proposal to build an intensive rabbit farm at Wisbech. To a burning effigy of the farmer was added red smoke from a smoke bomb which proved very successful. Two newspapers promised to cover the story.

The fur trade in Norwich is receiving the kind attention of the **Norfolk Animal Rights Campaign.** Three of the 15 members, who held a demo. outside Brahams, chained themselves to the main entrance trapping the traders inside. 20 minutes later the police arrived and freed them. The animal rightists were arrested for obstruction of the highway, which we can only assume runs through the main entrance of the fur shop! The demo. was reported well by Radio Norfolk.

During the Fur Traders' Ball two sabs were picked out and arrested, one for threatening behaviour and the other for threatening behaviour and assaulting a policeman. Heavy fines are expected and Timothy Nickerson is appealing for donations on behalf of those arrested. His address is Box 16 Freewheel, 52-54, Kings Street, Norwich, Norfolk.

Sabotaging Saboteurs

A CONSIDERATION OF HUNT TACTICS

Despite trying to dismiss the campaign against bloodsports by the HSA, the BFSS in their Shooting Times article, Sabotaging Saboteurs, by R. Kidd, in fact show themselves to be very concerned about the strength and endurance of our organisation. It is ironic that every article written about the HSA in the Shooting Times contradicts itself. In dealing with the particular issue or problem the sabs are posing the bloodsports gang at the time, the writer for the Shooting Times first has to misrepresent the facts, i.e. by twisting the information to suit his argument, or by an out and out lie. (A BFSS speciality). Then the Shooting Times writer must repeatedly reassure his readers that the HSA are no real threat, that they pose no real problems and can be safely contained.

The amusing part comes next. The Shooting Times writer then turns everything he has written up to this point on its head and gets down to the true purpose of the article, which is to explain just how much trouble the sabs are causing the hunting mob and to suggest various methods of "dealing" with the sabs. This pattern can be detected in numerous Shooting Times articles about the HSA including the one mentioned above. It is to our credit that we never need to misrepresent facts about bloodsports or hide our activities from the public. The BFSS go to great lengths to conceal from the public the many disgusting cruel practices that are part and parcel of hunting. The HSA policy in the field is contained in the tactics booklet 1983 which is freely available. (For 25p).

Sabotaging Saboteurs is an attempt to lay down a list of tactics for besieged hunters. The perceived weaknesses of sab groups are listed. However, the writer quickly distorts the known facts. Sab tactics are stated to be only effective against "frustrated car followers." "Hit and run tactics" have a poor effect on hunting. Trespass, enjoyment and fun are the main aims of a sab group who are bored and disgruntled, but held together by one, or two fanatics, plus unspecified "payments." (Packed lunches were not mentioned). Sab groups experience a "rapid turnover" due to false "stereotyped" view on hunting, and the failure to save hunted animals lives.

Recommended tactics for hunters are as follows. Each hunt should form an anti saboteur squad to monitor sabs movements and actions during the day. This "squad," which is in effect a vigilante gang and may well be illegal, is urged not to fight the sabs as violence and abuse are counter productive, but to literally (and this is quite seriously proposed by the writer) bore the sabs out of the hunting field. Likewise, foot and mounted followers are advised to be firm and totally boring to sabs. At this stage I must point out the hunters complete success in this venture, they are totally boring to sabs. Further tactics of a more sensible nature are proposed. The "squad" in their own vehicle should make early contact with sabs and maintain contact all day. During which time they should make a complete written record of sabs vehicle numbers, sab movements including alleged trespass and areas sprayed, alleged damage to fences and alleged spraying near livestock. Also alleged hollas and horn calls near roads. This is to be supplemented by numerous photos using a telephoto lens.

I should point out here that sabs have been recording similar information about hunts for many years now and should continue to do so. Open a file on your local official Hunt Heavies, I mean local Anti Saboteur Squad, (they may turn out to be one and the same). The "squad" is recommended to liaise with local police during the day. This will undoubtedly make them feel they have official sanction for their vigilante actions. Further ideas are to bring the local press out under cover to watch the sabs in action. This has worked well for sabs in the past, but I cannot see the hunt getting much change out of it.

By sticking to the sabs all day the "squad" hope to take the initiative by putting the sabs on the defensive, and inhibit sabs manoeuvrability and remove the element of surprise. A good sab group should overcome these tactics without much trouble. The "squad" can only follow one vehicle at a time, and once out of the vehicles the "squad" could well be legless after the first hill. As for taking the initiative, an anti saboteur squad is highly unlikely to achieve this. To get this result it needs a co-ordinated effort by the whole hunt and not just a small section of it. 99% of hunts cannot do this.

However, do not underestimate the "squad." Their primary function of information gathering could be put to use. Fabricated allegations of criminal damage or even of assault with sprays can and have been drummed up in the past. The information gathered by the "squad" is to be used to isolate the "hard core" of sabs from "new" sabs. There is a strong and serious implication in the article that "special treatment" may be in store for these categories of sabs. Heavy mob tactics or fraudulent complaints to the police may result from this. Sabs should be aware of this trick. Further "squad" tactics are to contact van hire firms or employers while the sab is in progress. University groups may also find that fictitious complaints are made to university staff. A group on campus should be able to finish off this sort of nonsense. Although the article recommends "reasonable" complaints to van hire firms, to my knowledge the only reason hire has been refused is because a hunt member has anonymously told a van-hire firm that their vehicle will be smashed if sabs show up in it again.

Although the article plays down the use of violence, there is always the suspicion that license is being given to hunt heavy methods. Some hunts in fact do have an anti saboteur squad that is of a non-violent nature, but they really are slow and have difficulty in keeping up. They never seem to last more than a few months each season, and I suspect they have a very rapid turnover in membership due to difficulty in finding the sabs and problems in taking notes.

The only thing left for me to do is to remind you to be as efficient as possible in the field and wish you a successful season against bloodsports. Don't forget to read through the tactics booklet 1983 and let me and the committee have your thoughts and comments.

JOHN HALE. Tactics Officer.

STAR SPANGLED SABOTEURS

Who else, other than an American, would dream up the 'Star-Spangled Goose', which a Connecticut man uses to scare geese from hunting areas. Painted red, white and blue, the goose-shaped decoy motors through the water playing the US National Anthem!

This innovation is just one of a variety used by members of the 120,000 strong 'Friends of the Animals.' This New York based group has caught onto the necessity of direct field action to save the lives of animals hunted by the large and unevolved American hunting community.

'Tips for Hunt Saboteurs', similar to the HSA's tactics sheets, offers imaginative advice. Hints range from lobbying state, local, and national officials for changes in the law, to sabotage tactics which vary from the spreading of rotten eggs and dung in duck blinds, to the introduction into the field of a female dog in heat, thereby redirecting the interest of male hunting dogs! Animals are given early warning presence by collecting hair from local barber's shops and scattering it in the woods. Other tactics include applying for restricted permits to hunt rare species, or to use particular duck-blinds and then not doing so, removing bait set for deer and even setting out old stuffed animals, that hunters might shoot in error, thereby scaring away live wildlife. All of this 'serves to anger them, and angry hunters do not stalk so quietly, their aim is not so precise.'

It is interesting to note the familiarity, (American in flavour) of pro- and anti-hunting rhetoric. Members of 'The Friends of Animals', reports William Geist of the New York Times, 'stroll through the country playing classical music on a tape player, sending wildlife crashing through the bush.' While Susan Russell, a spokesman for FOA sees this as reasonable action, Bob Busnardo, host of the weekly radio program, 'Sportsman's Hotline' on a Bridgeton, NJ radio station threatens, "The confrontations have been verbal so far, but when you harass someone long enough and hard enough, eventually there are going to be serious problems". Indeed, New Jersey Assemblyman and hunter, Joseph W. Chinnici has said, "If this is not stopped immediately, someone's going to get hurt." Indeed, he has introduced legislation that is he claims necessary to protect both the hunters from harassment and the animal activists from retaliation.

The form of this protection comes as no surprise bearing in mind the hobbies of the proposer. It will become illegal to 'interfere or to attempt to interfere with the lawful hunting, pursuit, killing or taking of any animal, bird or freshwater fish.' Predictably, offenders would be fined.

Opponents of the Bill claim it will infringe on the rights of speach and assembly. Spokesman Susan Russell of the FOA states, "Whenever there is a protest of anything, whether it be civil rights or women's rights, or whatever, there is the chance of confrontation. But someone cannot just do away with the right to speak out on things we disagree with. If they do, I believe that in good conscience we would have to continue to protest as we are now. We consider wildlife a national resource, and cannot reconcile this policy of their right to kill animals while saying that we cannot protect them with other public policy concerning resources. If you pick a flower or cut down a tree on state lands you can be arrested, but it is alright to kill animals with guns and smash their bones in steel traps." In contrast, Chinnici said "This is a group determined not to let deer be killed. And of course they are wrong."

Like most European hunters, Mr. Chinnici and his friends have a long way to go.

BLOOD THIRSTY STUDENTS APPOINT A COMEDIAN AS THEIR SPOKESMAN

For those sabs fortunate enough to see it, a recent article, nay gem, in Shooting Times doubtless caused much amusement. It was written by a Charles Cable and, as a taste of things to come, was entitled *"The Universities Campaign for Country Sports – a severe threat to abolitionists".*

The article describes the popularity of the Birmingham University Country Sports Society whose membership is now "greater than ever before" but predictably no figures are given.

He then explains the terrible things which befall unsuspecting new students: *"At present students are bombarded with the abolitionists' propaganda from the first day they arrive at their university or college. In many universities little or nothing is being done to combat this propaganda with the result that many students who arrive uncommitted have left with an anti bias. Graduates are potential leaders of society and their views have an important influence on public opinion"!!*

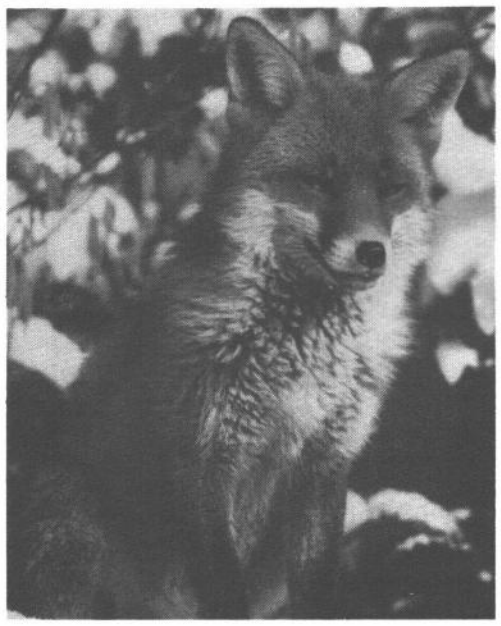
Continuing, he proposes that a nationwide campaign be established to promote country sports in every university and appeals for a permanent organiser and local sponsors.

Before concluding he chillingly warns of *"The opposition, as is to be expected from small-minded and self-righteous people, becomes both vicious and hysterical when challenged. Fortunately the spectacle of an enraged vegan can do wonders for recruitment and is more likely to alarm a cabbage than your average undergraduate country sports member."!!*

It should be obvious after reading this that British comedy is alive and well, and can be found within the columns of our field sport magazines from where it will occasionally burst forth to rival such as Monty Python's "Parrot Sketch". Thanks for the laughs Charles!

HUNTS HAVE NO CONTROL

OVER FOX POPULATION



The main argument used by fox-hunters to justify their particularly cruel pursuit is still, and no doubt always will be, that foxhunting serves as an efficient means of controlling foxes. Much has been said about the need to control foxes and most intelligent people quickly understand that much of the evidence put forward against the fox is based on ignorance and prejudice rather than proven scientific fact. Whether or not the claims made against the fox are a reliable indicator of its role in nature or agriculture, the simple facts are that present practices designed to control fox numbers are remarkable for their inability to fulfil their object. Today the fox is one of Britain's commonest of animals, indeed it is probably more numerous now than it was, say, two hundred years ago. This is not thanks to foxhunting as some self-contradictory pro-hunt protagonists often claim but simply because this most opportunistic of animals has found twentieth-century Britain much to its liking. Foxes are as common, if not more so, in our cities, suburban fringes and small towns as they are in the most rich of rural habitats. Thanks to a decrease in the ruthless gamekeeping of the last century and that of the inter-war years, fox numbers have been able to stabilise or increase in some rural areas, especially in the game regions of Scotland and the grouse moors of upland Britain while rural depopulation has helped the fox in many arable and mixed farming regions of the country.

Despite their ubiquity fox numbers are constantly held in check by a variety of complicated and interconnected factors, fluctuations in local populations depend more on natural controls and environmental restraints than on the rather futile efforts of mankind. Only in areas where human beings maintain a constant and vigilant pressure on foxes can it be said that artificial controls have any real impact on population levels, for the most part, however, the level of road casualties probably has a greater impact on fox numbers in a given area than the so-called control operations carried out by man. In Ireland during the 1970's it is noticeable that foxes suffered a real decline due to artificial mortality that had no bearing on any desire to control foxes. Each year some 30,000 fox pelts were exported to the continent from Irish ports, and thus the decline was prompted more by free-market enterprise than an effort to reduce the fox population. Indeed those people who claim to be most efficient in fox control — the Irish foxhunts — were most vociferous in their condemnation of this trade and demanded its regulation or, in some areas total abolition because they were suffering from a serious lack of foxes which are of course the most essential ingredient in their sport.

In Britain, foxhunts are variously reported as accounting for between 9,000 (BFSS 1979) and 16,000 (H.G. Lloyd maximum estimation) foxes annually, the largest proportion of which are accounted for during the cub-hunting season (August to October inclusive). The total kill of foxes by control efforts and the fur trade has been estimated by the BFSS as about 30,000 annually — almost certainly a considerable underestimation — and by H.G. Lloyd as around 100,000; in my opinion a far more likely figure. The actual fox population of Britain, is, for obvious reasons extremely difficult to determine but the BFSS puts it as around 900,000 and H.G. Lloyd estimates it to be between 1,000,000 and one-and-a-half million animals.

A casual glance at these figures reveals two points for consideration:

1. that whether the total number of foxes killed by all human efforts is 30,000 or 100,000 the toll taken from the total population (between 900,000 and 1½ million) is virtually insignificant, the worst it can be is less than one animal out of ten being killed;

2. when the total killed by fox hunts is compared with H.G. Lloyd's estimated figure of 100,000 foxes killed annually by all human efforts we can see how insignificant the fox-hunter's tally is and how ridiculous their claim that they are an efficient or important form of fox control.

Confronted with such "facts" fox-hunters generally fall back on two arguments to justify their claims, it is these that I would like to consider in detail:

1. Foxhunters do not wish to wipe out foxes in an area but merely maintain a balanced population.

2. that if foxhunting was abolished there would be 9,000 (or 16,000 foxes more, living and breeding in the countryside and that if all forms of "control" were stopped the fox population would soar rapidly and soon become a real nuisance as they infest the countryside and through shortage of food would be forced to prey on domestic livestock.

Both these arguments seem plausible enough at first sight but are in fact based on a total ignorance of fox biology and the workings of population dynamics.

The first argument, is without a doubt the most stupid; any biologist can tell us that it is impossible to decide on, or proceed to carry out a programme designed to maintain a balanced animal population until the total population has been assessed, the carrying capacity of the habitat has been determined and the individuals or age groups for killing have been identified. Foxhunts do not carry out such preliminary research and they hunt and kill whatever animal happens to be in front of their hounds regardless of sex, age or position in the social hierarchy of the local fox population. Thus foxhunters are not capable of establishing or pursuing a balanced population of foxes nor of carrying out a "cull" as it is euphemistically called, of a local fox population.

Perhaps more significant is the fact that the majority of foxhunts kill more foxes during the cub-hunting season than in the main fox-hunting season, in other words the majority of foxes killed by foxhunts are accounted for prior to their dispersal from their birth area and prior to the onset of winter. Hunters claim that cub-hunting aids dispersal and reduces the number of foxes in an area; but in unhunted regions, and in continental countries such as Denmark and Sweden, foxes have few problems dispersing from their homes and the natural mortality of foxes takes its greatest toll on young cubs immediately prior and during the onset of winter. Those that fall victims to this natural mortality are the weak, the sick and the ones which have been unable to establish a territory mainly because of the presence of adult and established territory holders. With or without hunting this natural mortality is very high and is nature's own way of maintaining a balanced population of foxes, determined as it is by the levels of food and territory availability and individual ability, it is by far a more finely tuned instrument of control than the sporting whims of the foxhunting fraternity.

The principal advocate of the second argument is Mr Ian Coghill (yes, we've all seen his letters in local newspapers and recently his behaviour in the hunting field on television) as the BFSS Conservation Officer and one of three writers who submitted a scientific article for the Journal of Applied Ecology we would expect him to know better than to promote such a weak and misleading argument. The rational behind it is that if foxes were not killed by humans their numbers would consistently and accumulatively increase, presumably until they poured out of our living rooms and overflowed the offices of the League Against Cruel Sports. Again this is not the case.

In any area the fox population can only increase to the level at which territorial and food availability will allow. In rich habitats, such as has been described by D.W. Macdonald on the fringes of Oxford, food availability is great enough to allow a slackening of natural territorial instincts among adult foxes so that several animals may occupy a single territory. The social organisation of these groups seems to be matriarchal, i.e. there is one dominant female and several sub-dominant females sharing the territory with, usually, a single dog-fox. Nevertheless, if all the females were to produce litters of cubs more foxes than the area could support would be the result and thus in such areas only the dominant female mates with the dog-fox, or at least social-stress and inexperience leaves the sub-dominant females barren or unsuccessful in rearing their cubs. If the dominant female should die the dog-fox takes another lesser-female as his mate. Thus although the fox population density in this area is high it does not greatly increase from one year to the next.

When a litter of cubs are born to the dominant female she rears them, apparently with help from the sub-dominant females, when they are adults the dog-fox forces any males to desert the area to seek a home elsewhere, while the sub-adult females are absorbed into the social hierarchy of the territory if there is room or are forced into exile if not. If there is a sudden crash in the food supply, animals lower in the social hierarchy are excluded from the territory. This fact has been established by supplying artificially high concentrations of food and then stopping the supply suddenly. Thus if fox numbers did increase to a point where they might prey on domestic animals — the population density would still be controlled because lambs are only available for a short period of time to foxes, and at a time when the new members of a social group of foxes are still underground and totally dependent on their mothers. By the time they are ready to feed themselves lambs are no longer available and population size, dispersal and mortality of foxes once more depends on the natural supplies of food.

In H.G. Lloyd's study areas in mid-Wales, where sheep are more common than in Oxfordshire, the fox population density is extremely low: each territory holds, at most, one male and one female fox; dispersal of cubs during Autumn may take them, especially males, many miles from home in search of new territories and the natural — non-sheep — prey availability is so low as to prevent greater densities of population.

Another factor is also important here and that is of compensatory reproduction and survival rates. Foxes in mid-Wales and other upland regions suffer considerable persecution and in an effort to counteract this artificially high mortality each vixen tends to give birth to between four and seven live young. These take over territories left vacant by human "control" operations. In Oxfordshire Macdonald found that the average litter-size was only about three or four cubs per-vixen which reflects the intense population pressures of the area. A better illustration might be that of Anglesey during the late 1960's and early 1970's. In 1960 foxes were not present on the island; following a few introductions, attempts by farmers to wipe them out led to the discovery that vixens were giving birth to very large litters of between 7 and 9 young; following the failure to eliminate these foxes by 1974 farmers were killing some 400 foxes a year. This reflects the lack of population pressure in this largely vacant and rich habitat.

Other factors such as the incidence of barrenness among females, survival rates among young and adult foxes and the distance of average dispersal during the autumn movements of young foxes also help to maintain a rough balance of population, territory and food availability in a given area. A small change in the proportion of small mammals (mice and voles for instance) in an area is more likely to have a greater impact on a local fox population than all the "controlling" or "sporting" efforts of men put together. Faced with the facts — and the intricate details would warrant more space than this newspaper can offer — no hunter can prevail over the argument that hunting is not a means of controlling foxes.

RALPH COOK

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— (1981) Rabies and Wildlife. Oxford University Press.

From Our Hunting Correspondent



Berrow's Newspapers

As a keen hunt supporter who is concerned about the political interference in field sports, I think that our latest local venture, a rat hunt pack, is just what we need to show you anti's exactly what type of people you are up against: a united body reflecting the degree of integrity and intelligence that one has learnt to expect from field-sportsmen.

To ward off any subsequent criticism of this noble sport, let us look at the facts. Whether you like it or not, the rat is an actual or potential pest. We do not seek to exterminate them, just to assist in humanely controlling them to an acceptable level.

Rat hunting is good clean fun (the rumours about what we do with the rats private parts after we cut them off for trophies, simply is not true). Also, I can only stress that we get no thrill out of the actual kill (the fact that we jump up and down yahooing and cheering at the kill is purely coincidental). We enjoy rat hunting because of the excitement of pitting one's wits, and sometimes triumphing over, an animal of such superior intellect to oneself.

This sport is not cruel as we operate under a strict code of conduct. In fact, I'm sure the rats even enjoy it. I have often seen a hunted rat stop to nibble on a bit of corn, before moving off again. Of course, we only take the old and sick, leaving the healthy stock to breed. The kill is very quick and any captive rat is humanely shot – no huntsman worthy of his name would throw a live animal to the hounds. Such behaviour is not tolerated.

In the present climate of high unemployment let me point out the great contribution made by rat hunting to the industrial world; breweries show a marked increase in profits during the season as we all get canned up before, during and after the hunt; we all make regular contributions to BUPA as our increased susceptibility to rat bites necessitates our speedy access to tetanus treatment; we provide the market for ferret and terrier equipment, gum boots, hunting horns, flat caps, and even taxidermists. We honour any rat that gives us a memorable hunt by having its head stuffed and mounted. One such sporting rodent adorns my library wall reminding me of the hunt of a lifetime. That particular day I was with my hunting pals Sam Salisbury (known affectionately as Thicko by his friends), Ian Clothead (who only lives a minks throw away from Worcestershire), and Steve Evans (rumour has it he's the Leagues other "mole"). The terriers soon had a rat on the move and what exciting sport followed! That rat was chased for 15 seconds and scored a record-breaking point of 18 yards before being accounted for!

Those who might object to what we do should remember that we are all conservationists. Should rathunting be banned we would have no need to maintain the rats natural habitat: therefore, barns and outhouses would be ripped up indiscriminately leaving a prairie landscape. Is that really what you anti's want?

A final message to all you long-haired lefties – if you're really concerned about cruelty to animals then why not attack fishing as that is where the real cruelty lies.

By the way, should any of you wish to come along and see what good fun rat hunting is, then contact me:
Ann Tea, The Rat Inn, Knightwick, Worc's.

MINK HUNT RITUAL

That most traditional of country pursuits, mink hunting has some very strange ceremonies. The West Yorkshire MH, with a chequered history dating back as far as 1980, uses a 'blooding' ceremony for its hounds dating back over one hundred years to the early days of the Holme Valley Beagles. The noses of new pups are smeared with punch made from beer, port and brandy. This is accompanied by the recital (by the hunters, not the pups), of an Old Yorkshire poem calling on the pups never to chase anything with wool or feathers (such as a haberdasher or an emu). Funny, but it always seems that the hunters, rather than the hounds, are tanked up to their chin straps.

N.T. Ban

The National Trust has acted decisively to ban fox-hunting on 166 acres of its property at Downs Bank, Staffs. Past abuse has led the Trust to con–clude that the fauna and flora of the Down require some immediate protection. A permanent ban on fox-hunting has been reinforced by the initiation of a horse route across the land.

Regional land agent, Claire Pearson, stated that the ban would stop people tramping over the land. It seems that the people that she refers to are the North Staffs Hunt, who were the last group to use the area before the ban.

It seems that the NT is more concerned about hunt damage than animal damage.

MAD MAX TOO

Seavington Hunt's foolish Master of the Hounds, Max Southwell, clung to a cliff face for an hour, two hundred feet above the beach at Seatown, near Yeovil, after trying to rescue a hound which had followed it's quarry over the cliff. Southwell climbed down after Bridport, a valuable hound, but ventured too far. Mrs. Southwell fawned, "Max didn't think of his own safety and he got into a tricky situation." Weymouth Coastguard were able to rescue the master but not Bridport, who fell to his death. Obviously distraught, and after only the briefest of medical checks, Southwell rejointed the hunt. The pack eventually caught up with a second fox at Eype Down. For some reason the same concern was not shown to this one of nature's creatures.

GROUP FIGHTS TO BAN SNARES

A group of RSPCA supporters in Medway Kent have started a campaign to ban snares after becoming aware of the atrocities discovered by their local RSPCA inspector Tony Dean, who since March has dealt with four badger deaths, three fox deaths and has seen two cats almost ripped in half round the stomach.

Often the animals he finds are being eaten alive by maggots which fester in their gaping wounds and, as he points out, snares don't kill but torture their victims to death.

Although snares are legal, the law says that the owners must check them, but animals can be trapped for days before they are killed and, though usually intended for rabbits, snares are indiscrimin-ate. Cats, dogs, cows' tongues, foxes and badgers are all at risk.

Sabs who discover snares know what action they should take!

BADGER–BAITING ON INCREASE

The appalling 'sport' of digging and baiting badgers appears to be increasingly popular amongst yobs throughout England and Wales. The only positive aspect of this sickening fact is a greater willingness on behalf of the Police to presecute the baiters. In some areas, however, it has been necess-ary for interested parties such as the Royal Society for Nature Conservation to carry out private prosecutions. In fact, obtaining sufficient evidence to successfully prosecute has always been very difficult because diggers can claim to be searching for foxes or rabbits; (it's legal to terrorise foxes and rabbits with terriers but illegal to treat badgers similarly). However, in at least one recent case it has been enough for the prosecution to show that the digging was taking place at a known in-use badger sett, to obtain a guilty verdict.

Two badger baiters were recently each fined £300 and £100 costs in Plymouth. One of them, 26 year old unemployed father of two, Wally Jones of Newcastle Gardens, Whitleigh, Plymouth, boasted of his exploits to his local newspaper. His claims make sick-ening reading. He first went digging at the age of 13. He estimates there to be 20–30 baiters operating from Plymouth who generally go out at dawn with terriers such as Lakelands. A dog, wearing an electronic 'bleeper' collar, is 'entered' to the badger in its sett. When the dog stops it usually means the badger has been located and Wally and his mates commence the digging. The badger is hauled out using tongs and stuffed into a box or sack, and taken back to Plymouth.

When ready for baiting, the badger is taken out onto the moors and a trench dug into which the badger and a terrier are placed. Bets may be placed on how long the battle will last; the loser in the competition is the animal which leaves the trench first. It's a fair sport, claims Wally, although he doesn't like several dogs versus one badger because the badger might get injured. Wally claims he goes baiting for the fresh air and to stop him from thieving.

Jones and his accomplice, Kevin Taylor of Brentford Avenue, Whitleigh, Plymouth, were the first two diggers to be successfully prosecuted in the West Country. Other successful cases have recently been brought in Cheshire and Staffordshire, although those brought to trial only represent the tip of the iceberg. Jones' description of baiting is, of course, a gross understatement of what really goes on. Badgers are dragged kicking and screaming from setts and are often maimed before being thrown into a pit to face the terriers. One by one the dogs are entered, sometimes they are injured but there is never an escape for the harmless and terrified badger.

If it is lucky, the badger is killed by a blow from a spade. The unlucky ones, generally those which anger a digger by injuring his prized dog, may be kicked to a pulp or buried, mutilated and disabled but still alive, to suffocate or bleed to death.

THE FINAL ASSAULT?

The final meeting of the 1982/83 season for the Crawley and Horsham Fox Hunt was held at the elegant home of the senior Joint-Master, William Weller, on the edge of the South Down Hills.

The meet was attended by about thirty sabs from Sussex and Essex who gathered at the top of the hills prior to the meet. When the hunt reached the sabs it was apparent that the hunt had come well-equipped with heavies, – their terrier-men and regular yobbos were supplemented with local game-keepers.

Sabs remained at the hunt for just two hours, during which time numerous assaults by hunt followers occurred. The culmination of the attacks (all of which took place on public rights of way) was a vicious assault on Phil Shore by the hunt's terrier-man, Graham Farmer.

Farmer already had a criminal record for two assaults against sabs (one of them Phil) as well as a history of other attacks against sabs, and even a BBC reporter. As he stepped from his land-rover Farmer made it clear that this was to be a revenge attack to 'pay' Phil for taking him to court for a previous assault.

The attack was completely unprovoked.

Phil was singled out from a small group of sabs, beaten to the ground and repeatedly kicked about the head and struck numerous times with a drain rod, while other hunt yobs looked on. The resultant injuries were sufficiently extensive to lead the sabs to agree reluctantly to leave the hunt in order to prevent any further attacks.

The police were immediately informed; Farmer was arrested and subsequently given bail pending a trial. He was charged with ABH and elected for trial by jury. In court, sab witnesses related the incident as it happened; they stood up well to rigorous cross-examination. Conversely, the defence witnesses were poor and unconvincing.

Farmer pleaded not guilty on the grounds of self-defence, despite the fact that he was not marked in any way. He admitted knocking Phil to the ground with a drain rod because Phil was threatening to head-butt him (a lie of course). Farmer also admitted kicking Phil in the face whilst he was on the ground, – this was necessary because, claimed the accused, Phil was crawling towards him and shouting. (Presumably Farmer feared for the safety of his ankles!).

Farmer's witnesses all said they somehow missed seeing the assault occur, but agreed that Phil looked aggressive. Unfortunately for Farmer, he had been silly enough to admit his guilt to his arresting officers. To get out of this, he therefore accused the police in court of fabricating evidence and of having a grudge against him.

All this seemed very promising for the prosecution, the evidence all pointed to a violent yob carrying out an unprovoked revenge attack. Yet somehow the jury were taken in by at least some of Farmers lies; in finding him guilty they asked the judge to be lenient in view of the alleged provocation by the antis. The judge agreed and fined him a measly £100 which was paid, along with Farmer's legal costs, by the hunt. A technic-ality prevented the sab witnesses from being bound over.

One positive aspect of the case, however, was the attitude of the police who refused to be drawn into the hunting debate; to them it was a clear cut case of ABH and they dealt with it accordingly.

Farmer has now left the Crawley and Horsham Hunt, and is almost certainly working as a terrier man at another hunt; it might be your local hunt. Watch out for him he's Violent!.



Farmer has featured before in HOWL.

COURT REPORT

Hunt Saboteurs Cleared Of Charges Of Spraying Hounds

Two members of the Clydeside Hunt Saboteurs' Association were acquitted at Linlithgow Sheriff Court on August 25th. of charges of spraying hounds of the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire Hunt with antimate and thereby causing a breach of the peace. Ann Strachan and Margaret Smith had denied the charges, but had no need to provide a defence as Sheriff David Bogie ruled there was no case to answer.

The first witness, a farm manager and not a known hunt supporter, alleged that he saw Margaret Smith spraying on the ground and then on hounds on a track off the Ritchie Camp to Kirknewton road – the Crown's libel in fact stated that the incident occurred on the main road. He alleged that Ann Strachan did not spray, but was standing beside a car. Under cross-examination he stated that he felt sure that he had seen antimate sprayed on hounds.. The second witness, L & S Huntsman Tom Potts, breezed into the witness box and alleged that he had seen Ann and Margaret both spray on hounds. Despite the fact that he was twice as far away as the previous witness he was adamant that he had seen both girls spray. The third witness, amateur whipper-in Jim Nisbett, alleged that he had seen a car driver spray on a hound from a car parked on the Ritchie Camp to Kirknewton road, describing an incident and location totally different from the previous two witnesses. He identified the car driver as Margaret Smith, but under cross-examination expressed total amazement when informed that Margaret did not hold a driving licence and could not drive. He then claimed that he could not be sure in his identification.

Three police constables and an inspector then testified that the women had been detained under the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act and had been subsequently charged with breach of the peace; one even testified that they had been charged on January 21st, i.e. the day before the hunt took place. To add to the Police embarrassment, they succeeded in the losing the cans of antimate which were confiscated and intended to be used as exhibits.



draw in presence of witnesses



Del Parish



Carol Ogden

HSA GRAND DRAW 1983

Many thanks to all of you who either bought or sold our raffle tickets, whilst the final figures are not yet available it would appear that HSA funds have benefited by about £2500 from the draw. Listed below are the winners:

1st Prize	D. Parish	–	Holmfirth, West Yorkshire
2nd Prize	C. Ogden	–	Morecombe, Lancashire
3rd Prize	A. Pope	–	Cranbrook, Kent

Consolation Prizes –

H. Cullup	–	Cambridge	R. Malone	–	Crowborough
S. Hughes	–	St Albans	M. Portas	–	Newcastle
Brettell	–	Petersfield	W.J. Measure	–	London

Following the Crown evidence, defence agent Kevin Duffy, rising to argue that there was no case to answer, declared himself unsure in which way to prioritise his submissions, he had so many to make. Firstly, he argued that the Crown had imperilled their case by creating such a narrow and precise libel. Secondly, he pointed out that the evidence of the first two witnesses related to a completely different incident from that in the libel and that in any case that evidence was contradictory. Thirdly, the only evidence led about the libel was Nisbett's and his identification of the alleged sprayer was inaccurate. Fourthly, this evidence was unsubstantiated. Fifthly, there was a duty on the Crown to lead the best evidence available, and since they had lost the cans of antimate they can hardly be said to have led the best evidence. He concluded that there was no case to answer. Sheriff David Bogie agreed and found Margaret and Ann not guilty.

This case raises some quite serious points. Firstly, it was obvious to observers in court that the Crown case had failed after the evidence given by the first three witnesses had been digested – indeed it could be argued that a proper examination of the evidence prior to the trial should have led to a withdrawal of the prosecution. However, the Crown was forced to proceed to the bitter end, following instructions from the Crown Office that prosecutions involving Hunt Sabs are to be carried through to trial on every occasion and are never to be deserted. Secondly, both women were cleared because of a lack of evidence, but because costs are rarely awarded in Scottish courts still had to pay to have their innocence. Although costs were kept to an absolute minimum, it is clearly wrong that the innocent party has to pay.

The trial at Linlithgow marks the first time that Hunt Sabs have been acquitted in a Scottish court.

FARMER WINS FIGHT TO KEEP HUNT OFF LAND

In April, a Suffolk farmer, Mr William McMaster won his 10-year old fight to keep the East Essex Hunt off his fields. The Judge at Sudbury County Court refused to award aggravated damages but the Hunt was ordered to pay £50 for crops destroyed and £200 for general damages for trespass. The Hunt also undertook not to draw close to Mr McMaster's boundary or enter his property.

It was an incident in which hounds strayed onto a railway line which runs through Mr McMaster's farm that brought matters to a head and resulted in Hunt riders trampling a crop of wheat. After complaining the Hunt tried to fob him off with a case of whisky or £50.

In court he explained that he had grown tired of complaining and had threatened legal action but it made no difference, the Hunt still trespassed. He pointed out that foxes often went to earth on a four-acre site which he retained as a nature reserve.

The Judge accepted that unjustifiable trespass had taken place and it had to be reiterated that the operation, exercise and sport of the whole hunt depended on consent and agreement of landowners. A spokesman for the British Field Sports Society said, "Everyone is concerned when we upset farmers. But this is a very rare occurrence and most people are hospitable and generous to us otherwise we would not hunt". Sounds familiar doesn't it?

HUNT MASTER IN COURT.

Following an assault occasioning Actual Bodily Harm on a girl sab, earlier this year, George Hyett, Master of the South Devon Foxhounds, was fined £100 plus £25 costs in the Magistrates Court recently.

The incident happened when a van-load of sabs was boxed-in by hunt supporters in a country lane near North Bovey, on the edge of Dartmoor. When the girl sab got out to remonstrate with Hyett, who was letting down the van tyres, she was punched in the face, causing severe cuts and bruising. Hyett pleaded guilty to the offence.

Disgracefully, the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary had refused to make charges against the Master and a private prosecution had to be undertaken. Because Hyett had pleaded guilty the sab and her solicitor were not even told that the case was to be heard on that particular day. Consequently, neither was in court and photographs, showing the extent of her injuries, were not produced before sentence was passed.

Some saboteurs in Devon have been heard to remark that, in future, it might be better just to sabotage offending hunts out of existence, rather than resort to official channels and the biased legal system of rural Devonshire.

CONSERVATIVE COUNCIL AGAINST HUNTING

Conservative members and supporters who read HOWL will be interested to learn of the formation of the Conservative Anti Hunt Council whose director is Clive Skinner.

In a letter to the Ipswich Evening Star Mr Skinner pointed out that it is often assumed that opponents of hunting are "trendy lefties", whereas in fact Tories are equally concerned about "blood-soaked rituals" as demonstrated by reference to surveys which show that 54% of Tory voters disapprove of foxhunting, 76% disapprove of hunting deer with dogs, and 78% disapprove of hare coursing.

The Council is "determined to commit the Party to oppose these barbaric practices before the nation's wildlife disappears forever". He concludes the letter by saying that "The Conservative Party is the natural party for conservation and we must succeed in this new venture, however controversial, to avoid the contempt of future generations".

Conservative Party supporters (and those who now feel inclined to join) may like to lend support to this organisation by writing to:

The Director,
Conservative Anti Hunt Council,
3 London Road,
Luton,
Beds.

OTTERS AT RISK NORTH OF THE BORDER

Although in Scotland it became an offence to kill, injure, or take an otter with the passing of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, otters are still in considerable danger from the activities of eel fyke netters and eel trappers – both major causes of otter deaths.

The 1981 Act provides that a person may be found not guilty of an offence if he/she can show that the act (i.e. an otter death) was the incidental result of a lawful operation – such as eel trapping. However, it is also necessary to show that the act could not reasonably have been avoided.

Otters can easily be excluded from fyke nets and eel box traps by placing a net across the entrance. The problem is that in Scotland netters and trappers are not licenced by local water authorities and cannot be forced to adopt measures which would effectively protect otters from nets and traps.

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.....

.....

NEWS IN BRIEF

PLAIN STUPID

The average British officer is not exactly renowned for championing the environmental cause. It is hardly a surprise, therefore that the Army has just had to take responsibility for ploughing up five acres of Salisbury Plain where rare flowers were known to grow. The reason, – to make space for an officers pheasant-shooting area. The region is, or more aptly *was* an area designated of special scientific interest.

STUFFING REQUIRED

Lancashire sheep farmer, Francis Mercer has recently made a bag which any BFSS man would be proud of – a rare silver-grey arctic fox, which according to Blackpool Zoo, had likely escaped from private ownership. The brave bumkin tracked the animal to its nest, with a friend and shot it. He is currently considering the £120 fee quoted by a taxidermist. Any offers for Mercer?

HUNT THE MINER

The Banwen Miners' Hunt – much-mentioned by the BFSS as proof positive of working class involvement in bloodsports – has been severely embarrassed by recent revelations about its members. It appears that the coal-miners of the Valleys actually find less speciesist ways of spending their time than fox-killing – they are certainly few and far between in the ranks of the Banwen "Miners" Hunt. The Joint Masters are a solicitor and auctioneer and the Hunt Secretary an insurance man. The hunt have so far refused to reveal how many of their members actually work at the coal face.

CIRCUS SHOPPED!

Anti-circus campaigners found an effective way of depleting audiences when Circus Fiesta performed at Worcester recently. Shops in the area received letters on headed circus notepaper telling them that the circus was off due to unforeseen circumstances. Each letter was accompanied by a 'Cancelled' sticker, to put across shop posters.

Furious circus-owner Tony Hopkins told the local press that this sort of thing was really "very unfair", and insisted that the show would go on regardless.

OZZY OUT!

Retribution has finally caught up with odious rock-star Ozzy Osbourne, who is no stranger to these columns. Osbourne, who bites off the heads of live bats and birds during his stage-act, collapsed on stage, during a concert in Illinois, with chest pains, recently. The crazed rock-star was reported to be in a fair condition in hospital.

BLOW FOR HOT-SHOT

Would-be marksman Viscount Mountgarret, who was recently fined £1,000 for peppering a hot-air balloon over his grouse moor – probably in despair at ever being able to hit anything as small as a grouse – has had his firearms certificate withdrawn and been ordered to sell his £6,000 pair of sporting guns.

Mountgarret, who owns 16,000 acres of Yorkshire, suffered this terrible blow just one week before the "Glorious" twelfth.

HUNTER'S NOSE BITTEN

Poor Tim Asplin, Joint Master of the Essex Union FH, had his nose bitten at the hunt's supporters' show. During the terrier racing, drunken hoodlums (exactly the sort of people that attend these types of shows) were throwing their own terriers onto the race track and spoiling all the fun. Tim's intrepid wife, Sue, intervened and got thumped for her troubles. When Tim joined the scuffle he received a vicious bite to the nose.

Unfortunately Tim can't expect much sympathy from hunt sabs or from anybody else for that matter. It was he, you may recall, who commented that horsewhipping a sab was like wife-beating – a private matter between the two people involved. (Nobody knows if his wife, Sue, agrees with her husband's sentiments).

MAJOR PUNT

From the pages of the thinking man's toilet paper – the 'Mail', we have a particularly juvenile article by the laughable columnist, David Skan, who enthuses about the equally cretinous Major John Rippingall. Skan belches, "Huntin' I do, shootin', I enjoy, but gun-puntin' I have long wondered about." The Major, apparently 'a grand figure,' enjoys the pursuit. "You stalk up behind them and blast them from a low profile."

He has just spent £2000 on a new punt which is 21 feet long and has an 80lb gun mounted on the front. It is capable of firing 15oz of shot. The Major is proud of having once killed 32 Widgeon in one fusilade.

Anyone wishing to view this magnificent killing machine should find it tied up on his pond at Elmdon, near Cambridge.