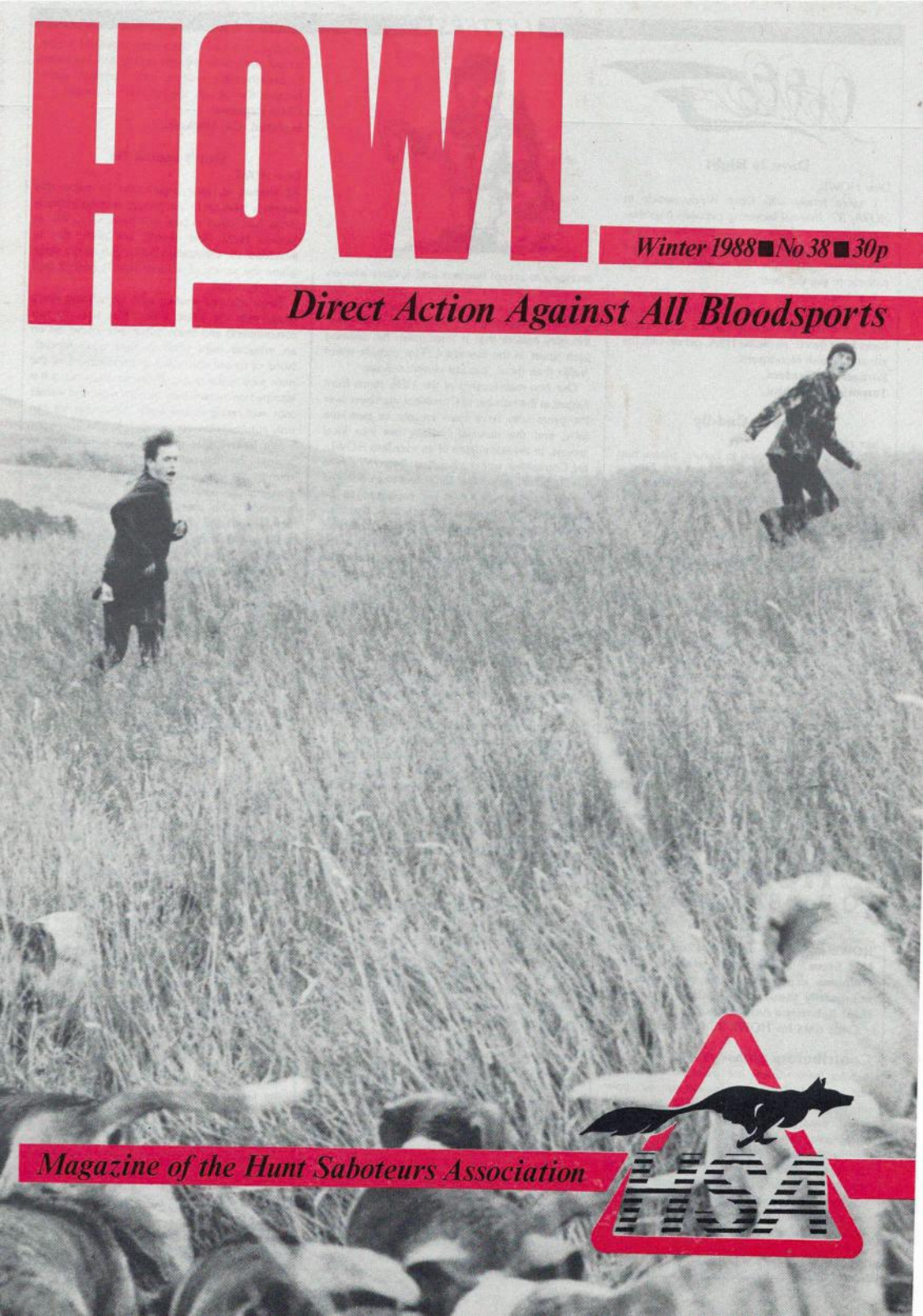
HOWL

Winter 1988 ■ No 38 ■ 30p

Direct Action Against All Bloodsports



Magazine of the Hunt Saboteurs Association



Dave Is Right

Dear HOWL,

I agree totally with Dave Weeks article in HOWL 37. Internal bickering between organisations fighting for the same cause does harm rather than good, and putting unrelated things into an organisation, i.e. rights for whatever group, is pathetic to say the least.

I've been sabbing or pestering the Cheshire Beagles virtually on my own since 1973; it's cost me a lot of time and money but I've saved many hares from death, so please HSA, get on with the job and abolish bloodsports.

Bernadette Hardern,
Tarporley, Cheshire.

Dave is Cuddly

Dear HOWL,

Re Dave Weeks' appeal in Forum; please hug him for me. I am in total agreement with him – the vital issue here is the saving of bright lives and anything that gets in the way should be off-loaded.

Sherri Scorgie,
Fife.

Dave is Mistaken

Dear HOWL,

We write in reply to Dave Weeks' 'Personal View' in Forum, and to explain our position as non-members of the HSA.

The animal rights movement (hunt saboteuring included) must not and cannot be isolated from the human rights movement. How can we hope to achieve animal liberation without human liberation or vice-versa? Surely they go hand in hand. If we fight 'for the animals' then we must also fight against the nuclear industry and the militia in general, and we must be fighting for women's rights and gay rights, for people living under Apartheid, and for the struggle against the Contras in Nicaragua, to name but a few. Hunt saboteurs, as part of the animal rights movement, must reflect this at every level and should not be prepared to accept butchers and soldiers who on Saturdays claim to be fighting against a sick 'sport', but the rest of the time are upholding the system that oppresses humans and animals alike, the very system that is responsible for allowing such 'sport' in the first place. This attitude is not 'holier than thou', it is just common sense.



Our non-membership of the HSA stems from disgust at the number of Commitee members over the years who have been ex-sabs or part-time sabs; and the minimal funding put into local groups. In the last edition of an excellent HOWL, the Committee, under a heading: 'More Money to the Regions', stated that £200 had been donated outright to groups. Are we supposed to be impressed? Members are led to believe that their money goes to an Association pledged to 'direct action against all bloodsports'. The truth is that the vast majority of sabs are not members, and prefer to put their money into their groups where they know it will be used in direct action and not, for example, to pay expenses for non-sabbing committee members.

Devon Saboteurs.

A response to the points raised in this letter about HSA membership and HSA Committee appears on the Forum page of this issue.

As one of those involved in the original discussions about sexual politics in the HSA, I'm surprised that none of the letters about Dave Weeks' article (or the article itself come to that) recognised that the motive behind tackling sexism in the movement was precisely to bring about the more effective and united HSA Dave is calling for. Gender equality is surely not a 'peripheral issue' if its short supply in the HSA is interfering with the confidence and effectiveness of some women members. Any further comments? (Ed.)

Parliamentary Politics

Dear HOWL,

I only joined the HSA a month or two ago and have received two copies of HOWL. Having read both from cover to cover, I was surprised to see no political debate. Now don't get me wrong. I know the most important thing is to save animals' lives, but I think some of you have got to come to terms with the fact that hunting is only going to end by political action as well as by direct action.

I personally think the HSA is the most important group in the fight against bloodsports, but please wake up to the fact that the way forward, for now, is in conjunction with the only major party in parliament who are firmly against bloodsports, i.e. Labour.

Although I'm not a Labour Party member myself, it's obvious the other main parties have no intention of ever banning hunting. Having said that, how many people in the HSA voted Tory on June 11th? Some still insist that politics do not come into the issue, but I say they're wrong. Remove the blinkers and look around you; imagine if you can — this society in ten years time. It's not going to be a pretty sight is it? I don't want to preach party politics, only common sense, because it's not only the fox that's in danger.

Chris Pegman,
Ingleton, Co. Durham.

Don't Insult Us

Dear HOWL,

All women at some stage come to realise that sexism is inherent in our society, it exists in many forms and often occurs unintentionally. We as women Hunt Sabs should not allow this to intimidate us, especially when it gets to the stage where the saving of animals lives is pushed into the background.

There are two women who go sabbing every week with the West Wilts HSA (due to our commitment) and many others who come out on an irregular basis (due to their commitment). None of us are oppressed or hoodwinked by the male sabs in the group. If Sexism does occur it is stamped on immediately by both male and female sabs and rarely occurs again. Obviously we can only comment on our group.

We believe that the problem is not men vs women, but the communication between every one in the group (which obviously would be impaired by rabid sexism). In our group new members have every action explained to them beforehand and throughout the day. Decision making is a group effort, every one knows what they are doing and why because the group cooperates and communicates. We not only go sabbing twice a week together but go to the pub, do stalls etc. together, and trust each other as individuals.

Surely we are not the only group that works like this?

Of course womens groups are a good idea if it gets more people disrupting hunts, but don't insult us by assuming that we are all oppressed and discouraged by male hunt saboteurs.

West Wilts Women Sabs.

Nature's Invoice

Dear HOWL,

Reference: Badger Baiting.

I understand that the latest ploy to add to the pleasure of the creatures who watch and take part in this dreadful cruelty is to break the badger's jaw so that he had no chance to defend himself and being the tough noble creature that he is, his death will be long and agonising.

This hideous cruelty has no place in Nature's law of survival. The pike lying motionless in the stream bears no animosity to the minnow and the lion after the kill does not spend his spare time tormenting the leopard. It would seem that this is the prerogative of the species that walks erect. This alien in Mother Nature's world has signed his own Death Warrant. She may sleep for a million years, but in the terms of pre-history the dinosaurs vanished over-night.

An old country saying is "God don't pay debts with money". When Daniken wrote 'Chariot of the Gods' his theory was that man's ancestors mated with beings from outer space to produce homo sapiens or could it be that evil mutation was created instead?

When Mother Nature demands final payment, the invoicing will not just be sent to the badger baiter, the Master of the thing-a-me-bob Staghounds or the hayseed hunts. It will be sent to us all.

John Charlesworth,
Poundsgate, Devon.

HOWL 38

PO Box 87, Exeter, EX4 3TX

HOWL is edited, designed and produced by Steve Poole and Janette Kerr. Opinions expressed in its pages are not necessarily those of the editor, nor of the Hunt Saboteurs Association.

Copy date for HOWL 39 is March 4th.

Contributors please note:

Articles from readers are welcome but should not exceed 1000 words expect by prior arrangement with the editor and should be typed, titled, double-spaced with gaps between paragraphs, and a wide margin (or at least handwritten in legible English!). Letters should be kept to 250 words if possible. Any work submitted may have to be edited; please tell us if you have strong feelings about this. Photographs taken in the field, especially those showing saboteurs in action are always welcome. If contributors observe the copy date, HOWL 39 will be out promptly in mid-April.

'Country Ways'

Dear HOWL

I just had to drop you a line regarding my recent holiday in South Devon. It was a lovely place, nice people, great weather, beautiful cliff walks, but the thing that upset me was the attitude of most of the people, considering hunting on Exmoor as a way of life. At Widecombe I met a Park Warden, a helpful, elderly grey-haired lady, only to discover that she hunted with the local foxhounds. When I questioned her about it, she seemed convinced that hunting was a vital part of conservation, and she made it very clear to me that, not coming from the country, I did not understand the ways of country people.

The point I am trying to make is, how on earth do we break down such attitudes? I am trying to understand the yobos and louts who lend their hands to the organisers of the infamous Waterloo Cup on Merseyside. Ten pounds a day to act as beaters to unemployed brain-dead males is one thing, but to hear so-called educated, highly paid, elderly people justifying the killing of beautiful creatures is beyond me, but then I am only a townswoman.

For human and animal rights,

Eileen Morrison,
St Helens, Merseyside.

Bored Of Prison

Dear HOWL,

Having read the last two editions of your mag, I am getting pretty bored with your articles regarding prison. Prison is nothing to be feared, but try telling Ronnie Lee (10 years), Viv Smith or Brendan McNally (4 years) that prison could be a "good laugh".

There's a saying that goes "if you can't do the time, don't do the crime". Well, animal rights people will be arrested on trumped-up charges because we are looked upon as a minor threat. If your being arrested, charged and sentenced means that you can't stop going on about it, then I suggest that your ego is getting in the way.

Having said that, people shouldn't pay fines to a system they don't want to prop up, but here's a friendly word of warning: Just because the peaceniks only get seven days doesn't mean you will. Hunt sabs will more than likely get at least a month, and usually in a closed prison. I won't go into details about what conditions are likely to be like. But prison isn't a joke unless you go to an open prison. Its not much fun being taken for a ride for being a vegan. And veggies please note: you'll be given battery eggs, animal rennet cheese and gallons of animal fats. But then what's new, eh?

Gari Krsna,
Northampton.

FOE and Angling

I am a member of Havant Friends of the Earth, and this week I attended FOE's annual conference. Imagine my shock when I discovered that a motion had been passed at last year's conference which saw FOE seeking assistance from anglers over water pollution. Well, this year, Camden FOE proposed a motion calling on FOE to reconsider its position and to recognise angling as a bloodsport incompatible with FOE philosophy. When it came to vote, this new motion lost by two votes. As you can imagine, I felt as though I had been stabbed in the back as this goes against the Green movement.

Anyway, Havant FOE will not co-operate or seek help from Anglers, and Camden and Isle of Wight FOE are also against this alliance with a bloodsport. Local FOE group members should find out where their group stands on this subject. Perhaps you could send me some comments. Yours in Peace.

Debbie Thorne,
80 Hambledon Rd, Waterlooville, Hants.

Authority And The Federation

Dear HOWL,

After reading the letters in HOWL 37 I was compelled to write, firstly on the question of authority and the typical statement of "We should not obey authority". What rubbish. When it comes to animal rights, if we don't have authority, we'd get no organisation, and if we didn't get organisation we would not have hunt sabotage and therefore animals would die.

On the issue of the Federation, myself and two colleagues attended the NAVS conference in London, which was on their new and very effective campaign called 'BIOHAZARD'. We were very impressed with the way they had organised everything. This report will END vivisection. If the Federation were to have their way, there would be no Biohazard campaign and no end to vivisection. As to the BUAV's 'Choose Cruelty Free' campaign my own group has seen a lot of new faces which are a direct result of it.

It seems to me there are a small minority of people who would like to close down these nationals and disperse their funds, with the end result being no real force against vivisection and all because a bunch of anarchists think they know better. God help laboratory animals if they get their way.

James Myer,
PO Box 20, Paignton, Devon.

69 ARRESTS AT YORKSHIRE SHOOT

Following the arrests of 49 saboteurs under the Public Order Act in Dorset during September (see Legal Page), the judicial silly season got into its stride at Hutton Wandsley in Yorkshire at the end of October. Leeds University sabs sent us this report.

Saturday October 31st saw the opening meet of the Bramham Moor FH at Bilborough near York. After heavy fog had delayed the meet until noon, thirty Leeds University sabs disrupted any attempts to draw coverts. Good use of CBs by sabs on foot with the hounds kept the mobile group informed and able to keep well positioned.

With the arrival of three more van-loads of sabs from Huddersfield, Bradford and Leeds town, who had earlier forced the York and Ainsty North FH to abandon their day out, Bramham Moor huntsman also admitted defeat and headed for home after barely two hours hunting. The whole group then decided to use the rest of the day to stop a shoot which had been spotted in progress on Colonel York's estate near Hutton Wandesley.

As nearly 70 sabs entered the field, sixteen assorted beaters and gamekeepers came to order the sabs to leave. Shooting was not in progress so, in order to avoid confrontation, sabs complied, ignoring the jostling by gamekeepers. But beaters armed with sticks harrassed sabs as they regrouped on a road, where one sab was struck on the head as he attempted to photograph a beater loitering near the vans.

The beaters then withdrew into a wood and the three Leeds vans followed with Bradford and Huddersfield covering an escape route. The forty-five sabs approached the shoot on foot together but when shots were heard, a small group ran ahead between beaters and shooters where they were wrestled to the ground by beaters. The rest of the group ran to their aid, pulling the assailants off the sabs who managed to withdraw, generally uninjured. Police arrived to find the beaters persuing sabs, intent on more conflict.

All 69 sabs were arrested 'to prevent any further



Photo: Leeds HSA

Saboteurs getting pushed around by a beater.

breach of the peace' under Section 5 of the new Public Order Act, and were released on caution later that day. One Leeds sab was charged with assault and was also released.

For most, the shoot was the first they had sabbed and the day ended with mixed feelings. Whilst we had earlier ensured that no foxes were killed, the shoot had already bagged at least 30 birds. Should we sab more shoots, saving more lives, or concentrate our resourses on achieving a hunting ban? As far as tactics were concerned, sabs stayed together well until the small group ran ahead; making themselves vulnerable to attack and committing the rest to a situation that may have been avoided. However, when sabs were attacked, help arrived quickly and a pitched battle was avoided by a fairly calm withdrawal.

LOCAL PEOPLE HALT STAGHUNTS

The Devon and Somerset Staghunt is fast running out of friends amongst the people who live in its country. Renowned for the brutal insensitivity of many of its kills, the hunt is in no position to claim that local people are in sympathy with its version of 'country life'.

During Autumn staghunting this year, there have been at least two incidents in which residents have taken spontaneous direct action to save exhausted red deer from death. The most widely publicised was the courageous action of Mrs Barbara Rackshaw, who stood between a hunt marksman and a terrified stag after it was cornered on the roof of her cottage near Porlock, its hooves trapped by broken tiles. Although 'ordered' to stand aside, Mrs Rackshaw was strongly supported by other villagers and stood her ground until the frustrated hunters left the scene.

In the second incident, Mr Michael Biles of Lynton returned to his house to find hunt supporters climbing all over his garden and car-port, and the hunt cornering a stag in a small area of woodland which is in Mr Biles ownership. Like Mrs Rackshaw, he stood in front of the tired animal to protect it.

"It was in a dreadful state", said his wife, "steaming and with blood coming out of its mouth. They told him they wanted to kill it and he told them to get off his property or he would prosecute them. After that they allowed the deer to go. He was verbally abused and spat at."

It must now rest with the HSA to translate such isolated instances of 'instinctive' sabotage into co-ordinated action to drive staghunting finally back into the Middle Ages where it belongs.

POLICE IN MOVE TO END DIGGING OUT!

Police in Scotland have advised the Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire FH to abandon the practice of digging out since the hunt is clearly not able to restrain the psychopathic behaviour of its terrier-man, John Waters.

Waters was recently fined £300 for assaulting a saboteur (see Howl 37) when Clydeside HSA intervened at a dig-out last season. Police from Johnstone, attending the L&R's opening meet this year, told sabs there would be no dig-outs.

It appears that the hunt have entered into an agreement with the police in an attempt to muzzle the embarrassing outbursts of their own dog and spade followers. But hunt secretary, Grant Forest, was tight-lipped when questioned by a local reporter on the matter. "I have no comment to make", he said. "It would only put me in deep trouble."

RIOTING HOUNDS RAMPAGE

Readers of HOWL will not be surprised to hear that packs of foxhounds all over Britain have been rioting out of control after the wrong prey yet again.

The deer pictured (right) was found during a cubhunt of the Chiddingfold FH in Sussex. Saboteurs in the area believe it died whilst trying to evade rioting hounds. "There's no way it would have attempted to jump the fence unless it was being chased," commented one. It became caught on the fence when its right hind leg got trapped between two strands of barbed wire.

On Christmas Eve, the Delamere FH ripped out the throat of a domestic cat at Ashton in Cheshire. Hunt officials were half a mile away when the pack raced into villager Richard Holland's garden and caught his pet as it scrambled to get through the kitchen door. Two further cats were killed in East Anglia during December. On the 19th, the Fitzwilliam FH found theirs at Carrington near Huntingdon, and the Cambridgeshire FH killed one at Ellsworth on the 28th.

Cats had lucky escapes when Mr Goschen's hounds rioted in October, and the East Sussex & Romney Marsh FH rampaged through an animal sanctuary in November. Julie Shepherd of Woolbeding said her cats were fortunately shut indoors when Mr Goschen's pack began running up and down her driveway. "What gets me is the complete lack of regard for other people's feelings and property," she said. Mrs Ethleen Goschen, the Master's wife, was quite sure foxhounds don't kill cats. "They wouldn't think of it," she told reporters, "They live with cats." When the East Sussex ran into Barby Keel's animal sanctuary, one cat was chased up a tree but escaped injury. Hunt members were not apologetic when they arrived. "Just pay the woman for any damage,"

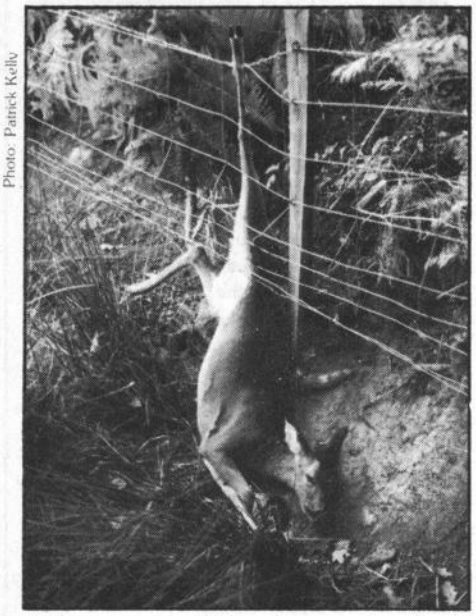


Photo: Patrick Kelly

said one, presumably impatient to get on the the chase.

When the Badsworth FH met at Clayton, South Yorks in November, a villager, short-sighted enough to walk his dogs on the same day, passed within range of the hounds. The pack immediately fell upon the first dog, a chihuahua, chased it into the undergrowth and then returned for the second, a collie. Saboteurs, huntsmen and a police constable could not prevent hounds chasing the unfortunate dog through a clearing and into a wood. When saboteurs and hunt caught up, the collie had vanished but the pack were all wagging their tails. A search for the dog proved fruitless.

WHIPPER-IN SHOT IN LEG

Charles Watts, whipper in with the Quorn, had his britches sprayed with shotgun pellets on October 30th.

He was rounding up the hounds on an estate owned by the furniture tycoon, Stuart Blythe in Leicestershire. Blythe controls shooting interests on the estate and has evidently instructed his gamekeepers to give short shrift to trespassers, especially marauding packs of foxhounds.

As Watts hove into range, a gamekeeper politely asked him to depart. "Get those bloody dogs off my land," were the exact words; at the same time emptying his shotgun into the foxhunters' leg.

This impressive display of brotherly love between bloodsporters is possibly explained by the fact that the self-made Mr Blythe once tried to secure his social position by becoming the Quorn's master, but according to a national newspaper report, he was turned down. Bad breeding probably.

BAITERS NABBED

Four Merseyside men were recently found guilty of badger digging after being spotted carrying a badger by the scruff of its neck.

The men, Steven Movat, Francis Guatella, Andrew Kellie and Robert Gilmour, had gone to a wood at Afonwen in Clwyd, supposedly to search for rabbits, when the sound of their yapping terriers was heard by two local people out walking. They watched as the men carried off the badger, then located the sett and found bloodstained hair and a portion of badger's lung tissue beside it. One, a zoologist, was called by the court as an expert witness.

Finding the diggers guilty, Flint magistrates chair, David Schwarz, said he intended to impose a severe sentence as a warning to others. But, although he could have fined them £2,000 each, he kept the fines to a quarter of that, £500 each.

Badger baiting on Merseyside is reaching worrying proportions according to RSPCA inspectors at Wigan. The society has a thick dossier of information received from people in the area, including a baiter's home video showing known Merseyside terrier-workers in action, but rarely has enough hard evidence to bring a prosecution.

ITALIAN MPs SHOW THE WAY

Hunt saboteurs in Italy went into action on November 15th, cutting nets belonging to bird trappers at Friuli.

Accompanied by two Green Party MPs, Michele Boato and Anna Maria Procacci, 40 members of the League for the Abolition of Hunting braved the physical assaults of hunters and liberated a number of captured birds. Interestingly, the two MPs enjoy parliamentary immunity under Italian law and are therefore protected from arrest.

LOCAL BANS GAIN MOMENTUM

Hunt saboteurs around the country have been lending their support to a number of campaigns for local hunting bans.

Several thousand people in Cumbria have now signed a petition calling on the Lake District Planning Board to ban hare hunting from the Caldbeck and Uldale Commons and the Torver and Blawith Commons. At a preliminary meeting of the board, a ban was lost narrowly by a single vote but the issue will be raised again before the full board on January 26th.

In Oxfordshire, an Anti Death Sports Society (OXADSS) has recently been set up with the aim of ending hunting and coursing in the county by legislative means. A council ban will be fought for, along with a campaign to urge more farmers and landowners to deny access for hunting. The BFSS is certainly worried. It mobilised 500 pro-hunt agitators to swamp and attempt to sabotage OXADSS' first public meeting on December 9th, but the meeting went ahead as planned.

Saboteurs in West Sussex are spear-heading a campaign to persuade the County Council to implement a wildfowling ban at Pagham Harbour. The harbour, which is an important habitat for several migratory and threatened species, has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest by the Nature Conservancy Council and is recognised by the EEC as a Special Protection Area. Despite the fact that conservation work is carried out by at least four reputable organisations in the area, including the Sussex Ornithological Society, shooters are making the rather fanciful claim that if it wasn't for their activities, "the demise of the harbour would be rapid"(!). Leafletting is being co-ordinated by SABS and is now in full swing. The wildfowler's licence comes up for renewal by the Council in the Autumn.

In Leicestershire, the Quorn are getting themselves into an uncharacteristic state of excitement over the action of the Nature Conservancy Council in declaring one of its favourite coverts as SSSI. The picturesque Outwoods near Loughborough, are now protected by 28 new conditions including one which bans "the killing of any wild animal, including pest control." The hunt are assuming that it will still be possible for them to draw the woods as long as they don't kill in them, but Labour councillors and hunt saboteurs will be fighting to keep them out altogether.

Tyneside HSA presented a petition to Northumberland County Council on November 16th, calling for a hunting ban over Bolam Lake Country Park near Newcastle. The petition, which was signed by 7,000 people, was aimed at the Morpeth FH who have been in the habit of visiting the park 4 or 5 times a season, causing mayhem to the abundant local wildlife and annoyance to the many people who come to the park for a bit of peace and quiet. The council looked at the petition in December (together with one from hunt supporters containing the grand total of 37 signatures) and voted unanimously for a ban.

The same council has successfully imposed a shooting ban (on the advice of the Crown Commissioners, no less) at Druridge Bay County Park on the Northumberland coast. The BFSS failed completely once again in its attempt to mobilise opinion against the decision, and presented its objections too late in any case. We can only conclude that either the BFSS are locally imcompetent (quite possibly) or they care less about the problems of shooters than they do about foxhunters (quite likely). It could be both.



Photo: Simon Wild

NORTHUMBERLAND BEAGLING FESTIVAL. Saboteurs, seen here looking after the Ecclesfield Beagles, came from all over the country to save hares at this annual ritualised bloodbath. Full story – centre pages.

NACC APPEALS FOR SABS!

The National Anti Coursing Council (NACC) has made the following appeal to hunt saboteurs:

Sabs! We at the NACC need your bodies desperately!

For the last couple of years, the *Northern* ACC have endeavoured to keep the public aware of what is happening at Altcar, particularly the notorious Waterloo Cup, Without sufficient response despite considerable backing from the LACS. Last year, it finally came down to a measly 300 protesters on a very passive demo/march which the coursing fraternity duly patronised to such an extent that they allowed us right into the Withins to witness their annual slaughter.

It was at that moment that we decided this cannot be allowed to continue and subsequently decided that the NACC needed a new impetus. So, we are no longer just 'northern' in orientation, but National and we have established complete independence from LACS and others (at which point, thanks to the HSA for all it has done to help us).

The interest in coursing 'live' animals is enjoying a resurgence, particularly with the growth of that noxious breed, the 'Lurcher Boy', and that is the reason why we need YOU to form the nucleus of a minimum five thousand turnout this March 1st.

We appreciate the dilemma many of you find yourselves in after recent year's events at Altcar, and consequently must reassure you that there are no plans to sab this particular meet, or come into direct confrontation with the coursers. Some of the more active amongst you may find this frustrating but we do not need another 'Eddie Coulston'.

However, the realities are such: This 'field sport' will one day be the first to be outlawed, and we must work together to hasten that day if we ever want to see an end to all animal abuse.

Therefore you MUST (please) be there: FORMBY RAILWAY STATION (Merseyside), at 9am on TUESDAY, MARCH 1st. In anticipation, **NACC, PO Box 8, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 0DX.**

Signatures to the NACC's petition (publicised in HOWL 37) are now approaching the 100,000 mark. They still need more and if you can help, forms can be obtained from the above address, but please hurry as time is getting short. Failing that, volunteers are still needed to take part in the Altcar-London sponsored walk, at the end of which the petition will be presented to Downing Street. The walk begins on February 13th and will reach London on February 25th. Please send an SAE for a sponsorship form, stating which part of the walk you can do. HSA groups who think they may be able to help en-route should also get in touch.



HUNTING ON BOTH SIDES OF THE LAW

The Legitimate and the illegitimate

It has long been a contention of people opposed to bloodsports that those who participate in hunting desensitise themselves by their constant exposure to killing and are therefore more likely to be cruel than would otherwise be the case. Lacking a degree in psychiatry I have no idea if there is any truth in this allegation but having spent a considerable amount of time researching into the personalities involved in various bloodsports I would certainly support the view that "legitimate" hunting encourages and is inextricably linked to even more barbaric and illegal activities like badger baiting, dog fighting and cock fighting. At this point I would like to say thank you to everyone who has helped me and continues to assist in the collection of the kind of information contained below.



Photo: Simon Wild

"Those who participated in hunting desensitise themselved by their constant exposure to killing". Fox bolted and killed by terriermen from the Hursley Hambledon is fed to hounds at the end of the day.

As described in the last issue of "HOWL" the world of the working terrier owner is a sordid one indeed, it includes some of the most disreputable characters who take great pains to hide their identities and yet go about the business of torturing wild and domestic animals legally (and illegally), with impunity. When, however, the facts come to light, presumably to their horror, the advocates and participants of hunting find themselves tarnished by their association with these people.

Hunting is inextricably linked to these people: in the 1960's hunts began supplementing their funds by holding terrier and lurcher shows. These shows, with cash prizes as an incentive, encouraged all sorts of people to purchase and then "work" their terriers on live quarry, the most testing and formidable of which is the badger. Since 1973 the badger has been the only British wild animal protected not on grounds of being an endangered species but specifically against the infliction of cruelty upon them. So it is not perhaps surprising that terriermen with hunt connections are amongst the hundreds of people convicted in the last few years of digging for and baiting badgers with terriers.

Among these are Jeffrey Elliot from South Wales, sacked as terrierman for the Gelligaer Farmers Foxhunt when convicted of badger digging in 1986; Mark Shaw, formerly an "earth-stopper" for the prestigious Quorn Foxhunt (with whom Prince Charles regularly hunts); Peter Garraway, from Gloucestershire, who in Court on a charge of badger digging claimed that he hunted with his local pack – probably the Berkeley – and Anthony Hurrell, a BFSS member and regular attender of Leicestershire hunt terrier shows, convicted of badger digging in 1986.

These are only the tip of the iceberg. At least half of those terriermen at the time of writing coming up before the courts on charges of badger digging have associations with one hunt or another.

Club Connections

Most, if not all, of those connected with a hunt are members of one or more working terrier clubs such as the Fell & Moorland Working Terrier Club founded in 1967 by a Cumbrian terrierman, Cyril Tyson. The club and many of the local clubs such as the Merseyside Working Terrier Club are affiliated to the National Federation of Working Terriers, whose address is that of the BFSS London H.Q. and whose Secretary, Tony Kirby, is a former regional representative for the BFSS.

Kenneth (Kenny) Kendal a member of the North Pennine Fell & Moorland Working Terrier Club (amongst whose membership are several hunt terriermen), was convicted of badger digging in 1984; Paul Scot from Mexborough also a member of such a club was convicted this year; Wayne Williams from Pencoed, South Wales, a member of two clubs was convicted in 1986 and Gary Humphrey, from Stoke-on-Trent was convicted of badger digging in 1984.

Many of the organisers of these clubs are linked to hunts as their terriermen, for instance Ron McCoy from Plymouth, a former area Rep for the Fell & Moorland Working Terrier Club and his friend Kevin Ellicott are terriermen for the Spooners & West Dartmoor Foxhunt and Eddie Chapman, terrierman for the Dorset based Cattistock Foxhunt is Chairperson to the Jack Russell Terrier Club of Great Britain. It would be foolish to believe that people such as these are unaware of the badger diggers amongst their club members. No doubt these clubs not only provide social benefits but are a good method of disseminating information on the whereabouts of badger setts and provide a way for people with similar bloodthirsty inclinations to meet and organise illegal raids on badger setts.

Dog Fighting

Hunt terriermen cannot escape their links with dog fighting either. Brian Nuttall, from Middlewich in Cheshire is, within terrier circles, highly respected as a breeder of a particularly good working strain of black coated fell terriers (also known as Patterdales). He also breeds cocks, used by some who are involved in cock fighting. A few years ago the RSPCA took him to court for possession of cock fighting equipment although he was cleared. In 1986, his son, Craig Nuttall was convicted with two other Cheshire men of attending a dog fight in London. His father, Brian, is terrierman for the Border Counties Minkhunt.

Another convicted dog fighter, David Morphew of Hertford, has written articles and advertised for sale American Pit Bull Terriers, commonly used in dog fights, in the Shooting News. This magazine has carried adverts, letters and articles submitted to it by people convicted for participation in various illegal activities ever since it first hit the newstands five years ago. Its editorial policy, by accident or design, caters for the very worst types of bloodsports enthusiasts including terrier and lurcher owners, and its readership mirror this policy. Yet still the BFSS and other allegedly "reputable" bloodsports organisations advertise in its pages. Are they trying to recurit badger diggers, dog fighters and the like into their midst?

In 1985 the Wheatland Foxhunt hosted a summer terrier show at its kennels. One of the attractions appears to have been a cock fight. This was raided by the police who netted and charged eight men with offences contrary to the Protection of Animals Act 1911 and the 1952 Cock Fighting Act. One of the men charged and subsequently found guilty on both charges was Terrence (Terry) Richmond, who at the time of his arrest was the

Wheatlands first Kennelman and had been in the hunt's employment for twelve years. His wife Jean regularly took part in organising hunt events. Following his conviction, he was fined the most out of his seven accopices (£1,500). He was sacked by the hunt, one of whose Masters, Captain John Foster, is a local Magistrate.

Criminal Record

This year we note that Terry Richmond is now employed as Huntsman to the West Somerset Vale Foxhunt – do his present employers know of his criminal record? Surely employing a man convicted of contravening the Protection of Animals Act is a strange thing for a hunt to do in the current climate, especially when the hunt concerned is registered with the Masters of Foxhounds Association which claims that the activities of its member hunts are humane and legal.

Most of the other seven men convicted with Terry Richmond own and work terriers, one of them, James Glaister, now follows the Eskdale and Ennerdale Foxhunt in the Lake District.

These connections are all that at present we can reveal, many others are known but must be checked up for a mistake could lead to libel action. Further research is necessary to dig up those other connections which, through lack of resources, presently elude us but are there in our dossiers for discovery. We will keep you posted as they come up.

Here you can help; the HSA is desperately in need of press cuttings about legal and illegal bloodsports. If you find any in your local newspaper please cut them out and send them to us as soon as possible.

It is, however, clear from the above that hunting not only commits, but also encourages obscene cruelty whilst attracting into its ranks the perpetrators of violent and illegal acts against animals. I fear that no amount of righteous condemnation from the BFSS will ever change this.

Ralph Cook

A NEW DAWN

Wind Direction and Correct Positioning

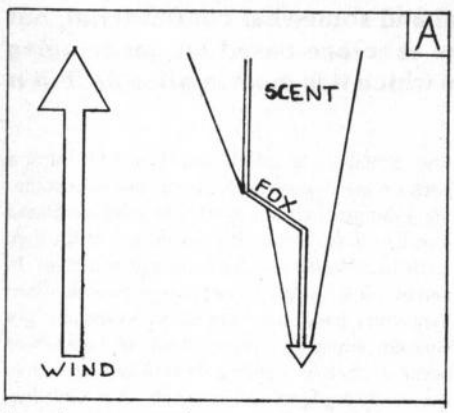
In the first of a new series of articles, HSA Tactics Officer, Aubrey Thomas, takes a detailed look at two aspects of the saboteur's craft that are not always clearly understood.

The HSA tactics booklet was formulated to give sabs an understanding of the basic rules of sabotage and hunting, and the rules which govern predator and prey. Every saboteur should obtain it, read it and make sure they understand it. From there, we can go forward to more specialised tactics. Pages 8 and 9 of the current booklet provide the basic rules which this article will expand upon.

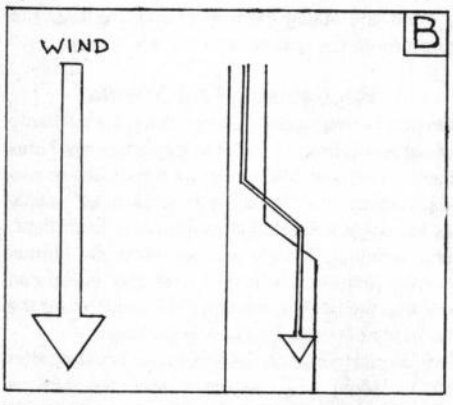
TIMING AND POSITIONING

(Quarry rule 6 and Hound rule 4). The most important lesson all saboteurs must learn is the art of being in the right place at the right time.

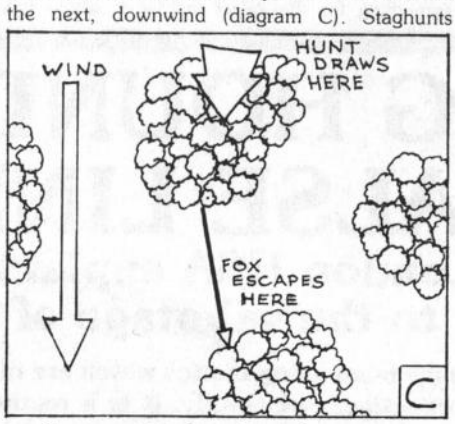
In the main, hunted animals run with the wind, and for obvious reasons. Running into the wind disperses a scent wider and makes it easier for



hounds to pinpoint the quarry's position (diagram A). Running with the wind keeps the scent narrow, and the position of the quarry is disguised by the way the wind disperses the scent (diagram B).



Sooner or later, most packs in chase will turn with the wind. Ideally, foxes will run from one landmark to another, usually from one covert to the next, downwind (diagram C). Staghunts



usually prevent deer from doing the same thing by blocking the quarry's route to the woods and sending it onto open moorland for an uninterrupted chase and kill. We must be careful not to do the same thing to a hunted fox.

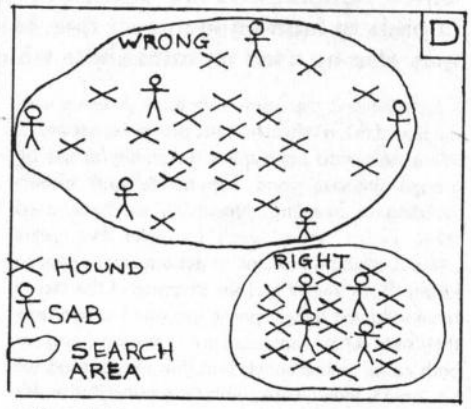
If you stand downwind of the pack, you must remember that this is also the escape route of the quarry and that any noise or sudden movement could force it upwind with disasterous effects. When hounds are casting towards you, follow with as little fuss as possible; when hounds are in full cry towards you, stand absolutely still and quiet until you see the quarry pass you.

The sight of the quarry directly in front of the pack is one that can stir emotions and cause thoughtless action. Running to its aid may be the very movement that kills it. Timing is all important.

Hound rule 4 explains the average time it takes different types of hound to overcome their quarry and you should keep these figures clearly in mind. Provided sabs do not disturb the quarry by moving in front of it, the speed of a hare provides for its initial escape and gives it an average 30 minutes on a large pack of beagles or 40 minutes on a small pack. Foxhounds take an average 40 minutes and bassetts 60 minutes. This gives us plenty of time to get downwind in front of the pack.

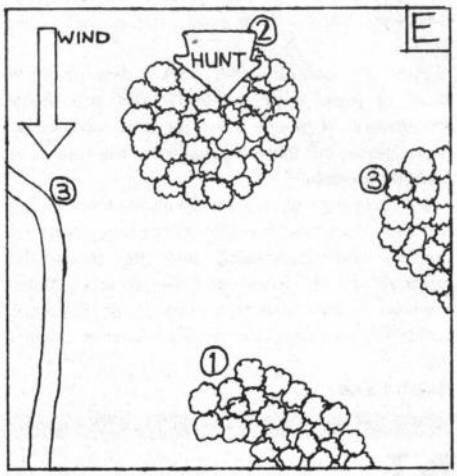
We should, in fact, already be downwind. The question is, how far? Basically you should always have the pack in view, or, if they are in a wood, you should be able to see the end from which you expect the quarry to emerge. Estimate the speed of the hounds. The faster they are, the further away you should be. For foxhounds, the best distance is probably about 700 metres and no more than 1000 metres.

Obstructions downwind, like roads, rivers or railway lines, provide the best positions. But whenever possible, split your group up to cover other positions as well. The second most important place to cover is the pack itself. Stand either in or immediately behind the pack but never in front or at the side. Use voice calls, not too loud, to keep their heads up and break the concentration needed to find and hold a line. Diagram D shows that by standing outside the pack you become part of it and enlarge the search area, which is precisely what you don't want to do.



The third most important area to cover, once you have covered the other two, is to the sides of the pack, slightly in front. This is the one position from which it is safe and advantageous to call the hounds over, using single, sporadic horn calls. Diagram E shows the three positions, numbered in order of importance from 1 to 3. Ideally you should try to cover all of them.

In positon 1, your tactics are all about exploiting angles and making hounds move in different directions. Hares naturally deviate their course from time to time, whereas foxes tend to run straight between landmarks. It is easiest to pull hounds from a line where the line deviates. If you are in a position to see the quarry alter course, make for this point. If the quarry runs straight towards you, especially in the case of a fox, wait until it is within three feet of you and



then, provided it is running full pelt, show yourself by clapping your hands sharply once. The animal's momentum will take it past you before its reaction sends it off on a new course away from you and the hounds.

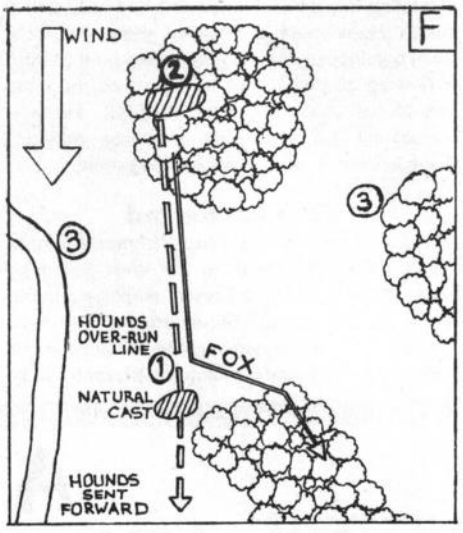
The pack will now follow the line to the deviation and then run straight on for a distance that depends upon their speed and the strength of the wind (see diagram B). Eventually, they will stop and cast themselves or spread out trying to regain the scent.

The second they have over-run the line, you must encourage the hounds further and faster with hunt-on horn calls (rapid notes). Keep up with them and when they stop to cast naturally, wait until one of the hounds, in front only, gives voice (however brief). Respond immediately with the hunt-on call. If hounds start drifing backwards, run ahead using voice calls to bring them forward. Eventually, one young hound will give voice and you'll be able to hunt them on again. Hunting hounds on is further explained in a separate article in this HOWL.

Diagram F shows the system for hunting hounds on.

Saboteurs in positions two and three should now be running to get ahead of hounds and urging them on. Whatever you do in this situation, don't halt them so that the huntsman can catch up and re-cast them. Always hunt them on, away from the huntsman.

Aubrey is keen and willing to give tactics talks (on weekdays only), and will travel any distance at any time to help HSA groups develop their tactics and knowledge of hunting practices. The best and most effective sabs are those who will not only take advice, but seek it, learning from their experience and, importantly from the experience of others. Effective sabotage is not something for the select few; it is within the reach of every saboteur, regardless of sex or physique, that ventures out onto the killing fields. If you'd like Aubrey to come to your group, contact him c/o the HSA PO Box, giving dates on which you are available and supplying a number where you can be contacted. Mark your letter 'Urgent' and 'For the Tactics Officer' and you'll get an immediate reply.



HUNTING HOUNDS ON A FALSE LINE

A member of West London HSA explains his group's radical approach to the sabotage of beagling.

For several years, West London HSA have been using tactics which are radical and somewhat contraversial, but which nonetheless are devastatingly effective. Put simply, it is a method of sabotage based on encouraging hounds to hunt an incorrect line. It is described here in relation to beagling, to which it is most applicable, but it may also be used on minkhunts which operate in a similar fashion.

It must be said that some saboteurs disagree with the use of this method and the principles behind it. We certainly do not think it is suitable for use by groups without good experience and understanding of beagling. However, we have used these tactics every week for over five years without seeing a hunt kill or get anywhere near to killing. Both myself and the inventor of the tactics have followed beagle packs incognito to see how they hunt when saboteurs aren't present, and we both came to the conclusion that the method we use now is ideal. Thus, whilst the principles in this article are only our opinion, it is an opinion based upon an excellent practical knowledge of both hunting and its sabotage.

A Stop-Start Process

Before explaining the tactics, it is necessary to have a basic understanding of the mechanics of beagling. The first point to grasp is that it's always a stop-start process. Hounds will chase a hare for a few minutes and then lose her as she employs instinctive escape mechanisms (such as leaping sideways) which break up the line of scent. Each time the hounds check (lose the scent), they will cast themselves in a circle to try to re-find it. More often than not, they won't be able to, and so when the huntsman catches them up he will cast them in a bigger circle or along hedges etc, until the scent is re-found. A typical hunt of 60-90 minutes may involve 15 or 20 checks; without the huntsman to guide them through these, the pack will not be able to stay with the hare, especially as the scent diminishes as the hare tires. Therefore, the aim of the hunt saboteur must be to split the pack and/or take it away from the huntsman.

If you understand and agree with the principles given above, you can start to use our tactics. As mentioned before, they involve encouraging the pack to hunt a wrong scent. The season this is so effective is that beagles are very keen to hunt and very reluctant to stop when they're on a line. Thus, it's very hard to take them off a scent by calling or hornblowing, especially if the huntsman is telling them to go on. They can hear one horn telling them to stop, and another telling them to hunt on; they will always obey the latter simply because it's what they want to do. The secret, therefore, is to turn this to your advantage.

When the pack picks up a scent which the huntsman doesn't want them to follow, encourage them and they'll obey you in preference to him for the same reasons. Obviously, the important part is knowing when a pack is hunting its intended quarry and when it's hunting something else. Some guidelines for when you should hunt hounds on are given below. But if you make a mistake and encourage them onto the hunted hare, you may look silly but you won't really do any harm because they would have hunted it anyway. Situations in which you must NOT hunt a pack on are those where hounds are near something dangerous such as a main road or snared wood or if they riot onto something which they could catch easily (like foxhounds after a hare). In addition it is useless to encourage hounds when they don't have any form of scent and are not chasing anything. They won't go anywhere because there's nothing to follow, and may eventually just ignore all your calls. Wait until they obviously have a line and/or one or more hounds give voice.

The simplest case in which you SHOULD encourage a pack is when hounds pick up a 'heel line', ie. run the scent backwards. They then have a good line taking them in exactly the opposite direction to the quarry, so keep them on it!

Recognising Old Scents

On good scenting days, there will always be plenty of old scents around from the movements of hares before the hunt. These may be recognised in two ways: firstly, hounds will give voice more quietly as the scent is weaker than that of a fresh hare; and secondly, the line will not follow the normal circular pattern of a hunted hare. So, if you can see that the pack is following old scents, hunt the hounds on – they're chasing nothing.

It is quite common for beagle packs to riot after birds. Where this happens and the bird is

obviously airborne and out of danager, you can hunt them on. Unfortunately, you won't take them very far, but you might hold the hunt up for a few minutes.

The next two situations are a little more difficult to grasp as they actually involve encouraging hounds to hunt an animal. But if you understand beagling, you will realise that this is definitely the right thing to do if you want to save lives and prevent suffering.

The first example is when a pack, having been hunting one hare for some time, picks up the line of a fresh hare instead. To make a kill, the huntsman must stay with one hare and wear it down, so he will try to stop the hounds and put them back onto the original tired hare. If you know this is happening, you must encourage the pack onto the new hare, because it's fit and fresh and will survive much longer than the tired one. You may recognise a change of hare in the following ways: The scent may become stronger, and hence the cry will become louder, and the circular path of the original hare may be broken, with the line following a different pattern. Remember that the huntsman will best be able to tell when the hounds have changed hares, so look to him for guidance! Hence, in any situation where the huntsman tries to stop the pack (long horn calls, whipcracking and rating), a good bet is to hunt them on, remembering the previous warnings of course.

A Split Pack

The final situation in which you should encourage a pack is when it splits and chases more than one hare in different directions at once. Whilst the pack is split, the huntsman cannot control it because he can't be in two or three places at once. So, he needs to stop all the hounds, bring them back and start all over again. You must therefore encourage the hounds, to keep them split up for as long as possible. Remember that stray hounds cannot kill without the huntsman. There is one note of caution: If you scatter a pack far and wide across the country, and then go home, hounds may be left out permanently if the hunt can't find them.

In all situations where you want to encourage a pack to hunt, use short, fast repetetive calls for both horn and voice, doubling the horn and calling "on, on, on, on, on!" Ideally, listen to the calls your huntsman makes when encouraging his pack and copy them exactly.

There are occasions when a pack will hunt well and won't riot onto anything. Obviously, there is no point in trying to encourage them, and other tactics such as calling hounds over to you when they check, should be applied. However, we have found that such situations occur only rarely.

I feel that there are many advantages to the method of sabotage described here. Firstly, it requires very few people. Secondly, each saboteur knows what the others are doing; we don't have different people trying to do different things. It can be used effectively from a distance, and positioning is not too important; you can hunt a pack on regardless of where you are in relation to them. We have also found that the police are very tolerant of our tactics, but much less so of whips, sprays, and using horns to call a pack over. Finally, there is a beneficial long-term effect from this method. Packs which we regularly sabotage become more inclined to over-run a line and more difficult for the huntsman to control.

If anyone is interested in our tactics, please DON'T go ahead and try them just on the strength of this article. Instead, come out with us one weekend and our methods will be properly demonstrated. Please write to West London Group, c/o the HSA at the Exeter address, giving details of when you're free and a phone number if possible. **Pez**

With no huntsman in sight, saboteurs from Oxford take the Christchurch Beagles for bloodless walkies.



Photo: Oxford Joe

HUNTSMANBALLS



"If the antis can keep up, why the hell can't some of our people?"

Richard Standring, huntsman, Bolebroke Beagles 17/9/87 at Beagling Festival.

"She said that she was sorry that no antis had turned up. She would have liked me to see them. 'They arrive in vans', she said. 'You couldn't believe how horrible they look. They are so sordid. The antis are the only sordid thing about hunting'".

Pytchley Hunt supporter in 'In the Pink' by Caroline Blackwood.

"The saboteurs taunt hunt followers in mock 'posh' voices about BP share losses, caviar and Mercedes cars — and have never been seen purchasing poppies for the Earl Haig Fund although these are always readily available in the vicinity of the opening meet."

Derek Parker, Paisley Daily Express, 23/11/87.

"The hunt supporters and followers look at it like this. If they went down to Fratton Park or the Dell, climbed the fence and marched onto the ground, they would be frogmarched off. Someone is going to get hurt sooner or later. They are bringing it on themselves."

Douglas Hunt, huntsman, Hursley Hambledon FH, Portsmouth News, 23/12/87.

"Now lord Mancroft is off heroin, he has joined the hunt."

Daily Telegraph Magazine on the new joint master of the VWH, 8/11/87.

Of the fox:

He has the habit of breaking into henhouses — not to eat the wildfowl, merely to slaughter. He has been known to even attack sheep and tear their backs out."

Paul Callan, Sunday Mirror, 27/12/87.

"The people of Porlock are more sympathetic to hunting than they are to the denimed and tweedy protesters who drive out with their placards from the towns at the weekends".

Alison Bowyer, Mail on Sunday, 18/10/87

"If you write a favourable story about us you can have a free ride".

Maurice Scott, Master, D & S Staghunt to Alison Bowyer, Mail on Sunday 18/10/87 (and, despite quotation above, she did not).

"Twenty five years of moralising mayhem has seen the movement's supporters grow into fully-fledged members of the eccentric rural scene".

Richard North on the HSA, The Independent, 28/12/87.

"My 14 year-old daughter Kate is looking forward to meeting the young Thrusters who hunt...."

Nick Fawcett, joint master, Surrey Union FH, Supporters Newsletter, September 87.

"If you keep doing this, I'll make things very hard for you. At work, at school.... and if you ever need financial assistance!"

Julian Wilson, East Lincs Hare Hounds, to sabs, 17/10/87.

"Onslow and I had worked out that, taking £5,000 as an average cost of a year's hunting for most followers, of whom there are about 200,000, and the annual killing by British hunts of about 15,000 foxes, each fox killed in this way costs about £650,000."

Richard North, The Independent, 26/10/87.

"TFB — the pack that likes to say 'yah!"

David Abberton, ex-joint master, Trinity Foot Beagles, 13/9/87

SABOTEURS STORM BEAGLING ORGY

The annual Northumberland Beagling Festival is the premier event in the beagling calendar. Until about ten years ago, it was known by the more appropriate name of 'Beagling Orgy', for that's exactly what it is. The host Newcastle & District Beagles and their 10–15 visiting packs hunt six days a week throughout September with up to 4 hunts a day towards the close.

Northumberland's large tracts of open moorland and relatively high hare population are a strong attraction for visiting packs and the intensity and timing of the 'orgy' make it a good opportunity for hunts to enter their new hounds, much as foxhunters do during cubhunting. Hunters are also lured to the festival by the promise of a month that has usually be virtually free of saboteurs. But this year they were to be disappointed.

In July, HSA committee were approached by Tyneside HSA and asked to back a national week of action against the festival. £470 was duly allocated for organisation, and HSA groups throughout the country were alerted through the contacts system. During August, Tyneside HSA made preparations and researched every aspect of the festival. The major problem, the closely guarded secrecy of the meets, was overcome, and research indicated that the third week of September, the height of the festival, would be the best time for sabotage. As well as saving lives, Tyneside HSA were hoping to expose and discredit the festival in the local media and disturb the introduction of the hunts' new entry. The group sent us this report:



Photo: Simon Wild

The Ecclesfield in full flight. At first sight of saboteurs, they ran straight back to the meet.

Monday September 14th saw the first major action. With two meets taking place simultaneously in the morning, sabs split up to cover each one. The morale of the Trinity Foot, meeting at Reaveley, was immediately demolished when, having travelled 250 miles to enjoy a fortnight of uninterupted hunting, they found themselves confronted by Cambridge HSA, their local sab group. At West Woodburn, the Newcastle & District called the police, a number of whom soon arrived and quickly arrested 23 saboteurs for 'action likely'. But by the end of the day, all had been released and no charges have been brought. The remaining groups continued on to the afternoon meet of the Wick and District where they encountered Bob Knight, joint master of the Old Berkeley. Mr Knight had decided to appoint himself Land Agent General of Northumberland and, in his new-found role, began forcibly ejecting sabs from the field and attempting to make citizen's arrests on anyone who moved. This kept him busy all afternoon as, one after another, all the sabs he frogmarched away returned to the field.

Four meets were scheduled for Tuesday and it was the Ecclesfield, so far yet to be sabbed, who drew the shortest straw. The sight of 50 sabs appearing along a ridge at Twice Brewed near Hadrians Wall obviously reminded the pack's two huntsmen of a certain historic occasion at Little Big Horn. Unlike General Custer though, the unfortunate duo turned and fled with their bemused hounds trailing behind them. After sulking by the roadside with a handful of constables, and spending 20 minutes retrieving a hound that had gone off with the sabs, they boxed up and went home.

The Bolebroke Beagles found themselves swamped by sabs that afternoon and were brought to a standstill despite police harrassment and blocked-off farm roads. The hunt's officials were left to contemplate the pointlessness of their 300 mile journey from Sevenoaks.

On Wednesday, after completely outmanoevering the Newcastle & District in the morning, saboteurs visited the more professional Wick & District at Sweethope Lough in the afternoon. By now, all sabs had had some experience of beagling and were acting instinctively. As Bob Knight moved in to make further arrests and police (not to be outdone) decided that even the public road was private property, a hare broke across the road without warning. HSA Tactics Officer, Aubrey Thomas, seized the opportunity presented by the hounds over-running the scent and encouraged them on. In a frenzy of excitement, they found the scent of a roe deer which easily out-ran them. The whipper-in had now been left a mile adrift, and the hounds had lost all concentration.

The Bolebroke were at Dunterley on Thursday, with huntsman Richard Standring struggling unhappily with thick heather, mist and hunt saboteurs. With the assistance of sabs, hounds over-ran their scent and were led off on a merry chase back towards the meet a mile or so away. When Standring and his whips finally caught up and tried to take the pack back to higher ground, saboteurs split them up and took the larger part of the pack for a half mile jog along the slope of the moor. With difficulty, Standring pulled his hounds back together but was once again thwarted by saboteurs' horning and the desertion of his pack on another long run back down the valley towards the meet. The final blow was struck when Standring took the pack for a long walk uphill in the direction of a figure waving in the distance which turned out to

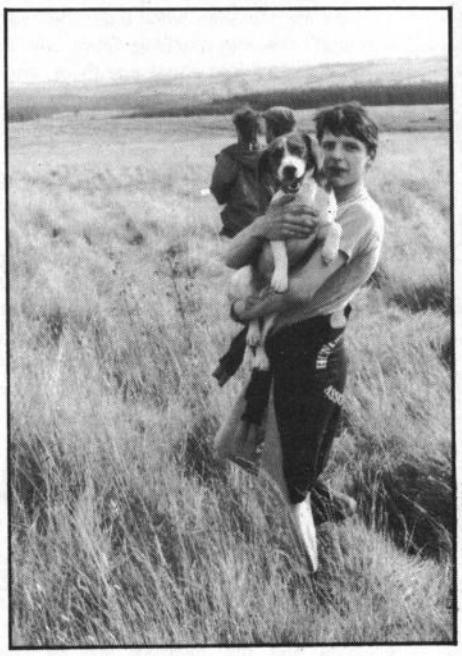


Photo: Simon Wild



DESERTING A SINKING SHIP. The Newcastle and District's huntsman and two whippers-in turn in despair as their entire pack runs away to start a new life with the HSA. A saboteur (foreground) calls hounds over.

be a saboteur waving to her friends. The hunt ended with huntsman and whips having to carry half the pack back to the meet since many hounds were now too exhausted to move.

A Tyne Tees TV crew joined the Old Berkeley's afternoon meet near Bellingham. Barely had they switched on their camera when a saboteur was hit and fell to the ground, volubly expressing his pain. The camera caught him clutching his head, surrounded by concerned friends and the resulting film was broadcast every evening as a trailer to a programme due out on Sunday and would have been seen by several hundred thousand people throughout the north-east.

Friday morning found the Trinity Foot battling hopelessly against strong gales on Castlehill. It's indicative of the consumate skill and prowess of this pack that the five saboteurs who were dispatched there proved more than adequate to prevent a kill. At the afternoon meet of the Hunsley Beacon Beagles at Colt Park, a hare bounded over a wall with the pack only three metres away. As the hounds reached the wall, two waiting saboteurs called to them and ran them at a right angle to the line taken by the hare. A whip arrived and put them back onto the line, only to have them brought to a standstill by more saboteurs further on. So it went on, the hunt rarely progressing unimpeded for any great distance.

On the final day, Saturday, saboteurs found the biggest meet of the week, hosted by the Newcastle & District on Wark Common. Two groups of sabs made for the area to be hunted; one was intercepted by the heavy police presence, but the other managed to get into the fields along the Pennine Way. After hounds over-ran their line, leaving the whips behind, some exceptional sab horn-blowing urged them on. Obstructed by a dry-stone wall, the pack split in two, and groups of saboteurs took command of each half, running the first for a mile and a half along the Pennine Way and the second into an outlying corner of Wark Forest, a solid block of conifers that stretches 10 miles westwards to the Cumbria border. The hunt was finished. Black clouds unleased torrential rain to complete the beaglers' misery as they searched for a pack that had by now all but disappeared into the depths of the Forestry Commission jungle.

The Tyne Tees TV report that followed on Sunday evening, and the following week's edition in which a large number of viewer's letters attacking bloodsports were read, showed



Photos: Ian Brown

"When are you lot going home?" Ollie Hall feels the strain.

Photo: Simon Wild

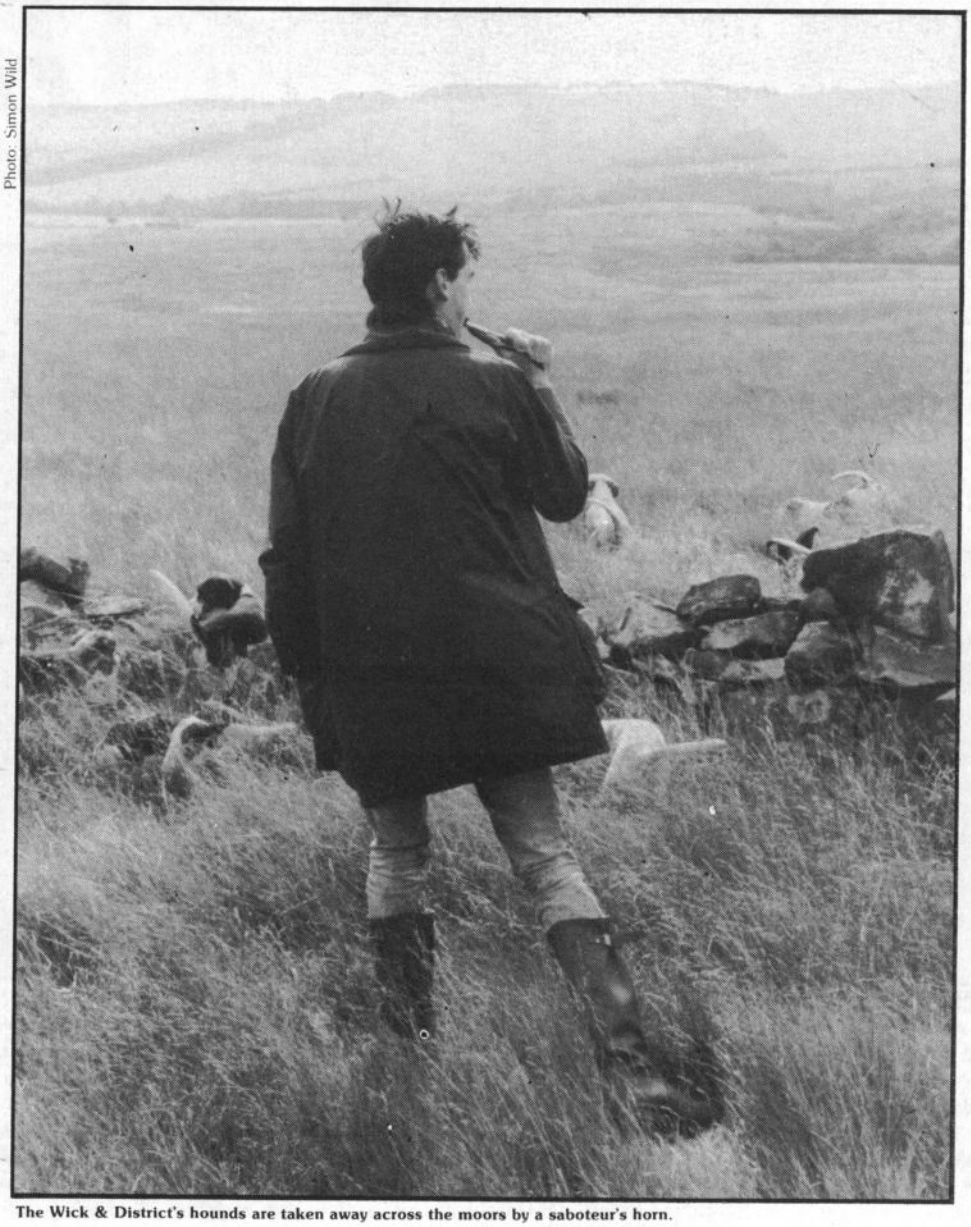
that the exposure we had achieved of the festival had been a valuable exercise.

In the following week, Tyneside HSA paid two further visits to the festival. On the second of these, they were treated to a staggering display of hunting incompetence, courtesy of the Christchurch & Farley Hill. Three times, the pack split, heading off in opposite directions along the same line. When the huntsman eventually persuaded his hounds to all hunt in the same direction, one sab blew the Laurel and Hardy theme tune on his horn and the entire pack came bounding over in great excitement, ignoring completely the huntsman's own horn calls.

The festival had been an unqualified success for hunt saboteurs. 22 of the 54 scheduled hunts were sabbed, with only one possible, and no confirmed kills. Eight of the ten packs participating were disrupted. It is, of course, impossible to estimate how many hares were saved, but judging from the numbers that were seen over the week, it would be fair to estimate an expectation of at least two kills per outing. Most people who arrived at the start of the week with no experience of hare hunts returned with a considerable amount of first-hand knowledge. It cannot be over-estimated how important this could be for the future of the hare as a species. The Game Conservancy's statement that the hare is in "real, substantial and serious" decline is now 5 years old and the situation has not improved. With this in mind, it is to be hoped that local groups who see sabbing beagle packs as less important then foxhunts, will think again about their priorities and act to save not just a life, but a species.

Tyneside HSA would like to thank the following local groups who took part in the week of action: Aberystwyth, Swansea, Rochdale, Merseyside, Clydeside, Potteries, West Cumbria, Cambridge, Lakeland, Huddersfield, Portsmouth, Sheffield, Carlisle and West London, and all HSA Committee members who came.

Photo: Simon Wild



The Wick & District's hounds are taken away across the moors by a saboteur's horn.

GROUP NEWS

This section is compiled from written summaries and hit reports sent in by local groups. If your group isn't mentioned, it's because you havn't told us what you've been doing.

SCOTLAND

CLYDESIDE HSA were puzzled by the non-appearance of the *Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire* for cubhunting in September until one of the hunt's dim-witted supporters scoffed at sabs waiting outside kennels one Saturday and told them they'd had an 'awfully good day' yesterday. The followng Friday, saboteurs duly discovered this sneaky pack and put paid to the subtefuge. The unhappy hunt reverted back to Saturday meets thereafter. Clydeside HSA have been with them ever since, midweek outings included, and with numbers ranging from 60 to 100. Hunt sabotage continues to grow in Scotland with a new group in the making at Paisley and a resurgence of interest amongst university students swelling the ranks of the Stirling group. With Edinburgh HSA, they are combining to sabotage the *Linlithgow and Stirlingshire FH* every week despite the close physical attentions of a few new terrier men who obviously know no better. Tayside HSA have stuck with the *Fife FH* as usual, but are up against increasing harrassment from the local constabulary.

NORTHERN IRELAND

BELFAST HSA have been increasing their activities, holding demos at coursing meetings in November and December. Police threats to use the Public Order Act against them have had only marginal effect, and the group intends to mount full-scale sabotage of coursing meetings in the near future. They have also been out with *East Down FH* who they persuaded to pack up at *2pm* on November 14th after taking hounds for a half-mile job using horn and voice. *The North Down Harriers* had an equally bad day when the group visited them, again blowing home in the early afternoon and failing to kill.

NORTH

Due to the heavy policing of the *Holcombe Hunt*, and the fact that many nearby hunts were getting away with murder, MERSEYSIDE HSA have been travelling. The *Colne Valley* and the *Bleasdale Beagles* were the first to be accounted for. The *Royal Rock Beagles* were assisted by the police who delayed sabs from reaching the hunt. The group's best day this season was against the *Pendle Forest and Craven Harriers* who hadn't seen saboteurs since 1978. All hunts visited failed to kill.

Saboteurs from CARLISLE, CUMBRIA, LANCASTER, and LAKELAND HSA have been active against the *Cumberland Farmers FH*, the *Lunesdale FH* and the *Eskdale & Ennerdale FH*. Lakeland fellpack sabotage involves saboteurs in a great deal of running on steep fells and can be an exhausting exercise. They encouraged the Eskdale's hounds onto a false scent during the November 14th meet and then saved a fox by masking its scent and calling hounds away as they went into cry in woodland. The packs were taken off into adjoining fields and were so confused by saboteur's calls that the hunt gave up and retreated to kennels. Sabs are improving their technique all the time, sticking with a fell-pack from the outset, splitting into groups and using good map-work and close CB contact to co-ordinate their action.

WIGAN HSA made an unsuccessful attempt to get close to the *Holcombe Harriers* on November 28th, but the hunt's private army of police

threatened arrest for the slightest interference. Police proved less interested in protecting the *Colne Valley Beagles* however, and the group had a good day, preventing any kills and apparently being responsible for the huntsman's desperate urge to work his hounds on in twilight for the whiff of a hare.

Following up their demolition work on the *Badsworth's* cubhunting, SHEFFIELD HSA have now turned their attention to the pack's main season with two new student groupss swelling their number. Relations with police have been good here with friendly constables even sharing their lunchboxes with hungry saboteurs. The new LEEDS POLY group is now off and running, working with the UNIVERSITY sabs and covering a number of hunts, including the *Badsworth, Rockwood Harriers, Bramham Moor, Vale of Lune Harriers* and the *York and Ainsty*. They've witnessed only one kill, an early morning chop by the *York & Ainsty* in a kale field in mid-November. The group is putting more emphasis on pre-meet tactics than before, partly as a means of evading the attention of the police who are proving very obstructive.

BIRKBY HSA hve been travelling about, joining up with NOTTINGHAM for some pleasant afternoons with the *Grove & Rufford FH*. Their huntsman, Tony Lock, is not a great hornblower and after two hours of watching his pack scattering to the tune of sab horns on September 22nd, he got fed up and went home. BIRKBY group have sent him a horn-blowing tape to cheer him up. They found the elusive *East Lincs Hare Hounds* on October 17th and ran rings around them. When a hare took refuge in a villager's garden, a woman came out and refused to let the hunt's yobs go in after it. Villager's also told the *Bramham Moor* where to get off in October when hounds careered through gardens and a pub car-park at Thorpe Arch. Saboteurs had previously called hounds away as they marked to ground where a suspected bagged fox had taken refuge. The *Rockwood Harriers* seemed completely taken aback when BIRKBY and LEEDS saboteurs turned up on October 24th and took their pack away. Sabs kept the hounds for over an hour whilst the huntsman sat on the far side of a valley, vainly trying to recall them but not prepared to go and collect them. His clueless whipper-in sat silently behind him and most of his very bored mounted field headed home for an early bath.

With 12 foxhunts and 3 beagle packs already within striking distance, TYNESIDE HSA are not unduly worried by the apprearance of a new hunt, the *North Pennine FH*. They visited them in October and found an incompetent foot-pack with 10 trencher-fed hounds and virtually no supporters. Sabs from TYNESIDE, SUNDERLAND, STOKE, and the USA (!) travelled to Melsonby for the *Zetland's* opening meet. Half the field went home after 90 minutes and the hunt failed to kill or even find a scent all day, strengthening the rumours circulating at the Beagling Festival that cubbing had been a disaster due to the over-zealous behaviour of Zetland terriermen. Tyneside HSA's active membership is well-up this season with about 30 sabs going out each week.

WALES

Trouble dogged the footsteps of ABERYSTWYTH HSA in the early part of the season with hunt thugs assaulting the group on the *Clifton upon Teme* and at the *Tivyside FH*. On October 23rd, 25 saboteurs split into two groups to find the *Tivyside* at Glandy Cross. While one group ran amongst the hounds and called them away, huntsman Norman Mathews worked out his frustrations on the second group, kicking one sab in the mouth, and smashing the van windscreen with his crop. One hunt follower who helped block them in was the hunting correspondent of the Tivyside Advertiser. Her 'report' alleged that saboteurs had driven into ponies (!) and then cornered and attacked Norman Mathews. Not only was it untrue, it was also an open incitement to violence, and, sure enough, when ABERYSTWYTH HSA returned to the *Tivyside* a week later, they found the countryside brimming with gullible rent-a-mob farmhands, all eager to protect poor Norman from any further inconvenience. The resulting 'trouble' was pre-meditated and systematic. By the time the group left for home, one saboteur had been beaten unconscious, one was severly concussed and one had a broken arm. Lesser groups would be deterred, but Aberystwyth have since had good days against the *Tanatside FH* and the *Glyn Celyn Beagles*.

To the south, the *Pentrych FH* had a bad start to their season courtesy of SWANSEA, PORT TALBOT and CARDIFF groups.

The *Llangeinor FH* never found another scent on November 21st after saboteurs took their hounds off the first with horn and voice. When the same pack met at Pencoed three weeks later, sabs from the South Wales groups were there waiting for them after pre-spraying an area near the meet. Hounds soon arrived and were cast over the sprayed area, their concentration further broken by a series of mysterious false calls coming from all around them.



Photo: Ian Brown

Newcastle and District huntsman, Ollie Hall, welcomes saboteurs to the Beagling Festival.

MIDLANDS

The *South Herefordshire FH* had an unfortunate time of it on September 19th. Saboteurs from WEST MIDLANDS, BIRMINGHAM UNI, WORCESTER and COTSWOLD groups took the pack away and horned them on across several fields. The dismayed whipper-in, who seemed still to be learning the art of cracking a whip properly (the one time he managed it, he hit himself in the head) had his work cut out to retrieve them but was gentleman enough to compliment the sabs on their hornblowing. WORCESTER HSA have been our regularly as usual, casting their net wide and taking in the *Warwickshire Beagles, Ledbury FH, North Hereford FH, Cotswold Vale Farmers FH, Ross Harriers, Worcestershire FH* and the *Wheatland FH*. The *Wheatland* were sabbed very effectively by the police who clattered about overhead in a helicopter for 5½ hours at public expense. The hunt's measured success is perhaps reflected in their inability to progress further than a mile from the meet all day. Pre-beating a meet of the *Worcestershire FH* with LEAMINGTON HSA at Hindlip had to be done quietly as the coverts border West Mercia police HQ! Vast numbers of police turned up at the outset but then vanished as the hunt's heavies lumbered in. A retaliation hit by other assorted MIDLAND groups put the hunt in its proper place.

LEAMINGTON HSA have also been combining with COTSWOLD and WEST MIDS HSA for hits on the *Warwickshire Beagles*, the *Atherstone FH*, and the *Albrighton Woodland FH* when the police helicopter put in another appearance with similar effects. A joint visit to the *Worcestershire* in October had the effect of sending the hunt home at 10am, early enough for



Photo: Birkby HSA

Saboteurs from Birkby and Leeds call away hounds from the Rockwood Harriers.

saboteurs to keep an appointment with the *Warwickshire Beagles* in the afternoon. Unfortunately, they were frog-marched off the field by an insane woman with a shotgun. Police arrived at the same hunt two weeks later, and finding it swamped with saboteurs from COTSWOLD and MIDLAND groups, advised the hunt to keep still and stop hunting!

The *Atherstone FH* spent a morning with LEICESTER HSA on November 21st and decided to hunt through a children's playground at Ibstock, earning themselves a good deal of adverse publicity on local radio in the process. Saboteurs had to intervene bodily between fox and hounds when the hunted animal sped past them with only a 20 yard start. For this act of valour, they were rewarded with horsewhips. LEICESTER saboteurs spend most of their time making life difficult for the *Cottermore*, the *Fernie* and the *Quorn* and have gained some good local newspaper coverage in prime rural hunting country.

NOTTINGHAM and DERBY groups have been harrying the *Grove & Rufford FH* and the *Meynell FH* . At the *Grove's* Park leys meet on October 10th, Notts police moved in and used the Public Order Act as an excuse to confiscate 10 sprays and a horn and then block access to public footpaths (so what's new?).

EAST

A new Cambridge beagle pack, set up by seven bored yuppies to help them relax, was given an appropriate send-off on its first outing. It was sabbed. Hunt saboteurs from CAMBRIDGE and SAFFRON WALDEN visited the *Newmarket Beagles* but were completely out-numberd by the local police and obstructed in just about everything they tried to do. Fortunately, the scent was poor and the hunt so incapable that one saboteur was able to report, "We did nothing and it worked fairly well." A few weeks later, saboteurs returned to find the hunt barred from their planned meet at the Golden Ball Inn at Boxworth by a community which refused to tolerate them, and having to box up and find somewhere else to hunt. Once again, police moved in as self-appointed minders of this bunch of unwanted commodity brokers, blocked public thoroughfares and threatened to arrest anyone who tried to go near them. CAMBRIDGE HSA have seen an increase in police at hunt meets throughout Cambs and Essex this season. The group worked with NORWICH, MID ESSEX and SAFFRON WALDEN HSA to disrupt the cubhunting of the *Essex FH*, making the hunt paranoid enough to hold their opening meet on a Monday. Saboteurs were there as usual, of course. NORWICH and CAMBRIDGE attended the opening meet of the *West Norfolk FH*, and despite numerous foxes about in the area, no kills were recorded. The *Essex & Suffolk FH's* opening meet was attended by 60 saboteurs who took the pack so successfully that a whipper-in had to get out of the saddle to remonstrate with one hound who obviously preferred the company of vegans. Throughout the cubbing season, this pack was inundated with saboteurs from NORWICH, WEST SUFFOLK, GREAT YARMOUTH and LOWESTOFT. CAMBRIDGE HSA travelled south east on November 26th to join with saboteurs from West London and Oxford who were hitting a fox-shoot. The action was a complete success, with the shooters packing up and leaving without a single gun being fired.

COLCHESTER & HALSTEAD HSA, with a new group based at COLCHESTER UNI, have been concentrating on the *East Essex FH* with saboteurs from SAFFRON WALDEN. They have found the pack tight and professional whilst hunting and difficult to distract. Effective sabotage has depended largely upon pre-meet tactics.

SOUTH WEST

WEST WILTSHIRE HSA have been acting as a full time Beaufort Destruction Society for a couple of seasons now and have been needling the hunt virtually every week since September. Extensive rookying of coverts has made the *Beaufort* abandon intended draws again and again, often trapsing off to the extensive woodlands of Westonbirt Arboretum or the Badminton Estate where it is easier to hide and sulk. WEST WILTS are such a civilised bunch that even terrier-man Fred Daw has been telling hunt heavies to "leave off, they're alright". A paranoid rider with horizontal gums was not so sure. On December 5th, he threatened to "hunt down and murder" a completely innocent saboteur for "taking the rise out of my teeth". *Beaufort's* hounds are prone to riot. On December 19th, they upset villagers by rampaging through gardens in pursuit of a fox which sabs were fortunately on hand to assist. Other hunts visited by this group include the *Tedworth* and the *Avon Vale FH*.

The *Beaufort* have also received attention from BATH HSA. At the opening meet, hounds were stopped on the scent of a fox running only yards ahead through Sopworth village by good horning and the action of a quick-thinking sab who covered the trail with about a gallon of garlic water! The group have twice travelled to find the *South and West Wilts FH* but with mixed fortunes. On November 14th, they sabotaged the digging out of two foxes, one of which was saved after saboteurs were evicted from a fox earth. As the fox was bolted, good hornblowing pulled the pack the wrong way. The other was saved by the less conventional tactic of a lone saboteur clinging gamely to the terrier man's back until be let go of it. When the group returned to the hunt in December, they were assaulted and it is hoped that charges may be brought against several hunt members as a result.

Saboteurs from BRISTOL, COTSWOLD and BIRKBY (Yorks) called in on the VWH during September cubhunting at Gryphon Lodge. Using short staccatto bursts on the horn, they pulled half the pack from the first draw, causing a nervous huntsman to sit tightly on his hounds for the rest of the morning. The whip and huntsman worked hard to keep 16 new entrants and 4 older hounds together against constant sab horning and although only two or three dogs trotted out of covert, the rest were split up, confused, and unable to concentrate. No kills.

SOUTH

The infatiguable OXFORD group has been active against hunts in its area more than once a week ever since September. Those taken in include the *Portman, Grafton, Vale of Aylesbury, VWH, Bicester & Whaddon Chase, Old Berks, Heythrop, Christchurch & Farley Hill Beagles, Warwickshire Beagles, Old Berkely Beagles,* and the *Marlborough College Beagles*. The effective use of rookies in hunt coverts during cubhunting prevented the *Bicester* from finding at all on September 17th, and at other meets, small groups of saboteurs (sometimes just one!) were able to pull hounds from coverts using good hornwork.

SOUTH EAST

FARNHAM HSA covered all of *Mr Goschen's* cubbing meets and prevented any kills above ground, staking out the kennels four days a week throughout the season. Main season hunting has seen the same poor performance from the hunt and it has become desperate enough to start holding up kale fields. Sabs deal with this by quickly beating the kale minutes before hounds are entered and then pulling hounds out with horns from the back of a retreating landrover. Still without a kill on top, the hunt is losing support and had only 12 riders out on Saturday meets during November.

TUNBRIDGE WELLS HSA occupied the entrances to a badger sett on November 28th when the *Old Surrey & Burstow FH* chased a fox to ground near Lingfield. When the hunt left the scene, half the sabs left with them, the rest sticking it out for 30 minutes until the terrier men got fed up. Since sabs could not be evaded all day, the hunt virtually gave up trying to kill anything and hacked about fruitlessly until blowing home. The group have joined with saboteurs from NORTH DOWNS, CROYDON, SLAPS, BRIGHTON, TONBRIDGE and BRUNEL for actions in the south east. The famously incompetent *Surrey Union FH* have been receiving close attention as usual throughout cubhunting and the main season and don't seem to be getting any better.



Photo: Oxford Joe

Come Along! The Tedworth's hounds bound out of covert to sabs from West Wilts & Oxford.

BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS

Comradeship should be a source of strength, mutual support and self confidence. But to the new recruit who may be most in need of it, comradship is often sadly out of reach. A hunt saboteur from the South East looks at the problem.

From a hunt saboteur's point of view, a recent trip out to a dry-ski slope with my university skiing club was quite revealing. No, I wasn't taught how to sab a polar bear hunt armed only with a pair of goggles and a bobble hat, but instead I was party to an invaluable lesson in one aspect of sabotage in which practically every sab group I've met, including those I've been part of, has been rather lacking. That lesson was in the art of communication, realistically the single most important asset which we all need in animal rights and related movements if we are to succeed in our aims.

Picture the scene; I'd never seen a pair of skis at close quarters before, had little idea of what to do once wearing them, and worse, posessed all the usual paranoias about having limbs scattered all over the slope once unleashed. Also, I had a twenty mile ride to look forward to in a mini-bus full of people, none of whom I'd never seen before. Unsurprisingly, my own fears of hospitalisation, coupled with the overwhelming number of strange faces, led to a common attack of Golden Silence.

Joyous Exaggerations

An irrelevant load of bullshit that has nothing to do with sabbing? Hardly. How many times has your group taken out new sabs and then been surprised when they didn't come out again the following Saturday? Frequently we are all too wrapped up in our own joyous exaggerations of the previous week's sab, safely laughing and joking with our own friends in the mini-bus in our own cliquey fashion about how pissed we got the night before, how many 'pigs' (a speciesist indictment of the real thing) we beat up, etc. etc... Too wrapped up to pay any attention to the nervous wreck cowering shadow-like at the back of the transit, and feeling totally out of both the conversation and the impending action, whose fears are probably only escalating because of our boastful talk. It may even be that some of us use our friends as a wall to hide our own shyness and discard responsibility for making the first move to talk to new sabs by telling ourselves that such initiatives should come instead from the newcomer.

Getting out of this rut of non-communication is relatively easy. First step is to realise that the onus is ALWAYS on the 15 people who already know one another to make the first move, not the one or two new sabs. And that means YOU, not just the other 14.

By the time I'd got to the ski-slope, most of my fears had dissolved and as a result, I was more confident of what I was doing and thus avoided breaking anything; because, from the outset, the other skiers had made the effort to talk to me, had explained how to stay upright, and had shown an interest in my life outside of the skiing context — all of which combined to make me feel a welcome part of their club.

It's so easy. Simple questions like, "Where are you from?", "What are you doing?", "What made you come sabbing?" all help to make a newcomer feel at ease amongst a bunch of complete strangers. Your group could even assign the task of 'Chaperone for the Day' to a few different sabs each week. Giving new sabs a tactics book and telling them to read it before they come is essential, but not enough. Ask new sabs if there's anything they don't understand, expand on the more complicated aspects of sabbing; you'll find that it helps your own confidence as much as that of the first-timer. All this can be done on the way to the hunt, but the final kick in the new-comer's teeth usually comes when you pile out of the van at the first sight of a redcoat, fall into your own Rambo-come-Robin Hood fantasy world, and go charging off over the fields, invariably leaving the new sabs behind, often lost, possibly to fall prey to the hunt's heavies.

Sabbing is not just a selfless/selfish action for the benefit of the individual's enjoyment every Saturday. We have a duty to help and pass on skills we have learnt to the next generation of sabs. When out in the field, new sabs are not 'somebody else's problem', they're YOURS. Don't leave them behind, try and get them to keep up with you, or at least stay with them: explain to them what you're doing, why you're blowing the horn in such a way, why you're running away from the nice bunch of country gents coming towards you and waving their sticks wildly, and so on.

It's worth the effort, not only because it involves new sabs in the action, but also because it benefits you. The sooner they pick up the gist of successful sabbing, the more of a cohesive and efficient unit your sab group will become.

If we can break these barries of communication that we ourselves create in the first place, then new sabs will quickly feel at ease and a part of what is going on, enough, hopefully, for them to want to come out again. The more people we get out regularly every Saturday, the faster our movement will grow and prosper, and thus the sooner animals will stop being ripped to shreds for no reason. Surely that is what we all want.

The Ghost of Paint-Pots Deep.

Photo: Simon Wild



Mr Goschen's whipper-in tries to ride down a sab. Is she sure of the support of her fellow activists?

NOTICEBOARD

BRENDAN McNALLY will be known to many of you as an HSA activist and northern area contact for several years. Brendan is now serving a 4 year goal sentence, dished out to him at the Sheffield ALF conspiracy trial a year ago. One of the worst things about being locked up for someone like Brendan is being out of touch with the movement. He'd particularly like to hear from HSA activists about how the movement is progressing and you can write to him, T03014, at HM Prison Acklington, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE65 9XF.

WINCHES FARM DEFENCE FUND — four people arrested for raiding the London School of Tropical Medicine at St Albans are badly in need of your financial support for their forthcoming court case. Winches Farm has received chimps for vivisection from London Zoo. Defence Fund c/o BCM 5911, London WC1N 3XX.

MINDLESS SLAUGHTER is the new Artists for Animals benefit LP for the HSA. Featuring rare and unreleased material from the Mekons, Chumbawamba, TV Smith, Conflict and others, it's yours for just £4.50 (inc p&p) from AFA, PO Box 18, South PDO, Manchester 14.

SCAR, the Student Campaign for Animal Rights, is currently campaigning to help students who don't want to take part in vivisection in their courses; investigating university vivisection; and promoting vegetarian/vegan diets for students. If you're a student, you should already be involved. If not, contact Box SCAR, Mandela Building, 99 Oxford Rd, Manchester.

THE FOX is an interesting new journal aimed at "promoting the fox in every possible way in order to get rid of the superstitions and myths which have surrounded the species for centuries". It costs 20p per issue (36p by post) from Jeanette Arnold, 'Oak Tree', Main Rd, Colden Common, Nr Winchester, Hants.

LLANDRINDOD WELLS ANIMAL SANCTUARY needs your kind donations to further its work with domestic and ex-farm animals. Contact Gelynen, Gwystre, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 6RN.

BASINGSTOKE AREA HSA desperately needs a van and driver. If you can help, please contact the group c/o 17 Doswell Way, Basingstoke.

MASS is hosting an anarchist men's weekend at Bolton Socialist Club, Wood St, on January 29th – 31st. All anti-sexist male hunt saboteurs welcome. Contact MASS at Box 25, 52 Call Lane, Leeds 6S1 6DT.

LITTLE ANIMAL RESCUE CENTRE is appealing for funds to finance the building of a new enclosure for its resident fox, 'Minty'. Minty was saved from agri-chemical poisoning and is a keen supporter of HSA (he even donates his bedding). Contact H C Easton, 143 Langley Hall Rd, Solihull, West Mids B92 7HB.

NORTH WEST ANIMAL RIGHTS produce a regular newsletter and have a youth group. Enquiries to 4 Cheshire House Close, Farington Moss, Nr Preston, Lancs PR5 3SA.

THE HSA – GRAVY TRAIN OR VALUE FOR MONEY?

A Committee member gives a personal response to the letter (page 2) from Exeter group.

In replying to this letter, I feel it is necessary to put it into context as I see it. Two years ago Exeter HSA was a group which I regarded as one of the best in the country but a series of unnecessary arguments about group policy led to a split in its ranks culminating in my departure as an active member of the group. The split was largely the result of disagreements amongst the group's "hard core" over our relationship with the media and the group's behaviour when out sabbing hunts. The main body of the group had little chance to air their views and due to the blight of "incrowdism" members voted or sided on the basis of personalities rather than policies. The present "leading opinion" in the group holds an uncompromising stand towards various aspects of hunt sabotage which has disuaded several individuals from joining it and has led to the withdrawal of several former activists from active participation in the group. The group's former diversity of opinion and personalities has declined and those who hold views differing from those of the "hard core", but who still remain within the group, are, to all intensive purposes, ignored. Indeed the reference to "Our non-membership of the HSA" ignores the several group members who do belong to the HSA and were recruited into the Exeter group via the HSA.

All of the issues raised in the above letter have been discussed fully over the last two years at meetings of the Exeter group attended by myself and the author of the letter as well as other group members. In a few words (a common tactic), the author seeks to discredit everything that the HSA has done and continues to strive to achieve. A few carefully selected statements designed to play on the minds of those not fully involved in the behind the scenes work of the HSA Committee are set before you in the knowledge that it will take acres of tedious explanation to refute.

Nothing New

None of what I say below will be new to the author of the letter, it will nevertheless, be ignored, dismissed or laughed at with a sneer for the aim of it is to put us on the defensive, to raise suspicion and to undermine the confidence upon which the HSA relies. So here we go, yet again.

It is not true – and the author of the letter knows this – that in the last Howl under the item titled "More Money to the Regions" on the Committee Page that only £200 was given outright to local groups from HSA central funds. The total handed out (with the inclusion of £200 held by the HSA until required), to activists and local groups was £1,023. Most of this was described as "loans", a term which is hardly applicable since not a penny of any "loan" made to any local group has ever been repaid, nor do we really expect it to be. Groups apply for "loans" without having any intension of repaying them. The Exeter group itself applied for a "loan" of £1,000 in 1983, none of it has ever been repaid and we do not expect it to be. "Loans" are merely devices for obtaining money from the HSA and everyone who applies for one knows it. Since the last Howl a further £1,000 has been handed out by the HSA. This total of over £2,000 will be increased thanks to the generous response of some HSA members to the appeal leaflet put out with the last Howl. This sum is the largest to be given to local groups since 1983 when over £20.000 was handed out thanks to the receipt of a legacy. Nobody, however, should see the HSA's primary role as a money bank for local groups: with over 100 local groups our minute resources would not go far. Each group should attempt to fund itself only asking for help in times of deperate need.

I have never fully understood why some people get so upset at the idea that some HSA Committee members are non-active. This reflects an unpalatable degree of elitism in my opinon. If someone has a skill which the HSA needs and is also willing to put in the effort and dedication required, surely it is right that they should seek a place on the Committee. After all most of our members are non-active, supporting members, should their contribution to the HSA go unnoticed and ignore? I think not, everyone, active or supporting has a role to play. Nevertheless, it is not, as suggested, the case that many Committee members in the past or present have been non-active. Out of a present Committee of fifteen individuals eleven are activists on a regular basis, in some cases going out several times a week, three are active when work committments or other factors allows, one has just started going out having been co-opted on the basis of a skill rather than knowledge about hunting and the last, for health reasons is rarely able to be active today but has had plenty of experience in the field. Between us the Committee has nearly 100 years of experience of hunt sabotage. To suggest that the Committee is somehow out of touch with direct-action and the needs of activists is clearly absurd.

Responsibilities

The Committee comes up for re-election annually, any member of one year standing can stand for election yet few do because most people are fully aware of the workload and responsibilities that must be shouldered by Committee members. The HSA cannot afford hangers-on, people only interested in furthering their own egos or partisan point of view.

In the past people who were unquestionably good hunt saboteurs took positions on the Committee which for one reason or another they were totally unsuited. Good activists they may have been but administratively they were inept and their failings very nearly bankrupted the HSA. It has taken fifteen months of solid hard work on the part of activist and non-active Committee members to repair the damage and put the HSA back on its feet and in a position where it can once again assist local groups financially. A good example of the contribution of non-active members is this journal. The magazine is put together by two non-active HSA members who have donated their expertise and a not inconsiderable amount of their spare time to produce an attractive, enjoyable and informative organ (independant of the Committee which pays for it). This magazine is read and enjoyed by thousands of HSA members and it seems non-members who read it for free by borrowing it from people who have paid their subscriptions.

The HSA Committee also contributes to direct-action in less obvious ways. The organisation pays for, and produces Howl, the monthly Contacts' Mailout, Tactics Books and maintains files on the country's hunts. All these provide a resource to those activists prepared to use them. The Committee consists of people with a wealth of skills and knowledge (or can find people who have the relevant abilities), which are available for consultation, advice or manual assistance. In addition the HSA pays for leaflets and advertising in national and local media which recruits new activists without whom the future of the HSA with a high activist turnover would be short indeed. Those groups, which for reasons of ineptitude, dissafection or apathy which do not take advantage of these resources are doomed to fade away. Whilst those who work with the HSA will be able in most cases to perpetuate their group despite the usual turnover of members and with luck the group will grow and become more effective in the field. There is, throughout the country a close correlation between good organisation and tolerant attitudes within a group or region and durability, efficiency and growth in sabotage activity.

Those members of the HSA who joined it believing that "their money goes to direct-action against all bloodsports" may rest assured that it does and, I hope, always will, despite the, as I see it, desire on some people's part to believe otherwise.

Expenses

Finally it is suggested that a lot of money is frittered away on Committee members' expenses as if we are on some kind of HSA gravy train. That's nonsense. I and other Committee members incur incidental expenditure which we do not, or cannot for various reasons, claim from the HSA: last year my personal loss added up to nearly £100 (my only income being the pityful amount I receive on Supplementary Benefit. My monthly HSA expenses add up to £3-400 where would I get this money if the costs were not met by the HSA? Most of it is postage costs representing hours and hours of hard work writing letters, packing parcels etc. should I do the work for free and then starve so that I can pay for HSA mailing expenditure? In past discussions I discovered that the main objection here was the paying of travel expenses: why not hitch-hike to Committee meetings I was told by our critics. Committee meetings are held on Sundays, in Birmingham at 11.00am. Ever tried hitch-hiking early on a Sunday morning with several hundred miles to cover in a few hours? Well hitch the day before comes the reply, What! On a Saturday when we're all supposed to be sabbing?

The whole thing is stupid and any reasoning human being can see it.

It is certainly true that most activists at any one

time are not members of the HSA but most activists do not last very lone. Of those that continue sabbing for a year or more most are members of the HSA. In the end it does not matter if an activist is a member or not because the HSA committee does its best to help all activists without discriminating between members and non-members. The disadvantage of non-membership is, however, that the activist loses any chance of influencing the decisions of the A.G.M. or the result of committee elections. This is their choice and I very much doubt, in most cases, that the choice of non-membership has anything to do with the reasons outlined by the author.

Value for Money

This Committee has worked hard to give HSA members value for money, to provide the necessary resources for activists and when necessary, financial assistance. The dedication of those among us who work almost full time or throughout their spare time without financial reward is to be applauded. Yet the HSA is not an organisation which ignores criticism, very often it is through listening to such criticism that it improves, that's why Howl is independent and does not censor criticism, even from people who are not members and seek to discredit it.

For those activists who remain concerned perhaps the solution is to pay up your subscription (which only just covers the costs incurred from supplying you with a New Members' Pack and a year's Howls), and put yourselves up for election in a year's time then your'll see how difficult our task is.

Meanwhile I'm going to go back to my work: 127 New Member's Packs to be sent, 27 letters to be answered, 25,000 leaflets to be parcelled and sent, Howl articles to be typed . . . what time's the next gravy train?.

Ralph Cook

LAW REPORT

49 ARRESTS AT THE CATTISTOCK

The new Public Order Act was wheeled out for the first time against a large number of hunt saboteurs in mid-September.

Saboteurs had successfully disrupted a cubhunt of the Cattistock FH at Mosterton in Dorset when police moved in and commandeered all their vehicles. A large number of police cars and vans were then used to form a convoy in which the sab vehicles were sandwiched. This convoy moved off under the pretext of escorting sabs to the county boundary. However, it later became clear that this was not to be the case. Roads around Bridport were sealed off and the sabs were forced to go to Bridport police station where all were then arrested for breach of the peace plus an offence under section 5 of the new Public Order Act (the harrassment, alarm and distress clause). All 49 were held in custody over-night until appearing before magistrates at Bournemouth the following afternoon.

All pleaded not guilty and a trial date was set for late November. Magistrates also imposed a condition of bail on all those held, that they refrain from attending hunt meets in England and Wales until the trial date. These conditions became something of a legal absurdity when they were challenged, firstly by saboteurs who argued that they remained legally entitled to attend hunts as long as they gave the meet a miss, and secondly by a judge in chambers who held that magistrates had no power to impose such conditions in the first place. The learned judge has since been overruled by a bench of magistrates despite his seniority. Some of the defendants have since been arrested for alleged breaches of their bail conditions.

At Blandford magistrates court on November 26th, 48 of the accused stood trial and learned the nature of the evidence against them – a video film shot by a hunt member who has since removed himself to the United States — which purports to show disorderly behaviour on the part of the saboteurs. The prosecution offered to drop the Section 5 charges on any defendant who would plead guilty to a straightforward breach of the peace, an admission which would result in the defendant being bound over. Since the only evidence standing against them appeared to be that they walked upon private land, the binding-over terms offered by the bench were not very appealing (2 years in £250 each plus £25 costs) and only five accepted them, the bulk of the defendants refusing to admit any guilt whatsoever.

The case is due to re-commence on February 1st. HOWL will be carrying a full report in its next issue, including all the details of the original alleged offence which are presently sub-judice.

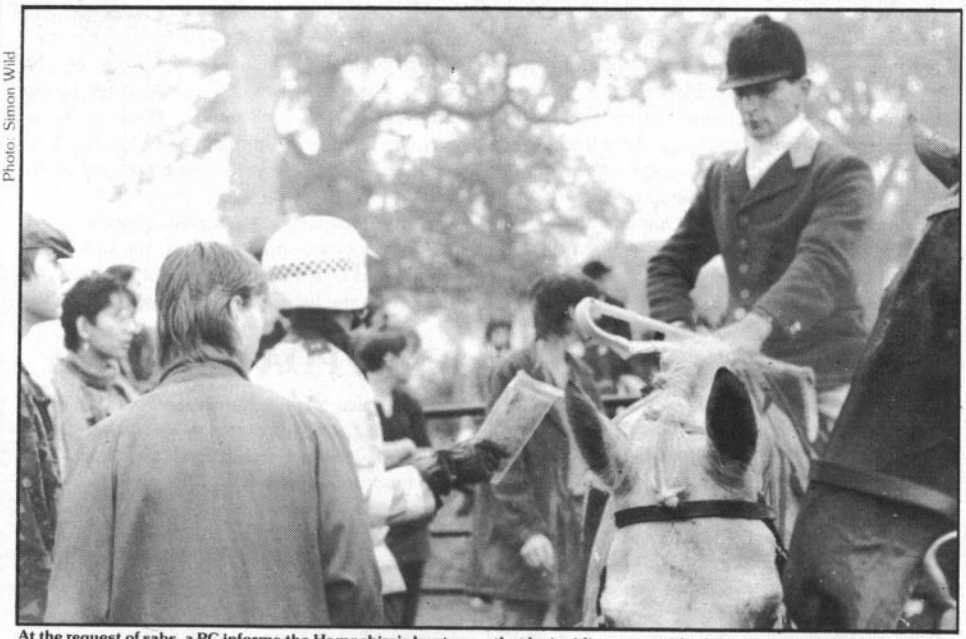


Photo: Simon Wild

At the request of sabs, a PC informs the Hampshire's huntsman that he is riding on a public footpath and should get off it (see story, below).

Huntsman Bound Over

William Deakin, huntsman with the Holderness FH, was bound over to keep the peace by magistrates at South Hunsley in August.

Hull hunt saboteur, Neil Hudson, gave evidence at a later hearing that Deakin had assaulted him for calling his hounds over. The prosecution offered no evidence however, and the huntsman escaped with a binding over.

The court tried to bind Neil over as well, but he successfully challenged the ruling on the grounds that he was moving away from the area.

Police Bias

Tayside HSA is in the process of setting up a meeting with Scottish Labour MPs to discuss the continuing pro-hunt bias of the Fife police. Stop and search tactics are being employed by this force whenever hunt saboteurs are sighted.

Hunting on Footpaths

Following our report in HOWL 37 that hunts can technically be prosecuted for taking horses onto public footpaths, saboteurs in the south of England have been looking into the matter more closely.

On October 3rd, the Chiddingfold FH rode along a public path on land over which they had not been invited at Burton Mill near Petworth. The owner of the land, Helen Evans, maintains the footpath herself. "I have just paid £100 for this gravel path," she told reporters, "and it's not very amusing to have horses messing it up . . . the notice clearly states that horses are strictly forbidden."

HOWL is now advised that hunts can in fact ride on public footpaths WITH the permission of the landowner, but not without it. In the above instance, they were clearly acting unlawfully and we await police action with interest.

Saboteurs might find it worthwhile informing relevant Parish Councils after hunt horses have churned up a public footpath in future, whether they had permission to be on it or not. As the body responsible for seeing the public footpaths are well maintained, Parishes may be able (and even keen) to bring pressure to bear upon the land owner.

SABOTEUR ON ASSAULT CHARGE CLEARED

Tyneside hunt saboteur, Dave Shepherdson, was found not guilty of assault causing actual bodily harm by a jury at Newcastle Crown Court in early December.

Dave first appeared in court on October 26th, charged with assaulting Tynedale FH amateur whipper-in, John Newbrough, at a meet of the hunt a year earlier. Newbrough had ridden his horse at saboteurs, pinning one woman against the side of a van and trying to steamroller her with it. Seeing this, Dave acted quickly in her defence, pulling Newbrough from the saddle. The whipper-in alleges that actual bodily harm resulted, although he didn't seek medical attention for several days, and was seen back on his horse, apparently unharmed and yelling abuse, just 20 minutes after the incident.

The October hearing collapsed in disarray after Dave's barrister, Vera Baird, complained to the judge that after the previous day's adjournment, she had over-heard PC Morrison, a police witness, talking with prosecution witnesses who had either given evidence or were about to do so. The implication was that everyone was getting their story straight. When the judge called on Morrison to explain himself, he admitted to Vera Baird that he was a follower of the Tynedale FH. Faced with a possible contempt of court by a police officer, the judge dismissed both himself and the jury and ruled that the case must be heard again.

Retrial

At the retrial in December, Morrison once more admitted to being a hunt follower and went further, stating that there were several other Tynedale followers in the force. His fellow witness, DC Ramshaw, was also shown to have connections with hunt members under cross examination by Peter Hall, Dave's new barrister.

The prosecution did not present all of its witnesses' statements to the court until half way through the trial. The probable reason for this was that the ones held back were taken from Tynedale terrier men whose recollection of the incident suggested that it had been a two-sided affair rather than the straightforward case of unprovoked assault the prosecution was trying to build.

After five days of evidence, the judge, Mrs H. Paling, summed up in the prosecution's favour and directed the jury to find Dave guilty as charged. To their credit, the jury took 40 minutes to reject her advice and returned a verdict of not guilty.

To make matters worse for the Tynedale, they had to miss two hunting days through court appearances by leading members of the hunt. An unconventional bit of sabotage, that!

First POA Conviction

The first case against hunt saboteurs under the new Public Order Act came up before magistrates at Yate, Avon on October 8th. Two Bristol sabs were tried under section 4 of the Act (the fear or provocation of violence clause) following an incident at the Beaufort's final meet last season. Both were charged after huntsman, Capt. Farquhar, had tried to ride saboteurs down on a public road near Hawkesbury Upton. One was aquitted, and the other, Neil Davis, received a conditional discharge and was ordered to pay £75 costs. Horse and Hound, which has been noisily rejoicing about the new Act's anticipated effect on the HSA, gave the court's decision a rather muted welcome.

And The Rest . . .

CLYDESIDE HSA had 7 people arrested for 'action likely' when 100 sabs turned out for the L&R's second proper hunt of the season.

NORWICH HSA's driver was reported by police on October 17th when they spotted the wire grills protecting the group's van windows. Action likely, apparently (watch out Securicor, you're next . . .).

CAMBRIDGE HSA had 2 people arrested on October 3rd at a meet of the Essex FH. One was 'action likely' occasioned by spraying in front of hounds; the other was under the Public Order Act for using foul language. On November 14th, another sab was arrested (action likely again) for hornblowing at the East Essex FH.

SHEFFIELD HSA had 7 people arrested by Lincs police at a meet of the Burton FH near Ingham on November 14th, all for action likely. Sheffield Law Centre is making an official complaint.

DONCASTER HSA have had a village PC removed and posted to the big smoke after making complaints about his pro-hunt bias.

And finally, WEST WILTS HSA were at Yate magistrates court on October 6th, winning a claim of criminal damage against a Beaufort hunt rider who smashed their windscreen with his crop last season. They won compensation of £95.

THE FOX CONTROL MYTH

Ralph Cook on the latest evidence

THE foxhunter's classic defence that their activity is necessary for the control of wild fox populations has come under increasing fire over the last few years principally as a result of the work of wildlife scientists using sophisticated technology and mathematical calculations. Recently some interesting research carried out by fox expert Dr Stephen Harris of Bristol University and using the country's foxhunts as a source for its information has disclosed yet more evidence that the impact of foxhunting upon fox population is virtually non-existent.

Dr Harris is an impartial authority having neither declared himself for, or against hunting. He has, however, studied foxes in the wild for many years and has had numerous papers published in respected zoological journals and has written a book about foxes.

Dr Harris new evidence is a result of a survey of the number of foxes killed in England and Wales by foxhunts registered with the Masters' of Foxhounds Association (MFHA), during the 1985-1986 hunting season. 187 foxhunts listed in Baileys Hunting Directory (an annual grossly over-priced book listing all the registered packs of hounds throughout the world), were asked in February 1987 for their previous season's tally of foxes killed. 116 (62%) participated voluntarily in the survey and of the 71 which did not, 15 were "abusive/or unco-operative" towards Harris' team. Despite some shortcomings in the gathering of the data and the possibility of unreliable information, Harris reported that between them the 116 co-operative hunts killed 7181 foxes, an average of only 61.9 foxes per hunt. Of those hunts which were able to provide separate details it was found that during their cubhunting season (August to November although varying widely from one hunt to another), they killed 47% of their final annual tally. The other 53% being "accounted for" during the hunting season proper (November to March, April or May depending on local farming practices). Extrapolating from these results, Harris concluded that all 187 foxhunts killed about 11,600 foxes during the season, of which 5,000 were killed during cubhunting and 6,600 subsequently.

Numbers Killed

The number of foxes killed by each hunt ranged from a mere 2 (this one must be facing stiff opposition from its local hunt saboteurs), to a rather higher 184. Of the co-operative hunts 22 (19%) killed less than 25 foxes, whereas 18 (16%) killed more than 100.

As noted by the HSA, Dr. Harris was told by many hunts that the 1985-6 hunting season was poor with prolonged icy weather in February bringing most hunts to a standstill for several weeks. According to some hunts their tallys were reduced by 25% as a result of this inclement weather. Harris concluded, however, that even in a good year the total annual tally would be below 15,000 with an average season netting some twelve to thirteen thousand foxes.

In the past I have recorded my own calculations, based on guesswork to be around 20,000 foxes killed, with perhaps half being killed during cubhunting. I still believe that this figure is closer to the truth. Harris' survey did not for instance include Scottish and Northern Irish foxhunts, any Harrier packs hunting foxes but not included in Baileys foxhunting section, nor any packs not registered with the MFHA of which there are at least 40-60 in Wales and others in Scotland, the North East and West and the South West of England. These, I believe would account



Graphic: Jo Richardson

for a further 5,000 or so foxes bringing the rough total to around 20,000 a year.

No Significant Role

Despite these slight differences Harris' main contention still holds up. He points out that from an estimated national fox population of some half a million overwintering adult foxes, the foxhunts account for a mere 2.5% (3.3% from my figures), and that since the fox population can withstand an annual mortality rate of up to 70% without a significant reduction in the fox population:

"It is clear, therefore, that the fox hunts play no significant role in the control of the fox population, and that other factors constitute the main regulatory mechanisms controlling fox population size."

As the fox control myth comes under increasing attack, foxhunters are becoming ever more confused as to how to defend their activity. Whilst the old guard still repeat the old rubbish about fox control the young rising stars in their midst talk about the contribution hunting makes to "dispersing" foxes (I thought they had been doing that on their own four legs for centuries but I stand corrected), and to the conversation of natural habitats and flora and fauna.

HAUNTING THEM TO THE GRAVE

One HSA group and its chosen hunt

In these days of saturation policing at certain often-sabotaged hunts, some HSA groups are spreading themselves to cover a greater number of packs, so making themselves less predictable to the police. CLYDESIDE HSA have virtually become an unwelcome appendage to the Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire FH, haunting them like a recurrent nightmare and completely undermining the hunt's confidence and efficiency. HOWL takes a look at Clydeside's record during the 1986/7 season.

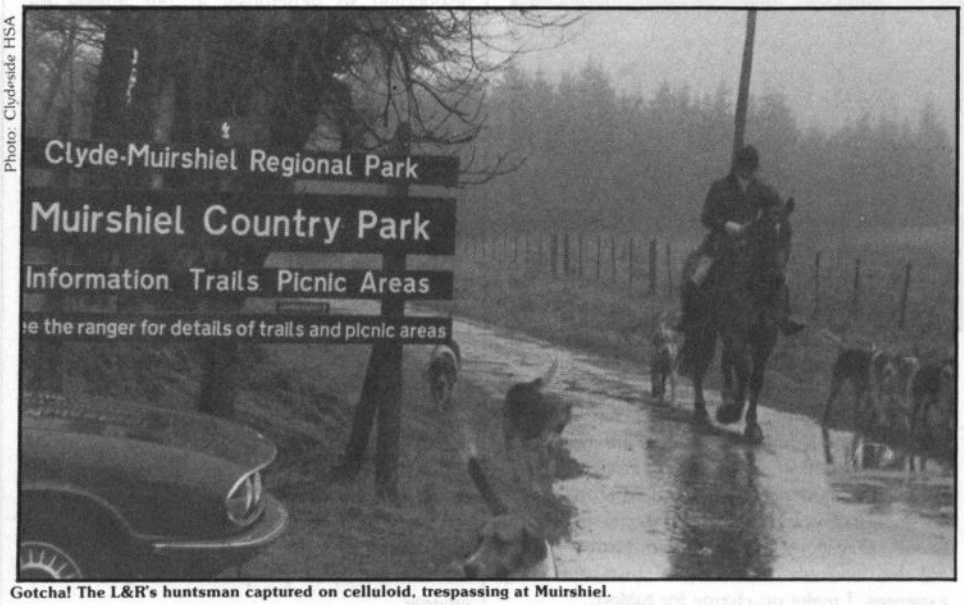


Photo: Clydeside HSA

Gotcha! The L&R's huntsman captured on celluloid, trespassing at Muirshiel.

Clydeside HSA has been operating in Renfrewshire since 1981 and has always devoted most of its attention to the Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire FH. With kennels at Houston near Paisley, the hunt goes out every Saturday and Tuesday from September to March.

The concentration of saboteurs on this pack last season left teh L & R with only seven days in total when the HSA was not present during hunting. These seven days were the hunt's only opportunities to kill foxes, for none were accounted for while saboteurs were on hand. In January, the poor performance of the pack was noticed by a local newspaper when it commented, "Last year, out of approximately 40 meets, the total number of foxes actually caught by the local hunt was only seven, and this season in the period since the beginning of November, that number is nil!!"

In fact, the hunt can have killed remarkably little in the cubhunting period prior to November either, because Clydeside HSA were present at all the Saturday meets and they ensured that each one was bloodless. So, how many foxes did the L & R actually kill throughout the season? According to the possibly unreliable testimony of a hunt terrier man at the end of February, they had killed four. Saboteurs attended each subsequent meet until the season ended on March 14th, and since there were no fatalities at any of these, we may take it that the fox took no more than four foxes in three and a half months of trying (assuming the terrier man is numerate).

There are those who say the L & R is a completely incompetent killing machine anyway. Followers of bloodsports seeking to cloak their often trot out phrases of this kind about which ever hunt it is their particular poison to follow. But no hunt is completely incompetent if it is able to kill on four out of the only seven days when saboteurs could not be there.

Cancellations

Certainly the L & R suffered more than some from inclement weather. From a fixture list of 39 possible meets, 13 had to be cancelled because of frozen ground or deep snow. One of these, on November 11th, is claimed by Clydeside HSA however, as 'cancelled due to the appearance of saboteurs'. It was just 10 days after L & R terrier man John Waters had hospitalised two members of the group after flooring them with his spade. The sight of three car-loads of determined activists at a mid-week meet so soon after that incident evidently unnerved the hunt and they boxed up under the pretext of 'bad weather'. In fact, the weather was a good deal better than it had been 3 days earlier when they had hunted on, unruffled, in a torrential downpour.

By the beginning of December, the L & R were worried enough to stop advertising their meets. It made precious little difference to saboteurs because details of meets continued to be supplied to them by some of the hunt's many enemies in the rural heartland. On their first 'secret' outing in December, 60 saboteurs turned up and depressed the huntsman so much he had to box up and go home at 1pm. At the next, it was evident that whilst saboteur's numbers remained solid, support for the hunt had dwindled by about 50%.

Outside Pressure

Clydeside group put pressure on the L & R off the field as well as on it, keeping as high a public profile as possible. When the hunt deliberately took hounds into Muirshiel Country Park, saboteurs photographed the incident and took their case to Regional Council officials who promised action to prevent a recurrence. Again, when hounds trespassed over Glennifer Braes Country Park near Paisley, Clydeside HSA contacted Renfrew District Council (who have had a no-hunting policy over all their land since 1980). The HSA was then invited to contribute to a meeting with District Council officials and their legal advisers at which council policy was re-emphasised and udpated.

A good many of the foxes saved during the season owe their lives to the willingness of saboteurs to intervene at dig-outs. Four of the L & R's attempts at digging out were prevented by Clydeside group, resulting in nine arrests for action likely in January. The positive attitude of the sabs to dig-outs is perhaps best revealed in the words of a group member, Louise, experiencing her first season as a hunt saboteur. Hearing hounds marking to ground, she entered a covert with two friends:

"Gerry arrived at the fox-earth and started pulling out the hounds . . . When I looked around, all I could see were terrier men, their dogs and other hunters. They didn't care; they were laughing and smiling. I started to cry, I felt so helpless. The huntsman was calling, 'dig him out, boys', and suddenly I lost control and started to scream for people to help us. Now other saboteurs had reached the scene, and some went to help Gerry. The rest of us sat down in the earth to keep the hounds and terrier men out. Someone was trying to calm me down. Hunt officials were laughing at me, but soon stopped as more and more saboteurs piled into the earth. I cried out for more people to join us – suddenly there were over THIRTY determined saboteurs in and around the foxe's refuge. WE had taken control and were defending OUR fox."

Police Called

When police arrived on the scene, saboteurs told them emphatically that they were not going to move. *"The atmosphere between the saboteurs was fantastic; everyone was so positive. The police, realising our determination, then spoke to the hunt officials saying that since WE were not going to move, they (the hunt) would have to! The hunt were really angry about this, but the police stressed the fact that there were just too many saboteurs to make effective arrests and they therefore had no alternative but to ask everyone to leave. Reluctantly, the hunt left. WE'D WON!"*

Half way into the 1987/8 season, the L & R are once more in trouble. Clydeside HSA will be with them till the end, and perhaps the end may not be so very far away. A deluded farming community cannot for long be expected to back a 'pest-control' service that kills no more than 11 foxes in two years.

SELF-DEFENCE WORKSHOPS

A saboteur trained in several disciplines makes the following offer:

A few years ago I went out on my first sab. All went well and towards the end the group split up to return to their vehicles. Some of us were followed by the hunt's heavies who caught up and jostled us. At first it seemed nothing much, but then one sab was singled out while his friends just stood and watched. Eventually I had to intervene to sort them out . . . if this sounds all too familiar then read on.

Slightly disillusioned, I offered to teach group members self-defence skills. A small number took the offer up but didn't stay with it.

At the Waterloo Cup in 1984 I saw more of the same thing. As the line moved over the field, thugs picked off individual sabs who were not properly prepared to defend themselves. They found it better to leave me alone, though. Back home I became tired of being the only one who could be relied on to fight back, so I stopped sabbing.

This year I started going to the local group's meetings again. The group had suffered more frequent violence, but since no-one had any training they were unable to deal with the situation. Ideas had changed and a small group formed to start training. Even a short period's work has resulted in some proficiency and more confidence. Men and women train together – there is no room for macho attitudes. Everyone helps each other to improve; this is not sport, there is no competition. Training together can help bring a group closer and inspire mutual self-confidence.

I am ready to hold regional or national workshops on self-defence. Interested groups or individuals should send their names and addresses, and details of their requirements via The Tactics Officer, PO Box 87, Exeter. Once I know what demand there is and what the needs are locally, I can arrange a regional or central venue. Questions are welcome; further details will be available later. Apart from travelling expenses, I make no charge for tuition.,



Photo: Ian Brown

Another saboteur is subjected to an assault. Time to turn the tables?

HSA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS 1988

Once again, applications are invited from HSA members who would like to stand for election to the committee. The 1988/9 committee year begins in July, following the election of officers for the year. Those interested must:

1. be paid up members of HSA of at least one year's standing.

2. be proposed and seconded by 2 other HSA members. Both must have been members for at least a year prior to the closing date for nominations. They must not be candidates for committee themselves, and may not nominate more than one candidate.

3. Supply a written CV of not more than 200 words (please try to stick to this; we don't want your autobiography) to include the following: name, age, occupation, diet, why you think yourself suited for committee work, and how you see HSA developing in the future.

4. Send their CV to **Committee Elections, PO Box 87, Exeter, EX4 3TX, to arrive not later than March 4th 1988.**

Committee work is unpaid, although basic expenses will be met. Committee business may occupy you for about an hour each day and you will be expected to attend monthly meetings (Sundays) and submit monthly reports. Most committee work is administrative in nature. Present posts include: Chair, secretary, press, tactics, sales goods, women's, treasurer, membership, contacts, fundraising, youth, research, and students.

CVs will be printed in HOWL 39, due out in April. A postal ballot of all members will result in 12 persons being elected to form the new committee. The result will be announced at the AGM in London on July 2nd (provisional).

Any proposals for **changes to the constitution,** to be debated at the AGM, should also be submitted by **March 4th** together with the seconder's name. These will also be printed in HOWL 39 since HOWL 40 is unlikely to be out before the AGM.

HSA CONTINUES TO GROW

Membership of the HSA has now doubled since the 1987 AGM and looks set to grow further in the coming year. The total number of active local groups is 128, an all time high. An intensive but selective advertising campaign has produced thousands of enquiries about the Association and public and media interest continues to be high. HSA's new press officer, Anji Majennik, handled more than 20 local radio interviews over the Christmas period, as our biggest ever Boxing Day publicity drive got under way. 74 local radio stations covered our actions, as did national and local television news and the Fleet St dailies. About half of the total number of provincial newspapers in Britain carried our Press Releases. Anji hopes to maintain the links that have been forged with the media by keeping a steady stream of stories flowing their way. You can help by notifying her IMMEDIATELY anything newsworthy happens to your group. Keeping a high public profile is a pre-requisite for any popular mass movement.

NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Ammending the list published in HOWL 37, the following people have been co-opted onto committee, replacing those who resigned in the summer: Dave Lahee (student liasion), Steve Fowler (Southern region) and Mark Halford (Midland region).

WANTED

HSA committee urgently needs a second-hand good condition photo-copier. If anyone has one and would be willing to donate it to the HSA, please get in touch via PO Box 87. We'd like to thank the Vegan Society and NAVS for responding so generously to our appeal for office equipment in the last HOWL.

Our Research officer needs your unwanted domestic telephone directories from anywhere in the country to help HSA to locate people involved in 'fringe' bloodsports. Current editions, or last year's would be most welcome.

LEGAL OFFICER NEEDED

The HSA needs a hard-headed, vigorous, campaigning legal officer to take responsibility for making sure all HSA members understand the law as it relates to the sabotage of bloodsports. The job will involve taking action to see that complaints against individuals and the police are followed through, and that all arrests are reported to HSA. S/he will not necessarily be an expert on giving legal advice (a solicitor can do that) but will need a good basic understanding of the law and will be expected to monitor closely all prospective changes as they emerge.

PUBLICITY

We are intending to establish a sub-committee to deal with all HSA's promotinal material, so that the breadth of our output from sales goods to posters and leaflets can be design-co-ordinated. Anyone with appropriate artistic/promotional skills who would like to serve on this body, please write to us enclosing a sample of your work and a CV if possible.

CLUB DRAW

October results: 1st J Stevenson (£47), 2nd L Kaye (£30), 3rd D Plowers (£15). If you'd like to enter the draw, standing order forms are obtainable from the fundraiser c/o PO Box 87, or payment can be made by a cheque for £24 to cover one year's membership. Many thanks to the supporter who returned the prize money in the August draw.



POSTCARDS FOR SALE. This design and others of an A/R bent from Ian Daniels, 28 Malling Down, Lewes, Sussex. Send SAE for lists.