"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

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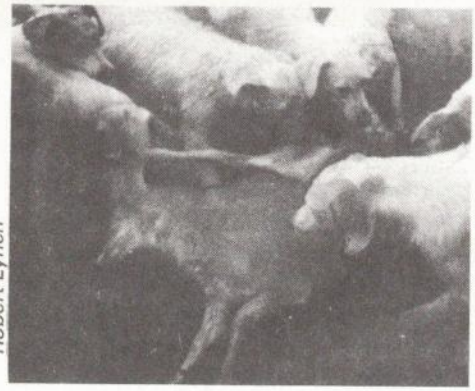
HUNT RIOT EXPOSED

In January of this year the New Forest Foxhunt chased and killed two deer on separate occasions. Much to the Hunt's dismay both events were not only witnessed by, but also photographed by two members of the Hunt Saboteur's Association. A still of the first incident appeared in the Daily Mail accompanied by a vitrolic report, the second incident, recorded on video was shown on an I.T.N. news programme. Both events are here described by the saboteur's who were able to record the brutal acts.

Predictably the adverse publicity attracted by these incidents caused the hunt and its B.F.S.S. advisers quite a headache, in the face of such incriminating evidence they made a ridiculous, but perhaps plausible counter-claim to the effect that the saboteur's had not only by their presence caused the incidents but had actually engineered them. The Field Magazine on the 10th. of March made, perhaps the most outrageous claims. After years of saying that saboteur's are little more of a nuisence to hunting than a gentle frost, the magazine went as far as to say that the saboteurs had the discipline and skill necessary to lay the hounds onto a false trail and to lead this right up to the deer. The circumstantial evidence presented to defend this accusation was that on both occasions saboteurs were present and camera equipment, that on both occasions the hounds had hunted right through deer earlier in the day, and the claim that these hounds had never before killed a deer.

This last statement, is however, not strictly true, for in an H.M.S.O. publication, dated 1980 it was described how hounds from the foxhunt invaded a forest enclosure while hunting a fox which resulted in the death of one female fallow deer and the miscarriages of three others, all were involved in a research project. When asked about

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Robert Lynch

SAB EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNT

At 1.00 p.m. Bob, a Winchester saboteur, and myself were in a densely wooded area near Anderwood Inclosure, four miles from Lyndhurst. Bob and I went into this dense wood when we heard the hounds hunting. For twenty minutes the hounds stayed in this area searching for their quarry taking no notice of the huntsmens' horns. Thirty yards from where we were standing we heard a high pitched shrill. Bob and I immediately ran towards the sound, and through the bushes we witnessed a female fallow deer slowly struggling towards a wire fence with six or seven foxhounds attacking her. By the time we reached the deer she was desperately trying to crawl under the wire fence but by now ten or twelve foxhounds were biting her body to ribbons. Bob and I screamed in rage, we climbed the fence and tried to get to the deer but we had to be very careful not to be bitten. At this point I took many photographs only one of which proved successful. After two to three minutes our screams of rage made the foxhounds leave. To our horror the fallow deer lived for a further four to six minutes squirming in her own bloodbath. About ten minutes after the foxhounds had left, the whipper-in of the hunt appeared, he observed the deer from a distance and ran off saying he would obtain a gun, he never returned. Twenty minutes after the deer died a forestry commission man appeared with a rifle and a policeman.

Mark Brown

Anyone considering statements put out by the New Forest Foxhounds on the days following the death of the second deer, may be forgiven for wondering how the video recording that formed the basis of much of the controversy that followed, came to be made. According to what became the official B.F.S.S. line on the incident, a film crew had been drafted in, specifically for the occasion, inferring that the entire event had been staged for the cameras.

The notion that an outside crew had been brought in on that particular day was continually restated by Mr. Tony Taylor, Joint Master of the Hunt, this, despite the fact that he knew I had been filming the hunt regularly over a period of almost two years prior to the deer kill. Six months before the incident I had requested an interview with him, to allow him to express his own views on the hunting issue. I explained exactly who I was, and that I was a film student gathering material towards a documentary project, and certainly not working for any particular organisation. After consultation with others he chose to decline my request, though he remained fully aware of my position.

On the day of the incident, the early hours of the hunt were spent walking with supporters to ensure that we didn't lose contact with the Field. Shortly before the kill we had been chatting with Jeremy Whaley, who takes over as Joint Master next season. Following an amiable conversation he rode off, as we continued looking for the pack. Minutes later he witnessed the beginning of the chase that resulted in the death of the deer, while some distance away we saw and recorded a doe breaking from the tree line.

Continued on back page



Dear HSA Committee,
I fully support your decision to implement the policies on angling agreed at the A.G.M.

I am convinced from the scientific evidence in the Medway Report that great suffering is caused to fish by anglers. The Medway Panel of Enquiry recommended that every angler should review his appreciation of the "sport" in the light of evidence presented on the perception of pain.

Angling is a brutal and cruel occupation and the HSA is to be commended for leading public opinion against it.

I have tried for two years to persuade the Nuneaton Round Table not to hold Angling Competitions on the Ashby Canal. This year, I and my friends will be adopting your suggestions for persuading the competitors of the cruelty they are promoting.
Yours for human and animal rights,
Margaret House,
Nuneaton.

Dear Sabs,
In Howl magazine no. 26 I wrote in saying how much I was against an active anti-fishing campaign.

I now apologise to any sabs offended by this, as after observing these quiet and calm sadists I have changed my opinion about the 'sport'.

Fishing is a bloodsport and an active campaign is needed to put an end to this pointless barbaric spectacle.
Yours sincerely,
Richard Watkins,
Caerphilly.

HOWL MAGAZINE

This edition was produced by:—
Nigel Bellamy, Ralph Cook,
John Hale, Flod Pamment
& Richard Farhall *(Group News)*

Contributions by:—
John Bainbridge, D. P. Callender,
Phil Shore,
Dave Wetton and Bridget Bardot.

Next edition due out Autumn 1984.
All contributions should be sent to HOWL P.O. Box 19, London SE22 to arrive no later than 31st August 1984.

The points of view expressed in HOWL do not necessarily reflect those of the Hunt Saboteurs Association.

Dear HOWL,
Once again I am incensed by the press officer for A.L.F. Yet again he has insulted everyone who doesn't agree completely with his opinion (see HOWL no 26).

I take it as a personal insult to be told that I am "sniffing around M.P.'s backsides", because I believe that direct action should be followed by political action.

In order to change temporary success against exploitation into permanent reforms, it is unfortunately necessary to deal with the people that change laws. (The first defense of animal exploiters is always that their actions are legal.)

I support, and participate in, direct action. My involvement has probably saved as many lives as our well known A.L.F. pressman.

However, we are not in an either/or situation. All kinds of activity is required to acquire long lasting success.

Comments about "sniffing backsides", (and others in the past about not being committed enough if you don't get yourself arrested) seem to me to show a singular lack of vision, and certainly are not helpful in the slightest.
Name and address withheld on request.

Dear Hunt Saboteurs,
I found a very interesting article about you in a Swedish animal magazine called 'Djurfront' (animal front) and I got very surprised and happy. I didn't know that there was such an association. I think it's great that someone cares about foxes, hares and other animals and really does something against those cruel huntings. Here in Sweden we haven't the same ways of hunting from the horse-back with a pack of hounds. I wish you lots of good luck with your job to stop the huntings.
Yours sincerely,
Charlotte Warg
Strömersgatan 4B
S-703 64 Orebro
Sweden.

Dear H.S.A.,
We applaud and support your landmark campaign against the bloodsport of fishing . . . even at the risk of incurring new opposition against fighters-for-animals'-rights.

Most fishermen are victims of a traditional brainwash that fishing is a macho sport . . . and they are actually unaware that they inflict pain and suffering in fish and that it is OK to murder those "things".

Now that you have taken the first step, it is absolutely necessary to remove the blinders from fishermens' eyes . . . and win them to our cause with continuous writings that expose the barbarisms and cruelties of fishing.

Use the psychology that reveals fishermen as bullys and sadists and phony-machos . . . so that new generations of youngsters will not want to be associated with fishing and will be embarrassed by fathers who try to continue the bloodsport of fishing.
All our best wishes,
The Blacker Family,
New York, N.Y. 10009
U.S.A.

Dear HOWL,
Harry Cross's fishing tactics (see HOWL 25) are a sure recipe for disaster as most of them will end up harming the fish, thereby defeating the object of the exercise.
Although I recognise that the tactics were put forward as a starting point, I urge sabs not to try any of them. Sabbing fishing is not that simple and there are very few effective safe tactics. The following should be avoided:

1. **Pre-feeding.** Throwing vast quantities of feed into the water before fishing so as to satisfy the fish and thereby reducing their desire to feed has been shown to be ecologically unacceptable. Much of the food remains uneaten and sinks to the bottom where it will putrefy and de-oxygenate the water leading to the death of many fish.

2. **Ultrasonics.** There is no way that it is possible to know for sure the effects such devices have on the well-being of fish.

3. **Laying Straw.** Not only would this clog up the water but it would not affect the majority of anglers who float fish where the line is not required to sink.

4. **Throwing Stones.** Disasterous! Especially in the summer. Many fish, particularly Carp, bask on the surface absorbing the sun's warming rays. A fish could easily be hit.

Many of the national dailies picked up on Harry's article and I am surprised that the majority did not identify the weaknesses of the above tactics.

It is vitally important that this area is discussed more fully both through the letters page of HOWL and at at the next A.G.M.
Yours sincerely,
Richard Farhall
Ex-angler and member of the Management Board of the Council for the Prevention of Cruelty by Angling
(CPCA).
This letter was received prior to HOWL 26 which contained further debate in the Tactical Tips column.

JACK'S SHAME

There has been a wealth of comment on the Channel 4 TV programme Jack's Game. Whenever hunting in any form is shown on TV, the furore caused by public opinion suggests that no matter how well it is packaged, hunting always appears as the nauseous practice that it undoubtably is.

Obviously the truth will always 'owt' as a northern man like Jack Charlton should appreciate. One incident which may have been overlooked, however, occured on the programme devoted to Beagling. The master of the Beagles went to great pains to tell us that it was only the chase, not the kill, which was of interest to the hunt. Surprising then that the hunt appeared to engineer a kill with the conivence of the TV team. It is a well respected precept of journalism that reporters and cameramen are there to record, not to create events. However, the cameraman (Mike Shrimpton) was required to put a hare up from it's form using the camera as a prod. As the hare bolted, it made for an open gateway in the field wall. The camera, for a split second, captured the sight of one of the hunt whips standing in the opening. He whooped and turned the hare, so that it ran left handed alongside the stone boundary wall towards a road. The next piece of film showed us the hounds having killed on a bank on the other side of the road, with the stone boundary wall to the right. Obviously, on film, it is not possible to tell if the hare bolted was the hare killed. But the point is, if the hunt are so keen to be fair and give the animal a chase, why block its' natural exit and place the quarry at a disadvantage? Of course, all sabs know that in beagling, the turning of the hare at field exits is common place, in order to facilitate a kill, particularly if it is late in the day, or the hounds have not recently killed.

The audacity of the master in this case, to pay lip service to some kind of code of honour whilst doing his best to come up with a kill for the cameras, betrays a stupidity born of arrogance. The direct involvement of the camera team in assisting to produce a kill is quite simply abhorrent and unprofessional.

The only saving grace about programmes like this is that the more people that see them, the greater will be those who oppose bloodsports.

Any members wishing to communicate their disgust of this programme can reach Jack at:
6 Rockley Old Hall, Worsborough, Barnsley, Yorks.

Tactical Tips

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

In this issue of HOWL, 'Tactical Tips' finds it necessary to return to the question of hunt violence. This is by way of an end of season review of this years campaign and a follow up of the analysis of hunt tactics from HOWL 25. This problem has been clouded over during the last half of the season as our condemnation of fishing was the main topic in the last few editions. Of course, the media did pick up on this so how did we fair in this fishing debate, good or bad? Well I think surprisingly good. After all, when a top angler went on Central Televisions match fishing programme with the R.S.P.C.A. and said "We have to face up to the fact that anglers are responsible for the lead shot that is killing swans" and "We had better do something about it," then it is only because they have something to be ashamed of apart from harming fish.

In the tactics article in HOWL No. 25 I did say that there was the suspicion that "Sabotaging Saboteurs" Shooting Times 28/7/83 by R. Kidd was an incitement to hunts to use violent methods to stop sabs. Not surprisingly this has proved to be the case. Reports from up and down the country tell of attacks on sabs, by hunt thugs, that have been carried out in a very similar manner. Hunt violence is not new, but a nationally coordinated campaign of violence against sabs is. Why is this happening and who is behind it? Well, the two main articles giving hunts advice on what to do about sabs were both printed in Shooting Times. The one mentioned above, which implicitly contains advocation of violence to sabs, and a further article "you, the law and the antis" by, you've guessed it, the B.F.S.S.

This second article is somewhat of a climb down as regards hunt violence as it concentrates, in serious tones, on various legal action the B.F.S.S. think is open to hunts. However, it does put two sticks of dynamite into the hands of fools. The first is in a few paragraphs which give advice on how 'authorised persons' may use force in removing trespassers, – this, of course, we know about. The second gem suggests making 'citizens' arrests for a breach of the peace'. The legality of this is very vague to say the least. It would seem therefore that the 'word' has been put about nationally to try and stop sabs by violent methods and the second B.F.S.S. article is a back down on this position as violent methods do not work and legal demonstration cannot be stopped. Why do the bloodsport society think that these methods can stop sabs even when they never have in the past? The answer to this lays again in the two articles. Apart from advice to hunts there is an analysis of who the sabs "are", "their" motivation and organisation. This hunt theory of saboteurs is fundamentally wrong, but it leads to a belief that uncommitted people can be got rid of by the harassment explicitly and implicitly detailed in the two articles.

Thats enough about the thug side of it, but what do we do? First, full files on hunts must be kept. These must have names, addresses, car numbers, photographs and descriptions etc. of individuals, as well as regular hunting information. Second, if a member of the H.S.A. is assaulted the incident must be reported to the police. If the police show any reluctance to record and act on the incident then you must strictly insist that they do so. The person(s) concerned and the witnesses should stay at the police station until it is recorded. Written complaints should be made to the Chief Constable about individual officers if necessary. In the long run this will make the police act impartially and attend hunts to stop attacks on sabs.

When sabbing under the above conditions vary your sabbing programme so as to become unpredictable to your hunts. This will stop hunts organising heavies in advance or on a regular basis. Large scale demonstrations can also be arranged if necessary. We should see this hunt action for what it really is, i.e. an admission by the B.F.S.S. that our methods do work and we are having a profoundly detrimental effect on bloodsports.

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

The Waterloo Cup 1984



Liverpool Daily Post & Echo

This hare was caught and held for 30 seconds before escaping from the jaws.

This year the Cup, scheduled for the 7th March was moved forward two weeks by coursing officials to avoid the massive protests that had been promised by the Hunt Saboteurs. The wonder this year is not how successful the demonstrations were but that with only four days notice over 300 people cancelled all other commitments and made their way to the flat, peaty coursing fields.

Clearly the change meant that many were unable to travel up, also sadly several of the tactics that were to be employed had to be scrapped. For four days hunt saboteurs gave everything they had in various attempts to prevent coursing beaters bringing hares to the arena of death. We failed because there were too few sabs, police did everything possible to wreck all tactics and they allowed hare coursers complete freedom in their ferocious attacks on hunt saboteurs.

The four-day campaign started on Sunday, 19th February with an ambitious attempt to pre-beat the five-mile coursing area, the day before coursing started. Faced with pick-axe wielding gamekeepers and officials led by Sir Mark Prescot and Ormskirk police who attempted to prevent all sabs crossing seeded fields and used their vehicles to turn back hares through the sab beat lines it is no wonder the idea failed.

All coursing was cancelled on the Monday with a heavy frost that made it too dangerous for the greyounds. This decision was not taken until 12.30 by which time around 150 sabs had attempted to get the area where the hares would be contained by the coursing beaters cleared. Another 100 were waiting to move in from the opposite side. Unfortunately, the frost thawed out on Monday night so that coursing starting on the Tuesday; a prolonged frost would have forced a postponement and an estimated loss of £10,000 to the coursing club. As it was the Cup started late on Tuesday morning and many sabs were unable to stay for the Tuesday. If the coursing had commenced on Monday there would have been sufficient numbers of sabs to seriously delay the coursing programme. By Tuesday sab numbers were down to about 100.

The Tuesday saw repeated attempts to break through the police patrols and get into the v-shaped beaters funnel in which the hares were kept at the top of the Withens coursing arena. Only once were sabs successful, clearing the funnel of most hares. The ITN coverage of the attempt showed the brutality that sabs received from the police. Unfortunately, this was the only time sabs got into the funnel. Sheer exhaustion; insufficient numbers; aggressive, even brutal police handling and perhaps sadly an overall feeling of hopeless frustration ensured that sabs could not get back into the funnel. If they had done the coursing programme would have been well and truly disrupted.

The Wednesday saw the hare-coursing move to the inaccessible Lydiate site by the river Alt. A last desperate attempt was made to break through the funnel by fording the river Alt and bridging Maghull Brook. However, Sir Mark Prescot and other coursing officials had taken the law into their own hands and formed armed vigilante patrol groups. In his own words, from Thursday's Daily Telegraph, Prescot stated "The idea of the patrols was to put a barrier of responsible people between the demonstrators and the spectators. We were delighted at the way it proved successful." The result was a bloodbath that police just sat back and watched. One sab was nearly killed suffering a depressed fractured skull. Edward Coulston from Chorley, Lancashire, a LACS member was attending his first sab. Faced with this outrageous violence the HSA had no option but to cancel any further demonstrations.

Now that the furore has died down there has to be an inquiry into the policing of the four-day demonstration. A lot of questions need to be answered. What were the police doing permitting hare-coursers to form patrol or guard groups? Why did they allow hare-coursers to go around with staves, iron bars and pick-axe handles? Why did the police refuse to act on countless attacks on sabs some directly in front of policepersons? Why did the police refuse to call an ambulance for the seriously injured Eddie Coulston despite pleas from two qualified nurses? What happened on Wednesday afternoon, happened because police allowed it. We cannot allow the police to get away with what happened on those four days. An in-depth complaint is being submitted through the Manchester Solicitor Rhys Vaughn to the Lancashire Chief Constable, Mr. Brian Johnson, including approximately 30 statements and supporting film evidence.



The injured Eddie Coulson

So was it worth it? Tactically, the HSA was out-manoeuvred for reasons already mentioned. With only four days notice of the change of date it may have been logical to cancel all the demonstrations. But if nothing else the publicity HSA direct action generated was enormous on both national and local television and radio. Lastly by moving the event forward two weeks, the hare coursing fraternity were admitting that the HSA could well have completely disrupted the whole event given the massive support that had been promised; but they also duped their own supporters. This year there were barely half the usual crowd of supporters present. By their reckoning Altcar Coursing Club stood to lose approximately £2,500 per day in lost ticket and programme money, on top of the minimum police bill of £3000 they have to meet. Financially next year the club could well be in serious trouble.



The long blue line! How much did the police security service cost Altcar Coursing Club.

M. Nunn

Following the Cup the HSA has opened up two appeals;

A) For Eddie Coulston's family. All cheques/P.O.s made payable to **Eddie Coulston Appeal Fund,** to be sent to HSA., P.O. Box 19.

B) Towards the legal costs and fines that 28 hunt saboteurs now face in the ensuing court cases in March and April. Cheques/P.O.s made payable to HSA but mark envelopes "Waterloo Cup 1984 Appeal".

Lastly, consider what happened on Monday afternoon. Firstly a group of coursing supporters attacked a small group of their own beaters carrying blue flags, mistaking them for hunt saboteurs. Police had to break up the brawl. Secondly at 4.30 p.m. a brawl broke out on the pub car park of the Scarisbrick Arms, Downholland between two rival groups of coursers from Lancaster and Cheshire. They inflicted horrendous injuries on each other and since then one hare courser has died. Just what kind of beings are they? The police must have known what sort of people they were dealing with. Those four days coupled with the escalation of violence on hunts all over the country must prompt the ultimate question: where does the future of hunt sabotage lie?

D. P. Callender

WATERLOO CUP COURSING COURT CASES 1984

There were 28 arrests over the 4 days of demonstrations against hare coursing. By 31 March 17 cases had been heard at Ormskirk Magistrates, Lancashire of which the HSA has won 13. All the charges so far heard have been obstruction and criminal damage to farmers' fields. One trial of 10 hunt saboteurs lasted two days, at a cost of over £2000 and after retiring for 3½ hours, magistrates dismissed all ten cases of criminal damage to winter wheat after sabs allegedly crossed a farmers field. With sabs, approx. 20 hare coursers, 4 police horses, 30 police persons and a police land-rover in the same field, prosecution evidence could not prove who did what damage, if indeed any was done! The police estimate of damage was £2 per person! Can you think of a better way to waste court time and public money? All arrests were for ridiculous and trivial matters, some sabs spent many, many hours in police cells and all because hunt saboteurs stuck to a fundamental moral principle that saving life is not a crime. Lastly all sabs found guilty are appealing to Crown Court against conviction at the magistrates court.

To end on a cheerful note the injured sab Eddie Coulston is now making a slow but gradual recovery. After two weeks in Walton Hospital Neurological Unit Eddie was allowed home where his wife and children were able to care for him although he still has to make regular checks at hospital. He will be off work for months to come and both he and his wife have shown incredible bravery in the slow recovery from those appalling injuries sustained in the attack.

HSA LEGAL FILE

FUNNY HAND-SHAKES BRIGADE BEGIN TO SURFACE?

It is always easy to talk of conspiracies. It is another matter to prove them. We have seen in recent weeks just such a situation arise, with the miners stating that the police hierarchy and the government are working together to break the miners strike. The police have vigorously denied this, whilst the government can afford to remain silent. The mass of police mobilized to deal with this strike (the biggest police action of its kind known so far) suggests there is no smoke without fire. Are we about to witness the same kind of overkill being applied to the anti-hunt movement, and if so, why? Recent disclosures have shown that perhaps up to ⅔ of the country's chief constables are members of the Masonic Order. The high proportion of senior police officers in the Masons was hitherto unknown. However, it has always been known that the masons include within their ranks many who hold positions of authority or power within our society. It goes without saying that some of these will be the same who take pleasure in a day out with the hunt or blasting pheasants out of the skies. Is it possible that the police have been instructed to bring greater weight to bear against hunt sabotage by way of this group of loonies? Obviously it is not possible to answer this question directly, but it is possible to look at police action to see in which direction it is moving. Many people who take part in hunt sabotage will also be familiar with other animal rights movements and their targets. Recent demonstrations at vivisection laboratories and factory farming establishments have been noted for their excessive police presence. At the Carshalton laboratories last year, SPG groups were in evidence and police truncheons were coated with a substance, presumably intended to mark demonstrators who could then be picked out later. Even more common place is the filming of such demos by the police and the infiltration of plain clothes officers into the march or demo. On the sabbing front, the Hertfordshire constabulary arrested 60 sabs in one operation at a Beagle meet in February of this year, originally charging them with criminal damage (ie, trampling on the fields). A huge police operation was also in evidence at the Waterloo Cup, where, surprise surprise, criminal damage again appeared as a charge. In other words, simply being on a field in order to assist a hunted animal can now constitute criminal damage. The fact that the police have subsequently dropped criminal damage in these cases and substituted alternative charges proves that even the police have no confidence in the validity of this charge. This makes it very important that no HSA member should admit to such a charge of criminal damage prior to appearance in court. Any member charged with this offence in the future whilst on a sab should contact the emergency HSA legal telephone No on: 0705 699698, and write immediately to the HSA legal office.

It is worth remembering that any action on the streets in the assistance of the defenceless would be welcomed. The concept that wild animals should be entitled to protection is at last beginning to take root. Some legislative moves against hunting are possible in the not too distant future and this trend should be reflected by a scaling down of police involvement against animal activists, rather than the reverse. Perhaps the latest moves indicate a failure on the part of the BFSS to defend hunting despite its large resources. If this is the case then the hunting big wigs are in for another disappointment. A new fervour and determination is apparent in the Animal Rights Movement and this is being coupled with greater public support. The membership of the HSA is now so widespread over the country that a large number of different hunts can be sabbed on any one day. Unlike a demonstration which has a fixed target, hunt sabotage is now so flexible that more than one hunt can be sabotaged by a single group during one day. The logistics of defending hunting, certainly by police tactics, are insurmountable. For as long as hunting continues, the sabs will find a way to assist the hunted. The gathering numbers of people who are prepared to go out and sab hunts will prove to the hunters that there is indeed no rest for the wicked.

We take the opportunity of repeating the appeal in the last issue of HOWL that each HSA group appoint a legal officer. If we are going to be subjected to an increase in police action then the defences must be organised now. Assistance on these matters and on any legal issues is available from the Legal Officer, HSA, c/o PO Box 19, LONDON SE22.

MINKHUNTING AND THE THREAT TO OTTERS

Otter Hunting as a fieldsport ended in 1978 when the otter was added to Schedule I of the Conservation of Wild Creatures and Wild Plants Act (1975), the nine remaining otter hunts either ceased all activities or turned to the hunting of mink along the same waterways as their traditional otter-hunting activities were carried out. Although the otter-hunts could not be blamed for the sudden decline of Britain's otter population in the late 1950's which has been attributed to the widespread use of organochlorine pesticides such as D.D.T. and dieldrin, the continued disturbance caused by hunts seriously endangered the recovery possibilities of the few remaining otters.

Since 1978 the number of mink-hunts operating on the British mainland has increased to 18, four of which hunt in the south-west of England: these are the Devon and Cornwall Minkhounds, the Pynes Minkhunt, the Culmstock Minkhunt and the Ytene Minkhunt. It is in the region covered by these minkhunts, however, that the otter holds out the largest concentration of their species in the entire south of England. The population, however, is at risk from many varying factors, including pollution of waterways by industry and farm waste, human disturbance whether by anglers, holiday makers, walkers, casual naturalists or boating enthusiasts and habitat disturbance by Water Authorities, Angling Clubs and farmers. The additional element of the minkhunt, complete with a pack of hounds, between 50 and 100 followers and the noise, disturbance and damage caused to the confined river-side habitat we believe may well be the final straw for the otter in the south-west.

The Otter in the South-West of England

Otter distribution in the south-west of the country is difficult to assess and for obvious reasons is not made public; nevertheless, in the area covered by the Devon and Cornwall Minkhounds otters are most numerous in North Devon and Cornwall and less numerous in South Devon. In these areas the Rivers Camel, Tamar, Okement, Taw and Torridge are known to support small populations of otters; elsewhere the Rivers Culm, Dart, Yealm and Teign and their tributaries either support occasional resident otters or are close to areas where otters are found and from which they would be expected to spread outwards as the population increases. All these rivers were hunted by the Devon and Cornwall Minkhounds during 1981, 1982 and 1983 and will no doubt be hunted during the course of the 1984 minkhunting season.

Otters often have very large territories, sometimes as much as 50 miles square, these they patrol regularly although within these larger areas an individual otter will have several preferred territories in which they will spend much time and earn most of their living. It is in one of these areas, within her territory that the bitch otter will give birth to her young. Otters do not seem to have a specific season for breeding but about half the recorded births of young otters occur within the minkhunting season.

Minkhunts and Disturbance of Otters

Prior to the sudden decline of the British otter population in the late 1950's, it would be fair to say that otter-hunting alone posed little or no threat to the survival of the otter as a species in Britain, although as far as individual otters are concerned hunting was both cruel and totally unjustified; following that decline, however, the continued hunting of otters became a serious threat to the remaining and usually isolated otters.

Those Otter-hunts which continued to hunt during the 1960's and 1970's, did so in those few areas where otters could still be found, in other words the Hunts concentrated their activities in small areas harrying continuously the few remaining otters in their regions and thereby enhancing the retreat of otters in their countries. Formerly, of course, the Hunts distributed their efforts fairly evenly across their whole range and thus their effects on otter movements were minimized.

Today minkhunts pursue their new quarry along the same rivers as the otter hunts used in the recent past; the disturbance they cause cannot fail to have some impact on the few remaining otters in their countries.

An endangered species (and the otter is undoubtedly one) very often retreats into the most isolated parts of the countryside away from human disturbance of any kind; in the case of the otter such areas cannot support large or growing populations and being isolated the chances of otters from different areas meeting in order to mate are greatly reduced. The effects of minkhunts operating along those rivers where otters are still found or which otters visit in the course of their wanderings are to drive the otters into yet less favourable areas and to cause a consequent contraction in the population and a reduction in the annual breeding success of the surviving otters.

The fact that otters can be found on those rivers hunted by the Devon and Cornwall Minkhounds is confirmed by the following quotation taken from the Shooting Times and Country Magazine 27th August 1981:

> "it is a sad fact that the Devon and Cornwall Mink Hounds have found evidence of only two otters on their rivers this year."

Further enquiries made to the master of this hunt Mr. Arlin Rickard revealed that the first piece of evidence was the discovery of a bitch otter with her young on one river and the second piece were signs of, probably, a dog (male) otter on another river. In both cases the evidence was discovered before a hunting fixture was arranged for these rivers and according to the Master hunting was not carried out on these rivers throughout the minkhunting season. Nevertheless, since the first mink from Dartmoor were known to be in residence by 1957 (Ian Linn, Dept. of Biology, Exeter University) the fact that the Dartmoor Otter Hunt (now the D & C.M.H.) did not note their existence on the moor until 1968 would indicate that relying on the minkhunters to spot evidence of otters in their country before they hunt would be foolish. Hearsay evidence has indicated that on at least one occasion during the 1982 minkhunting season an otter was seen in front of the hounds of the Devon and Cornwall Mink Hunt.

To restate our main point, we think that the chances of minkhounds being allowed to kill an otter by their huntsman is fairly unlikely, however, disturbance in an otter's territory by a minkhunt is probably as detrimental to the continued survival of Otters in Devon and Cornwall as an accidental kill of an otter.

To support this contention we would like to draw your attention to the following quotations from Peter J. Neville Havin's book "The Otter in Britain".

The otter was pushed "into retreat from some of its best areas of natural habitat. To some extent it would seem that the Hunts, inadvertently perhaps, actually abetted that retreat, simply because the activities of *any* hunt naturally constituted the most dangerous form of habitat-disturbance. Even if an otter was not found, or if one was found and subsequently escaped that stretch of water over which the hounds had been active was virtually to be avoided as "otter country" for a least a year . . . the activities of the Hunts almost certainly only assisted in dispersing the otter populations still further".

"Driven by hunting from their most favourable environments otters had obviously to seek less favourable ones where the available food-supply was not able to support a large population.".

"as mink occupy virtually the same habitat as the otter, the Mink-Hunts are likely to cause them just as much, if not more disturbance as the Otter Hunts did in the past."

It would be unfair to suggest that mink-hunts are the only threat to the continued survival of the otter in Britain: at least equal damage could be caused by the growing army of anglers. Habitat destruction carried out under the auspices of Water Authorities and angling clubs continues to erode bankside cover for otters while agricultural "improvements" such as land drainage and ditch dredging poses a major threat to otters in such areas as the Somerset levels. Nevertheless, minkhunting for sport poses the most selfish, shortsighted and useless form of

disturbance and should be abolished.

Otter Havens and Otter Conservation

Recognising the threats to the otter from various sources the Fauna Preservation Society and the Vincent Wildlife Trust began an otter-haven programme in 1977. Landowners, Water Authorities and Waterway users were approached to help provide facilities to encourage otters to re-establish themselves. The otter-havens are the result, these are areas where the bodies responsible for the land (farmers etc.) have promised to keep disturbance at a minimum. The locations of these are for obvious reasons kept secret but it is known that North Devon and Cornwall have a fairly large number of such havens.

In several parts of the country the project has reached agreement with individual minkhunts not to hunt on rivers where otters occur. In the case of the Devon and Cornwall Mink Hunt this agreement disallows hunting on, near or between otter-havens.

We know, however, that there is at least one otter haven on the River Torridge and another on a tributary of the River Tamar; both of these rivers are regularly hunted by the Devon and Cornwall Mink Hunt and in view of the travelling habits of the otter we cannot believe that mink-hunts never disturb otters on these rivers or others with similar situations.

The Devon and Cornwall Minkhunt

The Devon and Cornwall Minkhunt (formerly the Dartmoor Otter Hunt) claims to have a great deal of concern for the otter and conservation in general: it likes to suggest that it is offering a good pest control service, for free, by killing mink in Devon and Cornwall. It is claimed by them that not only are they keeping away from Otter Havens but that they are also giving positive assistance to otter conservationists by noting, while actually hunting, all the places where otters are likely to be able to live and are logging all the sites of possible holts (or holes under tree roots and in banks where otters might make a home).

Such assistance may well be useful, however, the Otter Haven project has its own people who could do this, but anyway the little good that hunts may do is completely outweighed by the disturbance factor in hunting.

Much of the country traditionally hunted by the Dartmoor Otter Hunt still holds otters. It has been suggested that there is a small possibility that the otter population is increasing and if this is so it is inevitable that otters will start dispersing from these unhunted areas to other parts of Devon and Cornwall where minkhunting is not in any way restricted. It is in this event that the minkhunts will threaten the success of any recolonisation of the otter in the south-west of England and we call upon the Devon and Cornwall Mink Hunt to cease its activities in the interests of otter conservation.

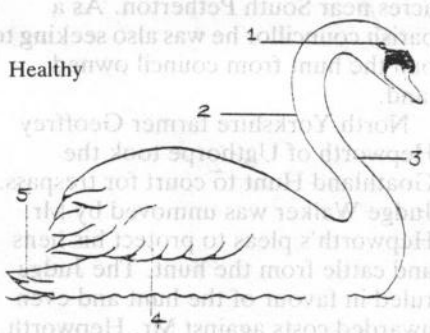
Ralph Cook

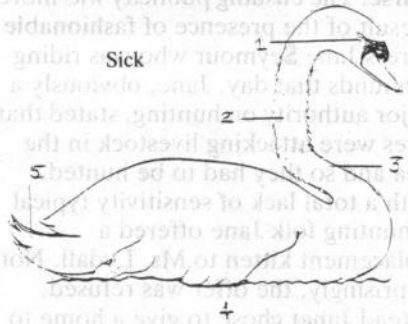
YOU CAN HELP SAVE BRITAINS SWANS

Every year over 3500 mute swans die, poisoned by fishermens lead split shot. Below are two pictures of swans and two lists so you can spot the difference between healthy birds and poisoned ones. If you see a swan with any of these symptoms or a swan in any trouble what so ever, ring the NATIONAL ANIMAL RESCUE ASSOCIATION on (0604) 44797, we will either come ourselves or put you in touch with a Swan Rescue Unit in your area. Help us to help them before it's too late.

R. S. Garfield. N.A.R.A.

Key differences between healthy and sick, lead poisoned swans.





Healthy

1 Eye
Bright and alert
2 Neck
Sleek feathers
3 Neck
Usual graceful curve or held straight
4 Wings
Held up and close to body
5 Tail
Straight out behind
Other Points
6 Feeding
Feeds readily

Sick

1 Eye
Narrow, sleepy looking
2 Neck
Feathers appear fluffy
3 Neck
Marked kink – begins at base of neck – as condition deteriorates, neck rests on back
4 Wings
Begin to droop down sides of body
5 Tail
Begins to curve upwards
6 Feeding
In early stages may still feed, but eventually stops. Drinks incessantly.
Becomes isolated from other swans & may gape continuously – opening & closing beak.
Constant head shaking. On land, becomes weak on legs.
Watery green or black motions.

COCKSPARROW UNDER SIEGE

After a demo some months previously and a highly successful ALF raid, Cocksparrow Farm in Warwickshire was the scene of another national protest in January.

2,000 people converged on the farm which breeds Arctic Blue foxes for their fur. Demonstrators were greeted by a phenomenal police presence complete with Orwellian surveillance camera and the West Midlands Police Light Cavalry.

An initial attempt to break the police cordon failed when mounted police drove protestors back across a grass field. Later however, a second attempt was made from the public footpath running adjacent to the fox pens which were covered so as not to enflame the protesters' anger. The police line threatened to break and so the mounties charged a second time, this time straight into the crowd. One protester was thrown into the mud and handcuffed and one policeman was thrown from his horse in the ensuing chaos.

25 arrests were made and further actions are planned.

ON THE BADGER BEAT



London Policeman Harry Dell is asking his colleagues to give up some of their spare time to go on badger protection duty. He is hoping to organise a force of police and civilians to combat badger baiters in the Metropolitan and Essex police areas.

oc Hunt Havoc Hunt Havoc Hunt

Now the fox and hare hunting season has drawn to a close hunters can look back upon a successful period of killing cats, trespassing and upsetting farmers – just like usual.

Cat Deaths

Extensive national publicity followed the killing of a cat by the Avon Vale Fox Hunt right under the nose of its distraught teenage owner, Janet Lydall. Nothing unusual in that of course. The ensuing publicity was more a result of the presence of fashionable actress Jane Seymour who was riding to hounds that day. Jane, obviously a major authority on hunting, stated that foxes were attacking livestock in the area and so they had to be hunted. With a total lack of sensitivity typical of hunting folk Jane offered a replacement kitten to Ms. Lydall. Not surprisingly, the offer was refused, instead Janet chose to give a home to an unwanted kitten.

Pet cats seem to be a popular quarry of the East Essex Fox Hunt. 15-year old Andrew Cowlin of White Colne watched in horror as his neighbour's cat was torn to pieces in his garden. David Nott, Joint Master, said he would try and stop the hounds from trespassing in future but could not guarantee it. Six weeks later they killed again. This time a 12-year old deaf cat called Whiskey, who did not hear her owner call her into the house when the hunt came by. It seems that poor Mr. Nott spends a good deal of his time apologising to irate land owners. The previous season his hunt was fined £250 including £50 towards the cost of damaged crops belonging to William McMaster of Bures.

Other cats to have died as a result of fox hunts include one belonging to a couple in their late seventies which was savaged by the Worcester Hunt. Even bloodsportsmen aren't spared having their pets killed. Hunt Master Bernard Bartlett's cat was *killed by his own hounds* at his Devon home.

Farmers abused

Whilst hunters often claim widespread support from farmers, there are many who are sick to death of the casual way in which hunts disregard other people's property. James McGregor claims to have asked the Cambridgeshire Hunt to stop running across his land on at least twenty occasions but to no avail. He says the hunt aggravates the spread of cereal disease which costs him £2,500 a year to control. Whilst not anti-bloodsports he was "concerned about the attitude of those who practised it. They do not seem in the least bit worried about the fact that they are trespassing. They seem to think they have the right to do so". Meanwhile John Mastrangelo, a Farmer from Horton, claims that the Duke of Beaufort's Hunt smashed down a fence, tore up land and mocked his efforts to stop them; he was fed up with being treated like a serf. Another farmer, Roy Stroud, has banned the Seavington Hunt from 100 acres near South Petherton. As a parish councillor he was also seeking to ban the hunt from council owned land.

North Yorkshire farmer Geoffrey Hepworth of Ugthorpe took the Goathland Hunt to court for trespass. Judge Walker was unmoved by Mr. Hepworth's pleas to protect his hens and cattle from the hunt. The Judge ruled in favour of the hunt and even awarded costs against Mr. Hepworth. This was in spite of the fact that his cows had been caused to miscarry because of the hunt's antics. After all, said the Judge, the only wish of the Master, Major Richard Dangar "is to give a good day's hunting". Incidentally it is not known for certain if this is the same Judge Walker who is also a keen shootin' fishin' man.

A Swansea Valley farmer was forced to shoot a foxhound belonging to the Banwen Miners Hunt when hounds broke into his farmyard and chased his small children and livestock.

A Farmer Emo shot and injured seven fox hounds which terrified his sheep during lambing time at Mawgan, Cornwall. He waited a full half hour before resorting to his shotgun in the hope that the dogs would leave his sheep. Eventually, when it was obvious that the hunt had lost control of its hounds Mr. Emo felt compelled to act.

Hounds of the Cotswold Vale attacked sheep on farmland near Littledean. The farmer claimed that one ewe later gave birth to a still born lamb.

Staghunt atrocities

Those particularly unpleasant characters, the stag hunters of South West England, have predictably been involved in some of the season's worst cruelties. In one case a Tiverton Stag Hunt marksman shot a stag which then thrashed about in agony for a full five minutes. Even some hunt supporters were driven by disgust to speak out in protest to the press.

In another incident Mr. Tony Smith, a Tiverton Stag Hunt follower, was so upset that he decided to join the League Against Cruel Sports. He witnessed hounds attacking a deer for four or five minutes, the unfortunate animal having its throat ripped to shreds before a marksman arrived.

The exploits of the Quantocks Stag Hunt have often featured in 'HOWL'. Recently they chased a stag onto private land at Holford, chewing up a new lawn. The Hunt refused to withdraw the hounds and so neighbours went to the stag's rescue. The hunt still hung around hoping they could resume the chase when the stag left the neighbourhood. Later the hunt agreed to pay £75 for the damage caused. The villagers of Holford must surely be some of the longest suffering victims of hunters (apart from the quarry) anywhere in the country.

The Devon and Somerset Stag Hunt was "sorry" for killing a stag in front of the vicar's house in Porlock while the Reverend's children played in the garden. Another Porlock resident claimed the villagers were incensed at the persistently disgusting behaviour of the hunt. Presumably worried that they might not get to heaven, hunters claimed that the stag may have caused some damage in Porlock cemetery. Poor Porlock residents are almost as long suffering as those of Holford. In another incident a stag was killed in a children's playground. It tried to jump to safety but four men grabbed it by the hooves and dragged it back for the hounds. Master Walner Robins said the stag died "in the usual way".

Back again to the East Essex F.H. who, tired of cats moved on to deer. Local businessman Harry Partridge watched hounds chase a young deer into a wood at Colne Engaine. No Huntsman was in sight, and when he finally found the hunt and asked why the hounds were chasing deer, they replied, "Because there are no bloody foxes!"

Fox killed outside school

The Worcester Fox Hunt pulled a fox limb from limb in front of a class of emotionally disturbed schoolgirls. This left some of the children hysterical and sobbing. Pupils and staff including the Headmaster signed a petition calling for an end to hunting in the area. In a classic piece of soft-soaping a local BFSS big-wig suggested the girls visit a hunt kennels to hear what a wonderful job the hunt does in keeping down vermin. The hunt master predictably claimed the alleged kill didn't take place, although the school's

Havoc Hunt

headmaster was adamant that it did.

A Suffolk County Councillor Sqd. Ldr. John Bloomfield was angered that the Essex & Suffolk Hunt continue to kill foxes on Broomhill Nature Reserve even though all other animals are protected there. Unfortunately, the previous owner of the land was a bloodsportsman and made sure that the council agreed to allow hunting to continue before he signed it over to them.

The Holcombe Hunt brought pandemonium to Horwich Moor, Lancashire. Ponies belonging to villagers were frightened and residents nearly came to blows as the hunters pompously exercised their right to trespass.

Days after local children had cleared up their village in preparation for a visit by Father Christmas the Kildare Hunt rode through Ballytore leaving a filthy mess. Horses left their own special type of Christmas presents piled up in the streets which must have greatly offended Santa's sensitive nostrils when he arrived later in the week.

Hounds killed

Beagles have regularly been killed on roads and railways. Every sab knows how easily hare hounds become separated from hunters, and it is perhaps surprising that more dogs are not killed. On Boxing Day eight hounds of the Brighton and Storrington Hunt in Sussex were electrocuted on a live railway line. On the same day six of the Blean Beagles were killed on a railway line near Seasalter Marshes. Unbelievably the Master, Betty McKeaver, blamed the railway authorities. British Rail were not too impressed as the power to the lines had to be switched off for ninety minutes while the remains of the dogs were collected.

Mrs. McKeaver did admit, however, that her hounds run blindly across the busy A2 road and get hit by cars, "when they get the scent they just cannot be stopped", she remarked.

Two of the Essex and Suffolk Hunt hounds were killed by an express train at Marks Tey. The Master admitted that hounds had been killed on roads by cars in previous seasons. (The hunt were not, of course, prosecuted by B.R.).

Sometimes hunters seem to have virtually no knowledge of what their hounds are up to. The East Sussex and Romney Marsh Fox Hunt rampaged through gardens in Brede but master Trevor Adams said "as far as I know we were not near Brede that day".

THE WORCESTERSHIRE HUNTS ARTIFICIAL FOX EARTH

These two photographs show a typical construction of a modern artificial fox earth.



This one, built comparatively recently, is located in Worcestershire hunting country on a bank overlooking the river Salwarpe, near Droitwich. The hunt used bricks for its walls and a removable concrete slab for the roof. Access (for the terrier men) is by simple removal of a layer of turf which is prevented from knitting with the surrounding soil by use of plastic sheets. The concrete slab is then lifted.



Access for foxes is by two long lengths of pipes that break ground, one on the left and one on the right, of the artificial earth lower down the bank.

At each pipe entrance is stationed metal grids and bricks for blocking purposes. The whole bank is covered with Hawthorn and is also used as a shoot.

Earth Worm

Continued from back page

suspend all their remaining Meets of the season for fear of a repetition of the incident. Predictably the hunt would not publicly admit responsibility for the death of the doe, and thus began a steady stream of accusations, largely based on suggestion and innuendo, attempting to discredit both the saboteurs, who they blamed for the incident, and the video recording itself.

For our part we were unaware of any of the "strange smells" apparently recalled by hunt supporters on the days following the kill, and the suggestion in "Shooting Times" that a saboteur was seen running behind the pack, laying a drag, is entirely refuted by the evidence of the video tape. He is clearly heard shouting repeatedly, "Leave it!" Thus Mr Taylors claim that saboteurs did nothing to intervene in the chase is quite inaccurate.

credibility of the video itself. During the interval between the chase and discovery of the kill, we had checked the white balance of the camera. This involves placing a transleucent white cover over the lens, then adjusting the camera to the temperature of the light. If the camera is still running, as it was, sound continues to be recorded. I imagine it would be obvious to most people that if one did not wish to record a particular event, one would simply turn the camera off - but not to some hunt supporters. Covering the lens up to them, indicated the concealment of some mysterious and devious act.

All the claims of drags being laid, strange smells etc., come directly from the hunt and have yet to be substantiated by any independant evidence. True, I am a former committee member of the H.S.A., and therefore partisan on the general principle of hunting live quarry. My colleague on the day however, has no particular view on the subject, and had previously never seen a hunt in action. He normally lectures in film studies, as well as being a fellow member of the film and video co-operative to which I belong. Needless to say, both he and I are extremely angry at the slanderous accusations that followed the incident. We jointly wrote to, 'Horse and Hound', 'Shooting Times' and 'The Field', making them aware of the facts of the case, but only 'The Field' had the courtesy to print the letter.

Malcolm Leick
Member of the Independent Film-Makers Association

GROUP NEWS

Many sab events do not appear in HOWL because groups do not submit **any** news reports. Not only does 'Group News' publicise your own groups efforts but also helps and encourages others.

For those who do send contributions, please send them frequently so that material does not become dated.

SOUTH-EAST

Brighton and Worthing HSA together with sabs from **Haywards Heath, Crawley** and **Horsham**, have concentrated their efforts on the Crawley and Horsham FH and the Chiddingfold, Leconfield and Cowdray FH. However, they have also hit the Brighton and Storrington Beagles. The group hit their New Year meet at Ashington in West Sussex in appalling conditions of wind, rain, and sub-zero temperatures. Sabs stuck bravely with the hunt throughout the day and used their voices to distract the hounds.

The hunt was well supported and there was a public school/weirdo/ rugger type who insisted on rugby tackling everyone. Luckily the ground was soft so the process was quite painless. In addition, he kept up a constant stream of verbal diarrhoea concerning his favourite subject - himself. Every topic imaginable was covered (yes, including that) and was related in some way to his major thrill in life - rugby. He even offered one sab £100 if he would streak across the turf at Twickenham during an all-girls hockey match (strange man). No kills were made and the old-Etonian finally desisted from rugby tackling when one sab (a martial arts expert) got him to the ground in a hold which although indescribable is believed to be of Japanese origin. The group would like their tremendous admiration for Trevor to be known - he's only a little sab and he got totally drenched, ah!

The final meet of the Chiddingfold, Leconfield and Cowdray Foxhunt was attend by fifty Police intent on protecting the hunt from the handful of sabs present. There were even two mounted officers. The hunt scuttled off many miles into an inpenetrable section of the South Downs hills, losing all its supporters and most of the sabs. The terrier men and their chums got fed up with looking for the hunt and so threatened and jostled a sab instead. This apparently had the blessing of at least one police sergeant. The attitude of the police was typical of what is expected in the Petworth area and was in marked contrast to the unbiased attitude of officers from some other areas of Sussex.

Previous meets of the Chiddingfold had been characterised by the hunt losing most of its supporters (sometimes including the terrier men); on one occasion this seemed deliberate in order to prevent a massive convoy of car supporters holding up the hunt and perhaps heading off the quarry.

NORTH-WEST

Are you looking for excitement and prepared to risk life and limb? Then if so the **East Cheshire HSA** could be the group for you. It has been active most weeks despite levels of aggro which at times have made sabbing impossible.

After a mixed Boxing Day hit, sab affairs were better co-ordinated on 31 December at



Look at the size of that truncheon!

a meet of the Cheshire Forest FH at Henbury Hall, near Macclesfield. After pre-beating, 12 very nervous sabs drove to the meet in a battered (glaringly sab-like) Bedford. A sigh of relief was plainly audible when it was realised that there were no heavies in sight. They were probably laid out after gorging themselves on dead turkey so as to cultivate that familiar 'polt-bellied' look so revered amongst hunt slobs.

The group decided however, to stick to the agreed plan of hit and run tactics (just in case). This tactic was used until 1 o'clock when a mere technicality prevented further sabbing - the van caught fire! Garlic sprays made up for the lack of a fire extinguisher. The van limped back to Macclesfield at an impressive 10mph and 5 sabs returned in a Mini to finish off a successful and unforgetable day in which no kills were recorded.

One would have expected that the group's luck would have improved after this but no, an attempted sab of the Cheshire Forest FH in the New Year had to be aborted owing to slightly uneven odds - 3 sabs versus 200

'DOGS ON LEAD', except Hounds of course



supporters. Unable to find the rest of their colleagues, the trio made off for the Royal Rock Beagles only to find that the meet had been called off! Meanwhile, the other sabs decided to hit the Cheshire Forest and managed to last an amazing 45 minutes before being forced into a tactical retreat.

The following week the group joined up with sabs from **Sheffield** and **Doncaster** to hit one of the most paranoid hunts in the country - the Badsworth FH. On the way there, sabs came across a shooting party and sabbed it from the road using anything which made a noise, and which one sab, who shall remain nameless, interpreted as including 'letting off wind'. As usual, the Badsworth was effectively sabbed despite releasing its once-a-week bagged fox, when things get desperate.

The group often pre-meets and has become accustomed to such eloquent and passionate phrases from landowners as "Get off my !**!ing land!"

Violence reared its ugly head again at another sab of the Cheshire FH. Redcoats and heavies tried to get sabs out of their cars and a car from Liverpool was dented and had its windscreen smashed by a psycho with a horse between his legs. Two headcases in a Landrover pursued sabs at the Cheshire Forest FH meet at Lower Peover. On one occasion they chased sabs across a field so that sabs had to leap into their sabmobile while it was being chased by a red sports car and being blocked in at the same time by another Landrover.

In the last 3 months **Merseyside HSA** have been out each week as usual concentrating on the Holcombe Harriers and Cheshire Forest Foxhounds, with mixed success. Hunt violence has always been around the corner. Whilst unblocking earths at a Cheshire Forest meet near Knutsford, two sabs were thrown into a river after a kicking. As usual police refused to act. On a sab of the Cheshire Foxhounds near Cholmondeley Castle, when they had their windscreen smashed after twice calling hounds off the line of the hunted fox.

Groups have had real trouble in getting fixtures this season; only one hunt out of eight advertises and gives meets out over the phone. Other groups in the north-west have been very active. **Macclesfield** and **Altrincham** groups have been concentrating on the Cheshire Forest and North Staffordshire Beagles who have now gone underground after only four excellent sabs on them. On two occasions hounds never left the hound-van! New groups have started at Winsford cheshire and **Leek** Staffs. The **Crewe** HSA group once again organised a large and noisy demonstration at the Cheshire Foxhounds Farmers Hunt Ball at the end of January at Nantwich Civic Hall. Local police had to whisk guests in through a barrage of jeers, jostles and spits. Wonder if they'll come next year? Groups at **Keele University, Stoke-on-Trent,** and **Wigan** have also been out on several joint hits on packs in the region.

SOUTH-WEST

Exeter University HSA has concentrated mainly on the East Devon FH and hits have generally been encouraging despite increasing violence. On one occasion a sab narrowly escaped serious injury after being ridden down and trampled on by a rider. On hunts which are not hit regularly the general reaction is to 'leg it' resulting in supporters wandering aimlessly about the countryside and sparodic hunting.

Sabs at a dig-out which are usually a safe bet for a punch-up were surprised to find how

easy it was for them to occupy the holes. Rather than wade in with their fists and shovels, hunters and heavies alike were evidently bemused, but promised to show sabs how to kill 'properly'. To the sabs relief they found nothing. After splashing out to go to the Waterloo Cup (you know, 5-star hotels, luxury coach, new underwear etc.) the group found itself bit short of readies and so was forced into inactivity (armchair sabbing) at the end of the season though members linked up with the **Bath, Bristol and Melksham HSA** groups.

Sabs from these groups combined to hit the Quantock Staghounds on their first meet of the New Year. A potent mixture of effectively flushing woods and heavy rain caused the hunt to pack up by 1 o'clock. The following week sabs hit the Avon Vale FH and encountered somethig of a rarity - a sympathetic policeman who was a farmer and hated the hunt. At the meet sabs mingled with supporters and patted the hounds with anti-mate. However, on returning to their sab-mobile they found that it had a flat tyre (mighty suspicious.) Although police dismissed the incident they very obligingly told the sabs where the hunt was likely to be.

South Devon HSA and **Plymouth HSA** joined forces to hit the Modbury Harriers at Brixton. Sabs made the hunt very nervous and it summoned a couple of policemen who chatted to sabs for a while and then went home! Around lunch time the hunt made a run for it in an attempt to shake the sabs off and consequently the hunt was lost until mid-afternoon. Hounds chased a fox towards a quarry, and believing that the fox had gone to ground it called in the 'beer gut and shovel brigade'. The fox meanwhile had not gone to ground (they're clever these foxes) and had slipped away. Later, sabs gave hunters a lecture on the dangers of hunting the quarry near the quarry (groan) and foot followers allowed their children to throw stones into the quarry oblivious to the quarrymen working below!

The **Devon Animal Rights Group, Exeter University Sabs** and **South Devon HSA** have continued their joint-hits against hunts in Devon. In January the East Devon FH were the target and during the course of the sab - during which a deer and a fox were saved - a sab was horsewhipped by the huntsman. Afterwards the huntsman was most apologetic and invited the sabs to come and "whoop" at his hounds as much as they liked.

Two members of **South Devon HSA** carried out a successful sab against the South Devon FH in January. One sab was pinned to the ground by three heavies and mugged - being robbed of his antimate, a pencil and paper. At that moment, Joint-Master P. H. Ripman - a well-known London barrister - rode up and the heavies released the sab, who demanded the return of his property and threatened legal action if he was refused. Ripman ordered the return of the antimate. The pencil could not be found so Ripman gave the sab 50 pence in compensation - he had to borrow 10 pence from a fellow hunter!

Devon Animal Rights have also been guarding the famous Spitchwick Badger Sett against the Ministry of Agriculture and lobbying local MP's for a ban on hare coursing.

WEST MIDLANDS

The Albrighton Woodland FH, a favourite target of **Wolverhampton HSA,** has been having a bit of bad luck recently. The building used by the Hunt Supporters Club has mysteriously burnt down. Also, one of their huntsmen, Simon Robinson appeared in court charged with stealing drainpipes (for use on sabs no doubt). As a result, the hunt has become very secretive.

Another hunt regularly sabbed by the group is the Albrighton FH which has sacked one of its terrier men for releasing a bagged fox on a hunt. The Master happened to notice straw on the fox when it was killed. He put two and two together and deduced what had happened - elementary my dear Watson!

SOUTH CENTRAL

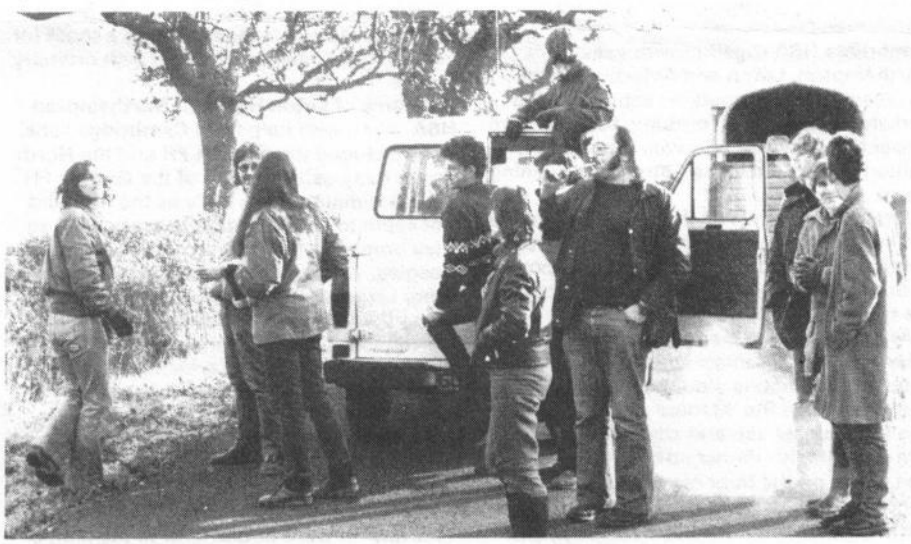
Sabs from the **New Forest HSA** were present the day the New Forest FH killed a deer. (See page one) This incident received television coverage and widespread condemnation, resulting in the hunt having its licence to hunt in the Forest taken away (though only on a temporary basis). The Master apparently had difficulty controlling the hounds all day and kept saying "Shame on you" because they had not been obeying him.

The New Forest group often organise joint hits with sabs from **Fareham.** During a hit of the Surrey and North Sussex Beagles the hunt found itself plagued by a four-legged sab called Lady - a terrier who kept up a constant yapping near the beagles. The police turned out in force and one police motorcyclist said that he thought that both sides were a "load of idiots" and that he would rather have been at home with his feet up watching T.V.

Sabs detected some ill-feeling amongst the beaglers suggesting that all is not well. Whilst some sabs were being cautioned by the police, a long-standing member of the hunt (50 years +) ran up and shouted at the copper that he should be up ahead dealing with the antis who were disrupting the hounds. When the Joint Master of the hunt David Jackson suggested that he should not be telling the PC his job, the Old Boy retorted angrily that Jackson was a "useless s!*t and that he had not been here (with the hunt) for 5 minutes.

Because of the ban on the New Forest FH, **Fareham HSA** was forced to concentrate on the New Forest Beagles. Effective sabbing meant that the hunt did not kill throughout February and March. Violence increased towards the end of the season but beautifully nurtured beer guts prevented heavies from capturing sabs. The group helped out on joint hits of the Aldershot Beagles and the Vale of the White Horse FH. It reports that people were so outraged by the savaging of the deer that next year 50-70 sabs are expected from Fareham.

Tyneside HSA surveying their country.



NORTH-EAST MIDLANDS

Sheffield HSA and **Doncaster HSA** continued their campaign to put the Badworth (Bagged) FH 'out of business'. Hunt support has fallen significantly but at the cost of increasing violence and arrests.

In late December, sabs were chased by four van loads of nutters wielding spades and spanners. Their sabmobile was boxed in and heavies sprang out and a spade hit the roof and a spanner was thrown. The sabs managed to escape but were pursued all the way to Wakefield. The hunt's Press Officer, Ernest Bird, claimed later that "I am entirely unaware that there was any trouble whatsoever".

The Badsworth was hit again on 7 January. A local resident told sabs that the fox had been let out for the hunt (a typical Badsworth tactic). The hunt eventually stumbled across the fox but failed to catch it, (probably because the terrier men had forgotten to cripple it.)

Later in the month, sabs drove out to a meet only to find that it had been cancelled owing to thick snow. Determined not to waste a day, the sabs returned to Sheffield and hastily arranged a fur demo in Debenhams. 30 activists chanted anti-fur slogans and handed out leaflets. All the sabs were banned from the store many for the third time!

At another Badsworth meet sabs split the pack so effectively that hounds were scattered all over the countryside. The Police thanked sabs for their good behaviour. "Aw shucks it was nothing" replied our gallant subversives. Charges of obstructing the police against Michael McKrell and Paul Richardson were dismissed at Doncaster Magistrates Court.

NORTH-EAST

Iain Brown, a member of **Tynside HSA,** who was the victim of a vicious and unprovoked attack by hunt thugs last year appeared in Hexham Magistrates Court in February together with the 3 perpetrators of the crime. All four were bound over to keep the peace for 2 years in the sum of £200. Iain pleaded guilty to acting in a manner to cause a breach of the peace while hunt followers William Bolton of Prior Thorns, Beaufront, Hexham, Paul Hawkes of North Cottage, Fellside, Hexham, and David Lynne of Shildon Hill Farm Cottages, Newton, admitted causing a breach of the peace. Bolton admitted a further charge of criminal damage and was fined £50 and ordered to pay £24.41 compensation.

The incident happened last October when nine members of the group set out to hit the

Tyndale FH near Corbridge. They parked the van and most of the sabs went to spray woods leaving Iain and Keith Parkins a student with the vehicle. The three thugs then appeared and attacked the sabs and the van. Keith was hit on the head with a shovel and the van was ransacked with Bolton ripping off windscreen wipers and wing-mirrors causing £55.52 worth of damage.

Mr. Anthony Gibson, defending the violent trio said in their defence that Iain *"was not a country person"* and that had the saboteurs *"invaded a football match to disrupt it they would be prosecuted"*.

Mr. David Glendinning, defending Iain said that the incident *"demonstrated the great divide between the non-violent members of the Hunt Saboteurs Association and the violence shown by the hunt supporters"*.



Sabmobile forced down track and whipped on the Morpeth F.H.

HERTS AND BEDS

Northampton HSA has been out most weeks this season with success against beagle packs. Master of the N. Bucks beagles was even moved recently to remark that all sabs came from Northampton and are the dregs of society!

Having raised over £700 in 3 weeks recently they now have their own minibus and Escort van.

They appeared on I.T.N. News doing the Pipewell Foot beagles early in the year as well as their local paper covering the Grafton F.H. Members have also been joining the successful Eastern Animal Liberation League actions. Any members in the Corby and North Beds. areas please get in touch via Northants H.S.A. c/o Doorway Bookshop, 18 Victoria Road, Northampton NN1 5ED.

Cambridge HSA together with sabs from **Northampton, Luton and Aylesbury** were involved in an unforgetable sab of the Old Berkely Beagles on 4 February. 59 sabs were present and the day was well reported on Chiltern Radio and in the Cambridge Evening News.

After a short while all the sabs managed to get into the field where the beagles were hunting and although they did not respond to horns, the sheer number of sabs brought the hunt to a halt.

At this point, a rather irrate farmer nicknamed the 'Maniac' sped across the field in his Maniacmobile ploughing into sabs. No one was hit but the 'Maniac' grabbed hold of one unfortunate sab and attempted to drag him away (for his dinner no doubt). While this was going on the hunt moved on and the police arrived, walking with sabs. Suddenly, the hounds picked up a scent and zapped through a hedge. One sab was just about to put his hunting horn to his lips when it was knocked from his hands by an elderly geezer with his cane. Sabs lept to disarm him and by the time things broke up tempers were running high.

Then (predictably) enter the 'Maniac', driving through the trees and shrubs in vain attempts to mow sabs down in full view of the coppers who watched and said nothing. The hunt then returned to the meet to await police reinforcements. It was then that sabs realised that the police were guarding them.

Reinforcements arrived and sabs got a shock when one senior officer announced that they were all being arrested on suspicion of criminal damage to crops. All 59 were taken to Watford Central Police Station and searched and photographed and kept in cells for 6 hours with no food or drink except a glass of water. Everyone was interviewed and one sab was charged with criminal damage, causing a rotten fence to collapse - it was his first sab! The others were bound over until March 18.

Bucks HSA has been focussing its attention on the Old Berkeley Beagles. However, it had to leave the hunt alone for 2 weeks after a series of incidents at their meet in Kimble. The day began with the often used, and now rather boring, 'Get off my land' lecture. Sabs kindly complied, but on the way back to the footpath one heavy kept hitting one of the sabs for not walking fast enough. Another sab was prodded in the stomach by a yokel in an attempt to cause her to fall (voluntarily) into a ditch filled with gunk. Later, a heavy pulled a sab to the ground and had to be 'restrained'.

One sab painfully learnt one of the Golden Rules of sabbing 'never help a heavy no matter how angelic he looks'. The sab was holding 2 strands of barbed wire apart for sabs when "like a fool" (his words not mine) he held it open for a goon who said "Cheers mate" and hit him on the side of the head. Dazed and bewildered by this ungrateful response to his gesture of goodwill, he looked around and the goon hit him again! As a result, sabs decided that the hunt should be the target of a joint hit. This tactic had worked successfully some weeks previously when the group was joined by sabs from **Northampton and Luton**. 50 sabs attended the meet and the day was covered by the local paper. Violence evidently was much reduced and the pack was effectively split on a number of occasions. The Joint Master of the hunt Mr. J. F. Richardson claimed that "one of the saboteurs admitted that he had come to provoke a fight, and another had said he was paid £5 for the afternoon's disruption." Also, "Their language was foul in front of ladies". It must be quite a shock for these 'ladies' when confronted with ordinary people.

Victims of **Luton HSA** and **Northampton HSA,** often with help from **Cambridge** sabs, have included the Grafton FH and the North Bucks Beagles. At a meet of the Grafton FH sabs decided to leave early as the hunt did not seem to be taking the day seriously, so they bombed off in search of the Stowe Beagles. The local coppers however, had other ideas and delayed them for an hour using their most effective weapon in crime prevention, the 'irrelevant question'. After their stern talking to sabs headed back to the Grafton (not through choice) where their arrival was greeted with a deluge of rocks. Beating a hasty retreat, sabs stumbled across a dig-out and kill but were unable to do anything owing to insufficient numbers.

In March, supporters of the Puckeridge and Thurlow FH were bound over in the sum of £200 for one year after incidents at the opening meet of the season when a sab, Robert Allen was set upon and beaten unconscious. Ronald Edwards and his offspring Steven of Essex Cottage, Snow End, Anstey denied causing actual bodily harm to Robert. Both tried to justify their assault by claiming that by doing so they were protecting crops. In the same court, another hunt heavy admitted causing criminal damage to a car and driving without due care and attention. He was fined £100 and ordered to pay £303.41 costs and compensation for crushing a sab's car. During the hearing it was alleged that the behaviour of saboteurs was akin to that of 'flying pickets'! Hail King Arthur!

EAST ANGLIA

On 17 March, sabs from **Norwich HSA, University of East Anglia HSA, Thetford HSA, Ipswich HSA** and the **Cambridge** group held a joint hit against the notoriously violent West Norfolk Foxhounds.

The day began with one 'lady' informing sabs that the hunt was the "last bit of England left" and then threatening sabs with a shovel in a distinctly unlady-like manner. 8 sabs were attacked and beaten while spraying garlic solution in front of the hounds. Although this was reported to the local copper he was reluctant to leave his nice warm police station. Throughout the day heavies refused to let sabs out of their vehicles which understandably made sabbing somewhat difficult. The Eastern Daily Press reported a different chain of events claiming that sabs sprayed hounds with an irritant (liquid heavy?). They also said that there was a scuffle between sabs and gamekeepers. In reality the gamekeepers had all got out of one van, rolled their sleeves up, gathered sticks and then waded into the sabs! A classic case of press distortion. The group is pressing for a correction and apology but the paper is blatently pro-hunt.

ESSEX

South-East Essex HSA has had a busy season concentrating on the Essex FH and the East Essex FH. At a meet of the Essex FH on 28 January at Hatfield Broad Oak, sabs pre-meeting a wood were thrown out by head cases in 2 Landrovers. One sab was pushed into a ditch but luckily was not hurt. Police kept close tabs on the sabs all day together with a National Trust warden. However, about 4 p.m. they told sabs that the hunt was heading home and drove off as if to illustrate the point. Sabs were unconvinced and found the hunt, now reduced to 5 riders, digging out a fox which when bolted eluded the hounds by running through someone's garden. Needless to say the garden's owner was not particularly impressed with the hounds trampling everything in sight and made a complaint to the police. The day ended on a sad note with the hunt mysteriously killing next to a road where the terrier men just happened to be.

WALES

The Caerphilly and District FH, Pentyrch FH, Llangibby and Cotswold Vale FH, and the Tredegar Farmers' FH have all received visits from the **Vale of Glamorgan HSA.** At a meet of the Caerphilly FH sabs were involved in a car chase (just like on T.V.) and one sab was set upon with sticks. The group had a very successful day against the Llangibby FH at Cherry Orchard Farm, near Chepstow. Sabs split the pack on a number of occasions and were always one step ahead of the so-called 'experts'. Eventually, the riders freaked out

and chased sabs deep into a wood hitting two sabs in the process.

Sab Dave Richards was terrified when bozzoes from the Tredegar Farmers' FH held him at gunpoint and threatened him that he would "get it" if he continued to disrupt the hunt. Dave thought his end had come when the 3 psychos trapped him and said "You townies up here interfering. If you don't —— off you'll get this" (a very ominous looking shotgun). The psycho thought better of murdering Dave in cold blood however and headbutted him instead and ran off. Police are investigating the incident.

On another occasion the Tredegar Hunt claimed that sabs sprayed anti-mate into the faces of young Pony Club members and their long-suffering ponies.

SCOTLAND

The **Edinburgh Hunt Sabs** have been going out every Saturday hitting the Linlithgow & Stirlingshire through the cubbing season and most of the foxhunting season. After Christmas, due to the bad weather, there were no hunts for 5 subsequent weekends.

Funds were very low this season, but sabs managed to send out at least one car every week. There have been less arrests, but more violence and intimidation from hunt supporters. Sabs have had antimate and horns stolen by huntsmen.

In November, B.B.C. cameras came out with sabs, filmed the days sab, and showed a 5 minute film on 'Reporting Scotland', plus film of a demo outside a courtroom where 2 sabs were on trial for an incident last season. A 3rd sab was also involved, but he was in the Falklands at the time of court case.

Tom Potts, huntsman of the L. & S., was cautioned by police on one hunt for riding down a sab who was 20-30 ft away from hounds, and in the words of Tom, "interfering with the hounds." 3 heavies surrounded a sab car on one hunt, and proceeded to kick and punch car, and grabbed one sab around neck. A complaint was made to police, and there might be a court case.

Near the end of the season one sab car went out against the Fife Foxhounds. A fox was killed at a dig out. The weekend after, 2 sab cars went out against them. Sabs got blocked in at kennels for 15 mins, but luckily managed to find the meet. One sab car was trailed all morning, so sabs decided to make supporters think that they were giving up and proceeded into a local pub. The sabs ordered orange juices, were all set to wait for about 15 mins and leave, when the supporters also came in, bought pints, and started to talk, joke and then even offered drinks to the sabs.

In March, for the first time ever **Clydeside HSA** group was video'd in action for the full duration of a day's sabotage against the Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire Foxhunt. Sabs split into 4 groups, with video cameras 'rolling' the hunt attempted to draw the first covert. Immediately a roe deer was filmed running from the hunt. One hound then 'spoke' to an obviously old scent and the huntsmen hiked hounds after the non-existent fox!! This set the scene, in fact sabs anticipated perfectly and, after an arduous 20 minute up hill trek, hounds were observed some ¼ mile across a small valley. Hounds, well trained by Clydeside HSA all season, responded immediately to efficient saboteur horns and holloas. Sabs very quickly had the whole pack all to themselves and, with no riders in sight, proceeded to take hounds back in the very direction from which the hunt had started.

At the end of the day, a very frustrated hunt, with just over half the pack remaining, tried to impress their supporters by very diligently drawing a marshy covert. 3 sab groups were however ideally positioned to intervene between hounds and quarry. This final draw proved an anti-climax (no pun intended) for the hunt as it would appear all wildlife had been alerted earlier in the day.

The L & R final Saturday meet, proved **Clydeside HSA's** most decisive victory of the season. 1 van and 4 car loads of sabs (35 in all) meant quite literally that the hunt couldn't move without confronting groups of sabs. With video camera roling for a second successive Saturday, the hunt were soon caught, in an obvious quandry at the top of a nearby quarry, trying desperately to keep hounds together, with 3 sab groups surrounding them. Every direction was well covered by sabs. One sab group and hunt supporters saw a fox running away through a wooded valley beneath the hunt. However, whether huntsmen didn't hear holloas, or thought it was sabs, no attempt was made to hunt this obvious fox.

Later, hounds did discover a fresh scent and ran quickly to an area known (from earlier cub hunting action) to contain foxes. Sabs, fearing a dig out pursued across country on foot. Hounds continued however for another mile to a large conifer plantation. Here huntsmen made their ultimate mistsake by trying a very thorough drawing of the wood and allowing all saboteurs to re-group and catch up.

What followed was a delight to watch. The hunt, consistent as ever, lost all control of hounds. Sabs positioned on 2 sides of the large wood kept hounds running in circles for a full hour with huntsmen completely powerless.

The redcoat diehards did attempt a final draw but, with hounds responding immediately to sabs calls, the hunt was eventually abandoned in a most dejected fashion. No foxes killed — total victory for H.S.A. at the L & R's final Saturday meet.

On Saturday March the 17th, Edinburgh and Clydeside HSA held a joint hit against the Linlithgow & Stirling foxhounds. This was to be the last Saturday of the Scottish foxhunting season. Sabs were expecting a rough time. Although sabbing was made difficult with the large number of supporters and the ever presence of violence, sabs managed to pull hounds on quite a few occasions, but this was to end shortly with the hounds marking to ground under an electricity pylon. Terriers with electronic devices strapped to their backs (which make locating the fox much easier for the terrierman) were sent down. Sabs had gathered some 200 yards away in a large wood. When it became obvious that the hunt were getting close to their fox the sabs moved across to the dig-out, but were stopped by mounted hunt supporters, four policemen and a police inspector. They were told that they would be arrested and were escorted back to the road. However two sabs had managed to get to the dig-out, but already one fox was dead and now they were digging for another (It's interesting to read that the Book of Foxhunting by J.N.P. Watson, Chapter 7 Ethics, Organization and Appointments, the Master of Foxhound's Association lay down certain rules, the principal of which are these and in a couple of lines says, "In any event where there is more than one fox in the earth or drain, only one may be killed by the 'invaders') The two sabs walked around the dig-out while another fox was being dug out, all this time they were being constantly kicked and spat upon.



Police moving sabs away from dig-out

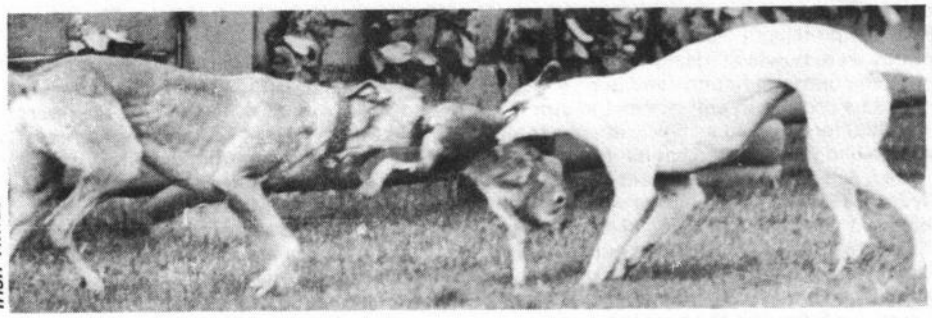
Then suddenly one of the terrier men grabbed the fox by the tail with the terrier still clinging to one of its back legs. One of the sabs dived in and tried to pull the fox free but was grabbed by three heavies, at the same time the other sab tried to help but was also grabbed by heavies and dragged off, kicked and beaten up. While the two sabs were being kicked about on the ground one of them could see the fox being killed, with one terrier-man holding the fox whilst the other smashed the foxes head with five or six blows of a spade. He then grabbed the dead fox by the legs and hit one of the sabs full in the face covering him with blood. The two sabs then made their way back to the road one with severe bruising to his back and backside, whilst the other had two cracked ribs and a displaced pelvic girdle. Three hunt heavies have been charged. The hunt ended shortly afterwards.

IRELAND

In November three English hunt saboteurs spent a week in Belfast with the **Queens University Anti-Bloodsports Group.** All Three had already spent time with the Irish Sea Shepherd who had kept a vigil over the grey seal colonies off the County Mayo coast in the Atlantic Ocean and travelled up from Dublin. A busy week ensued, with a well attended benefit concert, tactics meeting and slide show, a large and noisy demonstration againsts the two-day enclosed coursing meeting at Crebilly, two abortive sab attempts against the Mid-Antrim Harriers and the Armagh and Richill Beagles, to finish on the Saturday with an excellent sab on the North Down Harriers who did not have a clue how to cope with hunt saboteurs.

Whilst there is a reasonable broad base of support in Northern Ireland for Animal Rights, most groups shun direct action. The emergence of hunt saboteurs in Belfast bodes well for the animal rights movement there. Support for hunting is very poor in the north; there were only three people hunting the Armagh and Richill Beagles on the Thursday, local papers actually print long lists of farmers who refuse the hunt permission to cross their land, and indeed many of the hunts there seemed to be very second-rate and amateurish. Since the HSA visit the group has been active against the East Down Foxhounds and North Down Harriers. Interestingly within two weeks of the visit N. Ireland BFSS were wanting to have a seat on the national BFSS hunting committee presumably to find out how to deal with antis - and from all accounts they have, as one redcoat was filmed dancing up and down on the roof of a sab car complete with purple face and flaying whip.

Meanwhile in **Dublin,** hunt saboteurs have been out on several occasions with Mr. Kerr's Beagles and have been very active with both the **Sea Shepherd group** and **Stop Animal Experiments.**



Irish Times

ATTENTION! AN URGENT APPEAL TO ALL DEFENDERS OF ANIMAL RIGHTS!

It is said that a picture is better than a thousand words. Take a good look at this picture. It serves to expose the appalling savagery and inhumanity of the so-called "sport" of live-hare-coursing. In Ireland, up to 10,000 hares are netted annually for use as live bait at the 96 "meetings" of the coursing season. A large percentage of these must die, often in extreme pain as the competing greyhounds tear them asunder in a gruesome tug-of-war. Every coursing event is a brutal and uneven contest: The hare, a harmless and timid animal, is forced to run for its life before two larger, faster animals, virtually trapped in an enclosed area. It cannot escape, except into a specially constructed "pen", in other words back into captivity to be coursed again and again until its luck runs out.

Prior to a coursing event, it is not uncommon for the trainers to feed LIVE HARES to their greyhounds to make them more aggressive and bloodthirsty. Domestic animals like helpless, unwanted kittens are also used. They are tied to wooden stakes at a considerable distance above the ground in order to tease the hounds, being gradually lowered to within reach of the latter to be hacked and torn to pieces, alive. You may think that only a born sadist could perform such a barbaric ritual without feeling a sense of remorse at the cruelty involved. Coursing people joke about it! This practise, known as "blooding", is intended to enhance the performance of the hounds on the coursing field. It will not disappear from our midst until coursing itself has been abolished.

For almost 15 years, we of the Irish Council Against Blood "Sports" have been campaigning vigourously for the total abolition of hare-coursing. We organised a petition against the "sport" in 1976. It was signed by 100,000 adults. It was the largest petition in the history of the state! In 1978, an independent public opinion survey (conducted by Irish Marketing Surveys Ltd.) revealed that a staggering 70% of those questioned would favour the imposition of a ban on hare-coursing, while a meagre 14% favoured its continued legality. Despite these efforts, the government took no action in the matter. Now, at long last, the subject has been raised in our national parliament (The Dail) by a government M.P. who drew attention to its cruel nature and called for legislation to abolish it. The Minister for Agriculture responded positively, promising to consider the matter over the coming weeks. We understand that a Bill to abolish hare-coursing is to be introduced in the Dail in the near future. To facilitate its passage, it is important that it has the support of the Ministers for Justice and Agriculture.

YOU can help here. The ICABS appeals to you, ALL of you, to write (a few words will suffice) to these two Ministers, expressing your serious concern at the cruelty of hare-coursing and your desire to see it stamped out once and for all. Irish hare-coursing is primitive and obscene; a relic of the dark ages. YOUR support, your letters, can help to put an end to it! Write to:

Mr. Austin Deasy T.D., Minister for Agriculture,
Dail Eireann, Dublin 2.
Mr. Michael Noonan T.D., Minister for Justice,
Dail Eireann, Dublin 2.
Thank you.

J. Fitzgerald, Irish Council Against Bloodsports

GRAND NATIONAL 1984

For the first time in its terrible history, animal rights campaigners demonstrated at this year's Grand National. Over the last two years three attempts have been made to burn Bechers brook fence, that has killed so many horses.

On 31 March 40 activists from various organisations made a determined attempt to get onto the Grand National course at Aintree, Liverpool. Unfortunately a van-load of police with dogs were waiting as activists attempted to scale the seven foot perimeter fence round the course. Four activists made it over and one laid a wreath on the second fence in memory of all the horses that have died in this one race.

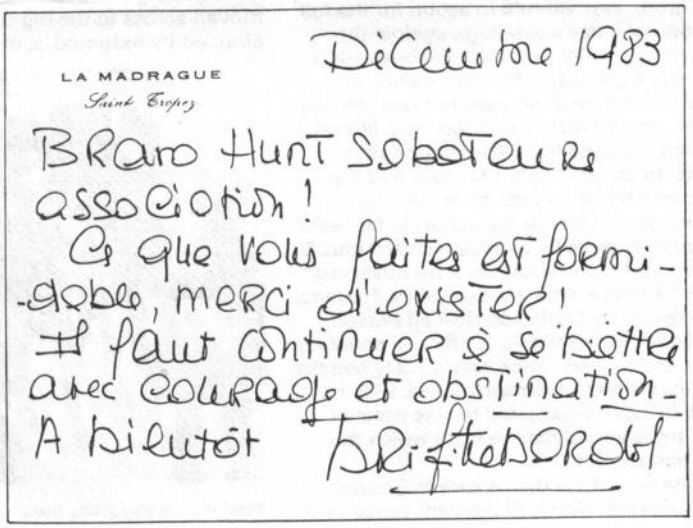
This year the horse that came 5th in the race, Earth stopper, dropped dead on finishing. Only two days earlier Roman Bar fell so badly at the notorious 'Chair' fence on the same course she had to be destroyed. In the last 10 years, 10 horses have died miserable deaths in the Grand National. Usually More than ⅔rds of the horses entered never complete the course. Even jockeys and racing experts admit that most horses are never the same again after running the National course.

At 4½ miles long it is a ridiculous distance to expect horses to maintain the tortuous pace needed to win the National. Horses have to jump 30 fences, far too many. Most of the fences have a lower drop on the landing side that horses cannot judge and have not experienced on other courses in the country; this accounts for many of the falls in the race. Far too many horses are allowed to enter the race – it should be limited to 25 runners.

The National is no longer the magnet for every steeplechaser of high calibre, it has now lost its prestige of former times. It attracts a far lower standard of competitors than before the Second World War – simply because it is too dangerous to risk valuable horses on prize money that can be won on easier and safer races elsewhere in the country. There can be no more damning evidence that safety procedures for horses is critically absent at Aintree.

This letter was received from Bridget Bardot after she received a copy of HOWL 25. A translation follows:

Bravo Hunt Saboteurs Association
What you are doing is fantastic,
Thanks for existing!
One must go on fighting with
Courage and determination.
See you,



NEWS IN BRIEF

HEYTHROP HOUNDED

The Heythrop Hunt found themselves hounded in February – by HM Customs and Excise. No sooner had the hunt galloped over the horizon than the Vatmen pounced – dipping rubber hoses into the fuel tanks of supporters landrovers.

It was found that some of the vehicles had "domestic use only" Diesel in their tanks. Because of its low excise duty this type of fuel is only supposed to be used for genuine agricultural purposes – in tractors for example.

One hunt supporter was incensed: *"It's an awful thing to do. Creeping up on country-loving folk when our backs are turned and we're chasing foxes is despicable!"*

CENSORSHIP TORY STYLE

The Tory Party's monthly newspaper, Newsline, failed to print a Conservative Anti-Hunt Council advert intended to appear in the December edition and, as if by some coincidence, this was the same issue which carried numerous letters supporting hunting, despite the fact that it is believed that it received more "anti" than "pro" mail.

When questioned, Newsline's advertising director, Alastair Watts replied (having no doubt spent hours thinking about his answer) *"The anit-hunt advert got lost"*.

Understandably, this explanation was greeted with some scepticism by the League Against Cruel Sports Director Richard Course who, never being one to (soya) mince his words, replied "Balls!"

GAMEKEEPER POISONED

A Scottish gamekeeper died after trying to poison a fox on the Solsgirth Estate near Kinross. Thomas Nicol accidentally swallowed some of the poison as he was preparing a bait.

BACKLASH

Tory Council Candidate Leslie Crawford of Cleckheaton received a bomb threat since he disrupted a cockfighting meet 300 yards from his kitchen window.

BABY DEER SAVAGED

Slaughterman Glen Biddles was fined £150 in January, for allowing his hunting dog to savage a baby deer. The deer had a broken neck and her spine and hind leg were ripped open. After the hearing, Biddles told the press *"I'm going foxhunting this afternoon to occupy the rest of my day off"*.

DEEPEST RED

Former Leyland shop steward Tom Yates has become a committee member of the Heythrop Hunt. *"I won't tolerate any snobbery"*, he said.

CAR FIRM BACKS BLOODSPORTS

The Audi car company has put up £100,000 in the form of the Audi Prix de Chasse – a sponsorship deal for hunt point-to-points.

GALLOPING MAJOR

The cat-killing Berkeley Hunt will now have to do without a member of the Berkeley family in the Mastership. Major John Berkeley stood down at the end of last season due to a hip injury.

STAGHUNT SLAMMED

The notorious Tiverton Staghounds have, once again, been accused by one of their own followers of causing a hind to suffer an agonising death. Gordon Parker, an occasional hunt supporter, said "This was an absolute disgrace. The hind was brought down by the man with the gun by one shot in the neck. The hind was thrashing about at the side of the river, trying to lift its head out of the water as it struggled. Believe me, it took fully five minutes before it died. We asked the gunman what the hell he thought he was doing. He ran off". HOWL readers will remember a previous incident involving the Tiverton in November 1982, when a hind was pulled down in the middle of a village street and had its throat cut with a penknife.

HUNT DOG TRAPPED

Kiz, a Jack Russell terrier, suffocated after being trapped in a drain, in which a fox had gone to earth. Kiz's owner, Simon Morgan of Gillingham in Kent, waited for 48 hours before calling in the RSPCA – by that time it was too late to save the bitch's life. *"Maybe I should have called them sooner"*, said Morgan.

1984 GRAND SUMMER DRAW



If you have not already done so now is the time to send in your tickets to enter the draw. There are a couple of extra books enclosed with this HOWL for friends, relatives or an extra few chances for yourself. Tickets will also be on sale at the A.G.M. and if you require any extra just ask through P.O. Box 19, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. Good luck one and all and thanks for your support.

FOXBAITER FINED

Huddersfield Magistrates have fined a fox-baiter, who put a fox and two terriers together in a blocked drain, £75 plus £25 costs. Christopher Tarandij of Malham Road, Brighouse, was prosecuted under the Protection of Animals Act 1911 – the prosecution successfully proving that the fox was a captive animal at the time of its cruel death. Tarandij claimed that what he had done was *"really quite sporting"*.

COCKFIGHTING – NEW EVIDENCE

Evidence that cock fights are being staged in Bradford homes has been collected by RSPCA Inspector Dave Millard, and as a result he has nearly enough evidence to make the first prosecution in the city for 10 years.

He believes that cocks and quails are being bought for battle from pet shops and a weekly animal auction held in Trafalga Street, Manningham.

No spectators are admitted to the fights and owners are rigorously checked-out. Owners surround the ring and aggravate the cocks. The birds have metal spurs strapped to their feet and then fly at each other. The winner is the one which has been ripped up the least or the one left alive.

Mr Millard needs slightly more information before he can obtain search warrants and prosecute. Bradford Animal Rights Group has joined him in his attempt to stamp out this supposedly illegal bloodsport.

HUNT MAN BURIED ALIVE

James Richmond, 29, a foxhunter from Accrington, died in January when he tried to dig his terrier dog out of an earth which caved in on him. It took emergency services three hours to recover the body. Richmond's two companions have vowed never to dig foxes again.

STAGHOUNDS ADMIT TRESPASS

Quantock Staghounds paid £75, in an out-of-court settlement, to Holford Resident Edward Venn, after an incident in October when a stag sought refuge in Mr Venns' garden. Mr Venn stated that huntsmen refused to call off the hounds, though the stag was eventually freed.

FOX IN VICIOUS ATTACK ON COPPER

A fox found itself well and truly stuck when it ran into a goal net at King George's Playing Fields, Sidcup. Luckily though, help was at hand in the form of one of the Boys in Blue, PC Wilkinson, who rushed to its aid.

The fox however, mistook his friendly advances for a baton charge and sank his fangs into the bemused copper. Although not badly hurt, the (much wiser) young PC had to have a tetanus injection and is now reported to have definitely gone off foxes. Needless to say, the fox has in all probability found its way on to a Police computer.

JOINT-MASTER FINED

Ethleen May Goschen, Joint-Master of the Goschen Hounds was found guilty in March of causing her 13-year old Chestnut Mare Nonny unnecessary suffering by allowing her to be ridden with a raw lesion on her back.

HORSE AND PONY LOVERS AGAINST BLOODSPORTS

Only a minority of horseriders actually support hunting and, in an attempt to mobilise the others, HPLAB has been formed. All members promise to "endeavour to understand and supply the needs of my friend the horse and never to hunt or otherwise harm any creature". Contact: Margaret Smith, 23, Levernside Crescent, Glasgow.

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this a Forestry Commission spokesman said that the deer was found close to a fence but carried no visible signs of attack by hounds. In the publication, however, the authors, (R. H. Smith and E. Johnson), describe the incident with these words,

"hounds entered the enclosure early in 1979 and killed one doe, and the remaining three does produced no offspring."

Further, Chris Balcombe of the New Forest Deerhunt Abolition Alliance who at one time followed both the Buckhounds and the Foxhounds tells us that the foxhounds killed a deer at least once a season but that both the Forestry Commission and the hunt remained silent about it. The F.C. spokesman however said that he would not rule out the possibility that the hunt did kill deer on occasions.

It is not unusual for foxhounds to follow and even kill deer, after all foxhounds are descended from deerhounds and it is quite natural for hounds to pursue almost any non-quarry animal. This season I watched the East Devon foxhounds chase a red-deer for a short distance themselves pursued by their angry huntsman. Last season I watched in amazement as the Colchester Garrison Beagles rioted on a flying pheasant! Stories of hounds rioting and sometimes killing sheep, cats, cattle, dogs and even ponies are quite regularly reported in the local media during the hunting season.

Finally the lengths to which the hunt went to avoid the bad publicity that the events could subsequently have brought is very interesting. Normally such a breach of discipline by the hounds would have lead to the execution of those hounds primarily responsible, perhaps followed by a programme of "re-education" of the others involved, for as Martin Letts the Huntsman of the College Valley Foxhounds stated in the Horse and Hound (25/1/800: "such traits can be infectious". In this instance, however, cognisant of the claims by hunt saboteurs that the culprits would be destroyed, the hunt held a press conference at which it was announced that the hounds would not be put down, but would be re-homed with a hunt which had no deer in its country. Presumably this would have to be the Isle of Wight Foxhunt since it is the only hunt to which this criterion applies. The guilty hounds, one of which was a bitch named Topaz which was actually identified in the video-recording of the second deer killing and at the press conference is thus, it would appear preserved for the moment from that fate which awaits all hounds if they transgress repeatedly and in fact every hound at the end of its hunting life. The fate described by the joint-master of the Colne Valley Beagles after his hounds killed three sheep, "We immediately shot the hounds involved" (Daily Examiner 3/3/80), may yet overtake these hounds secretly, away from the critical eyes of the media.

Below is a list of a few other occasions where deer have been hunted or killed by hunts other than deer hunts:

1). The Atherstone F.H. chase and kill five fallow deer on Lord Aylesfords Packington Estate in Warwickshire. (The Times 13/3/71).
2). The Puckeridge and Thurlow F.H. attack a stag at Mincinbury Manor at Barley, near Royston. The stag was saved by its owner who defended it with a broom handle. (Morning Advertiser 26/11/71).
3). The Cottesmore F.H. killed a fallow deer near Monkery Wood, Stretton. (Leicester Advertiser 10/10/75).
4). The Ullswater F.H. chase a deer over a bank causing it to break its neck in the river. (Sunday People 7/12/75).
5). The South Nottinghamshire F.H. trap three deer and three hounds kill a young deer. (The Derby Evening Telegraph 4/2/80).

Ralph Cook

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Further into the dense forest, the sound of whips cracking and shouts of 'leave it!', signalled that a riot was in progress. A second deer broke from the trees with the lead hound close behind it. The rest of the pack followed shortly afterwards, a lone Hunt Saboteur desperately trying to call them off. As hounds and deer disappeared from view, we ran towards the point where they re-entered the trees, but by the time we covered the ground, everything was silent. Either the Deer was dead or it had escaped: either way it was impossible to discern where they might be.

As two saboteurs arrived and began searching the area, we paused, checking the camera in case evidence of a possible kill arose. In the event, the saboteur filmed running behind the pack, came on the scene of the kill and apparently tried to pull hounds off the deer, now caught on the perimeter fence of the inclosure. The doe struggled free, but already badly mauled, collapsed inside the inclosure, where the hounds fell on it. Hearing cries for assistance we scrambed over the fence and into the enclosure, but by the time we arrived there was nothing that could be done for the unfortunate animal. As we filmed, hounds tore at the carcass, breaking up what remained of the body of the doe. Saboteurs watched helplessly.

We continued filming the deer, expecting the hunt to arrive, but they lost contact with the hounds, and didn't arrive at the kill until nearly three minutes after the deer had been brought down. Jeremy Whaley, enraged by their behaviour, beat the hounds off the carcass with his whip as other members of the hunt attempted to re-establish some order in the pack.

Following the shocked and embarrassed hunt staff with the camera, Joint Master, Tony Taylor, was recorded remarking bitterly to the Huntsman, "If you will bring those f---ing hounds out, like Topaz, that started it all!"

Events moved rapidly from then on as we returned to the Meet, made contact with a journalist who put us in touch with I.T.N., and then drove to London to get the tape on national television that evening. The video tape consequently appeared again on Southern Television the following Monday and became the main feature of local news that evening. The impact of the coverage was sufficient to persuade the hunt to

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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 .....

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