HOWL

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Direct Action Against All Bloodsports



Magazine of the Hunt Saboteurs Association

HOWL 46 EDITORIAL

FIRST AND FOREMOST, a big thankyou to everyone who swamped us with group news reports for this HOWL. You'll find the group news section somewhat longer than usual as a result. I hope no-one feels their reports have been too truncated this time, but with so much material coming in, paring it all to fit has been a major headache for your poor editor.

Its also good to see the letters page thriving again. Please keep sending in your responses to things you read in HOWL. If you want to tackle something in a bit more depth, why not write us an article. Mike Hall's piece in the last HOWL has generated both sorts of interest in this one. Healthy debate keeps us lively, so keep it up. Articles should be typed, double-spaced and with a wide margin if at all possible. Optimum length is about a thousand words.

Copy date for HOWL 47 is May 11th.

HOWL is edited by Steve Poole. Views and opinions expressed in HOWL do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or of the HSA.

COVER PHOTO: An Avon Vale redcoat welcomes saboteurs to the hunt's opening meet in November.

BUDGETING AGAINST BLOODSPORTS!

The HSA's Treasurer explains what we've been doing with your money . . .

WITH THIS HOWL you may notice one or two changes. Firstly, we have become a limited company and VAT registered, in accordance with mandates set at the 1989 and 1990 AGMs. This brings us both benefits and problems, the main problems being administrative ones. We are no longer only accountable to our members, but also to bodies like HMCE and the Inland Revenue. It means that we shall have to run a very tight ship.

Various groups up and down the country have already seen the benefits that a limited company can bring. As a trading company, our good name and our assets are protected from libel, slander and/or theft of ideas. On previous years' experience, I would expect a few writs to be issued on our behalf.

With the limited company status, we move towards a new-look HSA. You should receive with this HOWL two new leaflets which I think you will find more professional and attractive than any of our previous efforts. We have included these with HOWL for two reasons. Firstly, to show all our members how we are progressing, and secondly to encourage you all to sign up new members.

We have also reached a point where we can roll forward and progress in earnest. We have already committed ourselves to advertising in a national newspaper in the very near future, and we are designing a marketing campaign to promote the HSA through a number of exhibitions and fairs in the summer.

These include prestigious, high profile events like the Green Exhibition at London's Royal Horticultural Halls from the 23rd to the 27th of May, and the Living Without Cruelty Exhibition at Kensington Town Hall from the 14th to the 16th of June.

Well, that's a brief idea of how the business side of the HSA is going. But what about our most important side, our campaigning? Of course, we cannot predict what the future may hold. The more cash and members we can generate, the more we shall be able to do. But we can give you some idea of our aims by examining our actions as a Committee during October, November and December 1990, for which the account figures have just become available.

*During this period we helped eleven groups who needed cash for van repairs, insurance and so on, to continue or start sabotaging hunts to a total of £2120.

*In order that we may more effectively combat badger-baiting, dog fighting and so on, we took on a Committee member specifically to identify and campaign against these criminals. The cost so far has been £500, with a great deal more budgeted for 1991.

*To organise and deliver Legal Talks to sab groups, we have spent £300. Here, money is not so much of a problem. We can give legal talks whenever and wherever requested.

*For the organising of specific objectives, particularly starting up new HSA groups, we have spent £750.

All this is coupled with our unwritten and unspoken wishes never to keep more than £5000 in the HSA's bank accounts. It should give you some idea of what the new HSA is about.

We hope our past actions are acceptable to our members, whose support we rely on. However, if you feel we should be doing more or something else, all members are always welcome to attend any of our Committee meetings, which these days, thankfully, are open affairs.



Tactics Not Numbers

Dear HOWL,

I write in reply to Mel Christie's letter 'Small Groups' in Howl 44; her reply to my article 'Once More Into the Breach Dear Friends'.

My article was written as a plea more than a critique and I am sorry that Mel felt the tone was patronising. However, I do find her other criticisms rather unfair. I was not saying that people DON'T realise they've got to take things seriously; I was not implying MANY sabs are spare ends. This CAN however become the case when the emphasis on individual responsibility becomes swamped by too large a collective identity. Perhaps I should further qualify my statements:

There seems to be a permanent line in the sabbing world at which we seem to make the same mistakes we made years ago. I personally feel we could overcome this by allowing tactical and innovative considerations to be our priority. We must see that the enemy is very well-organised, very influential and by and large professional at what they do; we are getting there, but too slowly. I see the situation as being down to the fact that they are doing a job, each person knows their position and gets on with their job. We should have developed the same attitude within sabbing years ago but we have not. Why? Well essentially I think that a mentality of 'We're doing something good' is too prominent in our minds when out in the field. We are doing good but when there are tactical numbers of us we have to think more of our individual value to the hunted animal because basically the buck has stopped with us, the individual.

Sabbing is a serious job, we should aim to be professionals; it was a resignation to amateurism that I was addressing in my article.

Many sabs are improving their skills in the field but too large a number do not. Seeing sabs hanging around when something is happening is sad. This is everyone's fault but ultimately it is up to each individual to address their own situation. Large-scale co-operation may be a sacred cow of ideological integrity but we must ask ourselves are we allowing this to be an excuse for inefficiency.

It is tactics not numbers that save lives.

Phil Quinn

PS. Mel, I used a nom-de-plume for tactical reasons!!

Sickened

Dear HOWL,

I am sickened at issue 45's 'special announcement' concerning Steve Glintenkamp and Debbie Marsh.

To think that a magazine dedicated to animal rights should stoop to accepting letters on this issue is quite disturbing.

In Debbie's own words in HOWL 40, 'slagging off'. I think this sort of thing should be kept off the pages of a serious magazine and left in the gutter where it belongs. I've had enough rubbish from these two people without having to read it on the back pages of HOWL.

Sally

Bournemouth

PS. If anyone would like to contact me through SABS, to do with sabs in South Dorset, please do. No smut guaranteed.

Digging Out and the Law

Dear HOWL,

I'm fairly new to active sabbing, but have tried and failed to get a dilemma sorted out.

Dig-outs are our nightmare. They account for a high proportion of mortalities, they're a time when we're often rendered almost useless, and the point of many a scuffle.

However, the hunt in this situation are breaking two laws – holding a wild animal captive, and inciting a domestic animal (the terrier) to fight.

It seems that a test case would be the ideal action. The cost would be large, but spread over our national movement, it could be covered, and the benefits should it succeed would be fantastic. The present situation is pretty dire. It would be interesting to hear what other people think about it.

Yours,
Chris Iles
Portsmouth

**Jamie Hepburn, HSA's Legal Officer, writes: Holding a wild animal captive is not an offence. Cruelty to a (domestic) animal is, and there is a prosecution relating to dig-outs in the pipeline. HOWL will have the results when the case is concluded.*

Theft of a Bagged Fox

Dear HOWL,

I am the man referred to in the article and photo on page 22 of HOWL 45. I was there as an observer and was not a sab at the time.

What actually happened was that the hunt were stopped from digging at a culvert by a very brave young man on his own, which impressed me greatly. Then some sabs gained possession of the pack and took them for a walk, which annoyed the hunt no end, so a redcoat told one of his pet thugs to 'get out that fucking fox'.

The thug took a sack from the back of a pick up. I could see it moving as the fox kicked inside. He then went over to the pack and tipped a live dog cub into them. They ripped it open. Two sabs ran into the pack and made off with the fox and the hounds followed. At this the same redcoat galloped after them and whipped them across the head, forcing them to drop the fox.

I then arrived and picked up the fox at the same time as another sab from Brighton, but he was knocked to the ground by a large thug and I was left holding it. The police were present during both of these attacks, but seemed to have been struck with temporary blindness and did not arrest anybody.

I did not threaten or attack anyone, verbally or physically. I just walked away with my dead wild fox. I was stopped by a police sergeant who told me that it was the property of the hunt. I told him it was my property, but I was arrested for theft. Later, when they realised that you cannot steal a wild animal, they changed the charge to disorderly behaviour and breach of the peace.

In court at Oxted, I was told by the clerk that I would not be granted bail. I could not get a solicitor at short notice and I did not know who my witnesses were. I was therefore forced either to defend myself without the benefit of witnesses, or go to prison until I could organise it. It was like a drum head court martial and completely rigged. I was found not-guilty of disorderly behaviour but guilty of a breach of the peace, against which I am now appealing.

The behaviour of this hunt and the treatment I received from the Surrey Constabulary made up my mind to continue as a sab. I have now been out sabbing in total three times and have been arrested again. This was on September 22nd when I asked the Sussex police for assistance and protection after being knocked unconscious. Their answer was, 'you're under arrest'.

Yours Sincerely
Allan Hetherington-Cleverley
East Sussex

Police Costs

Dear HOWL,

On the 27th October, I attended the hunt at Forest Green to protest about fox hunting. Having parked the car, I saw a large, silent group of young hunt saboteurs standing at the side of the main road, opposite the entrance to a public right of way.

I crossed the road and was appalled by the large number of policemen who were engaged there. I was told I could proceed no further. I was threatened that if I took one step forward, I would be arrested. There was absolutely nothing I could do. I appealed in vain, but was likened to a football hooligan. I might add here that I am a pensioner and a granny!

Feeling confused and bewildered, I turned round to the silent young sabs, standing in their silent group, and blindly staggered across the road to join them. But as I nearly reached them, they all turned into knights in shining armour sitting astride gleaming black horses and the kind police were urging them on!

I was brought back to consciousness by someone calling to me, 'they're letting the grannies through'. But, alas, it was too late. The hunt was already leaving.

After returning home and recovering, I reflected on this experience and wondered about the huge cost of policing such an occasion. I had always believed that the hunt paid the bill, but have now been told it comes out of the poll tax revenue. Maybe I should join the poll tax protesters!

Joy Nye
Milford
Surrey

Regionalisation — Yorkshire Hunt Saboteurs

Dear HOWL,

Yorkshire Hunt Saboteurs has been set up as a regional independent organisation to get better organised locally. We believe that strong local groups and regions are the best way of combating *all* bloodsports.

A local group is better equipped to handle local campaigns and events in its own area. We think that there should be a federation of regions, each with its own membership, leaflets, money, press officers, and a delegate to a regular national meeting which can discuss matters of national significance, pass on information about events, tactics, transfer of money if necessary for weaker regions etc. etc.

The region operates the same on a local scale, with representatives from all groups in the region attending regular meetings. This means there is more say for the active sabs in local groups. This is what matters. This is what we are doing in Yorkshire. We share information, organise long-term campaigns against hunts, tactics, policy with the police, legal stuff, CBs, horns. Since doing this, we have been getting more and more effective. More groups are being set up, more hunts done.

The HSA Committee set-up is obsolete. It is time for a democratic federation. Hunt sabbing is not about national publicity, it is about stopping bloodsports where they happen. They happen locally. So, the most important thing is ensuring strong local groups to deal with them. The region is the best way of doing this.

If you agree with federation of regions, or if you disagree, or if you want us to explain a bit more, then please contact any of the following:

North Yorks Hunt Saboteurs, PO Box 323, York, YO1 1RR

East Yorks Hunt Saboteurs, PO Box 43, Hull, HU1 1AA

Huddersfield Hunt Saboteurs, PO Box B20, Huddersfield, HD1 1XS.

**You might also like to debate these issues in HOWL. Why not drop us a line? (ed.)*

Cohesion and Strength

Dear HOWL,

Many thanks to all in your organisation for the courage they have shown in trying to help the hunted animal.

I am pleased you have solved your problems and hope that now you will build upon your achievements to become a great organisation. Nothing is more damaging to any movement that seeks to help animals than internal disagreements made public – for then the enemy rejoice and the animals are the losers – so now I hope the word is cohesion and strength and numbers.

I enclose my sub and praise for HOWL – an excellent publication.

With best wishes,
Audrey Sheppard
Llandysul
Dyfed

Artificial Earth

Dear HOWL,

For the second time this year, I have been shown and photographed an artificial fox earth found in Cheshire Hunt country. The first one was very large with four main entrances and one partly collapsed entrance. The second artificial earth is very small in comparison and has only two entrances. The interesting thing about both of them is that they are only about seven fields away from each other. I wonder how many more there are in the area yet to be found.

Best Wishes,
Bernadette Hardern
Cheshire

HUNT SABOTEURS ASSOCIATION
PO Box 1, Carlton, Nottingham NG4 2JY

Tel: 0602 590357

(24 hour answering service).

Trainspotters Anonymous

Dear HOWL,

Firstly, let me congratulate you on your reapear ance with an excellent Autumn issue. I have beer compelled however to point out a few basic errors in Mike Hall's article, 'the Difference Between Sabbing and Trainspotting'.

Firstly, there is no 7.42 from Waterloo to Bournemouth. 7.45, yes. And did he mean 07.42 or 19.42? Also, all the trains are not Intercity but Network Expresses. Trains nowadays have five. not six digit numbers. Examples are 08 480; 20 013; and 37 898. Neither are there any Class 42s in service at Manchester Piccadilly or elsewhere.

Finally, due to disposals of motive power forever on the increase, a few hardened 'bashers' can and have collected all the loco numbers. Its also quite easy to combine sabbing and spotting. Try it one day.

Yours, waiting for the oil train to come,
S Howard
High Wycombe
Bucks.

Dear HOWL,

Mike Hall's article in the last issue of HOWL made depressing reading, although it is obviously true that we can only hope to cover a fraction of all the hunts in one season with the present levels of membership and organisation.

However, I see a more positive angle to sabbing as it is. While we're out there saving lives, we're also seeing – and more importantly, recording – the anti-social behaviour hunting folk normally get away with. By reporting from the front line of bloodsports, we can constantly expose the truth to an increasingly aware public.

Thayen,
Guildford group.

PS. By the way, Mike, thanks for turning up at just the right time to transport some very wet sabs on boxing day – Nice one.

Beagles Lose Support

STUDENTS AT WYE Agricultural College in Kent are beginning to register their disgust at their institution's forty-year old links with bloodsports.

In November, a number of students tabled a motion at the students union demanding an end to beagling on college land, and for the pack to drop the name of the college from its title; becoming simply the Wye Beagles.

The motion was defeated by 107 votes to 71 at a packed meeting of the union, but the anti-bloodsporting students stress that this was only the opening gambit in what is to become a major campaign.

As one student remarked, "This is the first time an active body in the college has gone ahead to fight the beaglers. It was a real show of strength".

Kent Bans Hunting

KENT COUNTY Council has joined the growing number of counties whose authorities have banned hunting on their land.

In a free debate in November, a ban was approved by 57 votes to 27, despite one Tory member claiming it was a "complete waste of members' time over a minority issue that did not affect the vast majority of residents of Kent".

There was cheering in the public gallery as the decision was announced.

Hounds in Security Alert!



(Equinox Picture Library)

The heir to the throne clears his nose but finds it is no substitute for a proper hunting horn. Charles with the Quorn in January this year.

A PACK OF BEAGLES scaled a perimeter wall and went plunging through the undergrowth at Prince Charles' Gloucestershire estate, Highgrove House, in October.

Emerging onto the Prince's farmland, they are believed to have caused panic amongst cows, calves and a flock of sheep before being rounded up by embarrassed hunt staff and estate workers. They were bundled quickly into a van and spirited away.

Never slow to pick up on the real issues behind a story, the popular press put their clattering typewriters into overdrive when news of this (let's face it) rather unsensational episode first reached them. From Dundee to Somerset, the provincial tabloids churned out the copy.

But it was the Gloucester Echo that carried the most reassuring news. Quoting a police spokeswoman, the paper said, "The dogs were only on the outskirts of the Highgrove estate. There was no security risk"(!).

* * *

Meanwhile, down on pater and mater's Windsor estate, where Prince Philip likes to call himself 'Head Ranger', the Mail on Sunday recently uncovered some illegal practices with free-running snares.

Although snares are not yet illegal as such, they must be checked every 24 hours – but that is not happening at Windsor. A reporter found a young fox trapped in one for more than 26 hours with gamekeepers nowhere in evidence.

It may tell us something about the Mail's priorities that their reporter did not release the agonised animal at once, but waited to see if a gamekeeper would come before doing so – 26 hours. He would probably argue that leaving the fox there was the only way he could check whether or not a gamekeeper had come. But one has only to consider how readily the press camp out in the bushes for days on end to get a glimpse of new royal babies to conclude that he could just as easily have released it and waited.

Anyway, just to make the story more interesting, he reported the matter to the RSPCA who promised to investigate. As well they might, because the Society is actively campaigning for all snares to be outlawed. The trouble is, the Queen (wife of the Head Ranger), and the Queen Mother (mother-in-law of the Head Ranger) are both patrons of the RSPCA. The Society's inspectors were set to interview the Queen's gamekeeper.

What about the bloody Head Ranger?

Help for Urban Foxes

THE URBAN FOXES of Leeds, Yorkshire, need more friends amongst city locals, according to Leeds Foxwatch Group.

Co-ordinator Sue Murray believes victimisation of the animals by whippeting gangs in Leeds' parks and woodlands is getting steadily worse.

In September, several men were seen beating a fox to death with sticks one evening before cutting off its brush and bundling the body into a sack.

Sue is appealing for more people to join the group in its campaign for better legal protection for the city's foxes and to report any similar cases of cruelty.

Figure put on Pigeon Slaughter

THE GAME Conservancy Council said in October that Britain's 350,000 strong shooting fraternity kill about ten million wood pigeons every year. The Council regards them as an agricultural pest.

Moves to place a nine month close season on 'pest' birds like pigeons and magpies under an amendment to the Wildlife and Countryside Act have not pleased the shooting lobby. The NFU, together with the BFSS and the Game Conservancy believe a close season would lead to a trebling of the pigeon population within two years.

COUNCILLOR CRITICAL OF HUNT POLICING

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY Councillor, John Attrill (Labour), has criticised police for 'helping' the New Forest Hunt to dig out foxes, and for consistent over-staffing at hunt meets.

As a Labour nominee on the Hampshire Police Authority, Mr Attrill has demanded to know why police claim to be under-staffed in cities like Portsmouth and Southampton, but never have trouble in finding dozens of officers to send to the Forest on a Saturday afternoon.

He has also asked how much of the police budget is being spent on protecting foxhunts. "Over the years I've tried to get this information, and we're always told it's not available", he says. He estimates the cost at "at least a million pounds a year".

Further north, in Lincolnshire, Spalding police have been criticised for sending at least four policemen to spend a day with a foxhunt when there were not even any saboteurs present!

A local motorist has complained after being stopped by them on the road at Weston Hills, and held up while the hunt crossed. He said the police, who included Inspector Stephen Colby, even had a video camera with them.

According to press reports, the hunt informed Spalding police that they would be hunting in the area 'out of courtesy' and the police allocated four officers to 'preserve the peace and prevent accidents'.

Assuming for a moment that the hunt are not yet so deeply unpopular amongst the rural community that they run a risk of attack wherever they go, the first reason would seem to have been completely unnecessary. We can therefore only conclude that the police stayed out for the second reason. And with hounds running beside the main Austendyke road, accidents were always on the cards.

COUNTY ACTS TO PROTECT BADGERS

WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL looks set to endorse a package of measures designed to protect the county's beleagured badger population.

A proposal to spend £5000 on badger 'subways' under busy roads has won broad support. Ten badgers were killed last year on the A3102 between Wooton Bassett and Lyneham alone.

Secondly, the council intends to alter the tenancy agreements for county farms so that tenants would be explicitly forbidden to interfere with badger setts on their land. The county has witnessed an upsurge in attacks by baiters on setts in the area around Devizes; particularly over the Christmas period.

Christmas being a quiet time in the fields, baiters expect to be able to dig setts undetected and undisturbed; a gamble that paid off for them in nearby Northavon this year.

On Christmas morning, a hole big enough to park a car in was sunk into a 100 year old nursery sett, and a large family of badgers removed.

To make matters worse, this was a well-planned raid on setts already fitted with electronic warning alarms by the local badger group. The raiders avoided setting them off by approaching from the rear where a busy railway line was thought to make access too difficult.

Jonathon King, a member of the Avon badger group, said he thought it likely that the badgers would have been taken out of county to Wales or Yorkshire for baiting.

More Hounds Die in Road and Rail Chaos

AS USUAL, packs of uncontrolled hunt hounds have been causing havoc and dangerous accidents on our roads and railway lines this season, with several receiving fatal injuries. Others have been rioting freely, trespassing on private property, and worrying farm animals.

Two hounds belonging to the Grove & Rufford FH were killed during August cubhunting when the pack streamed onto the A614 at Elkesley. Rioting after a stag, 41 hounds ran into the morning traffic, causing collisions with at least one van and a car.

Police said it was fortunate that no motorists were killed or injured and a hunt spokesperson admitted, "It's not the first time that this has happened". He said it was unfortunate. "We try our best to control the dogs, but it's just one of those things".

Albrighton Hunt servants took fifteen minutes to arrive at the scene of another tragic accident when their pack ran straight across the A5 near Weston Under Lizard. Two dogs were killed as they pelted into the path of oncoming traffic and one car was badly damaged as the driver swerved and tried to avoid them.

A spokesperson for the hunt, Linda Parker, said it took them so long to catch up with the hounds because the horses could not get past a wall!

A hound belonging to the Mendip Farmers FH was killed by a car on January 19th after the pack rioted through gardens in the village of Farrington Gurney in Somerset, then spilled onto the road. An onlooker described the scene:

"Completely unsupervised, many howling baying hounds tearing wildly in absolute frenzy to and fro across the farm and busy main road; screeching brakes, vehicles swerving in all directions and the inevitable ear-splitting cries of an injured dying hound . . ."



The Cambridgeshire follow the wrong line. . . The huntsman and whippers in of the Cambridgeshire FH are seen here trespassing on British Rail property between Swavesey and Willingham on November 18th. The picture, taken by HSA Committee and RSPCA Council member, Robin Webb, shows how many foxhounds die on railway lines. British Rail confirmed that the hunt had no permission to be there and called their action "highly dangerous". A spokesperson hinted that any future incursions would invite prosecution.

Two hounds belonging to the Bicester FH were killed on December 13th when the pack to run across a railway line near Brill.

The Cottesmore hounds poured into gardens at Oakham, Leicestershire in October and ripped up a ginger cat. The animal was so badly mutilated that it was impossible to identify accurately, and local cat-owners were unsure who it belonged to. Joint-master Brian Fanshawe commented with touching sensitivity, "It is obvious that any dog will chase after a cat". That's alright then.

Borders sheep farmer, Mrs Hazel Sanders, had her land invaded by the Buccleuch FH in November. Hounds and riders marauded through fields of sheep and over newly seeded land.

"The hunt managed to push not one but three separate fields of sheep through fences and several of the ewes suffered cuts and were panicked", Mrs Sanders told the Southern Reporter. "Many of these ewes were also in lamb, although the economic consequences will not be evident until lambing, when it is too late to claim effective compensation from the hunt".

In another incident, a ewe lamb was savaged so badly by a hound from the Vine & Craven FH that it had to be put down. It happened early in the main season on a farm at Upper Lambourn, Berkshire, and resulted in summary punishment for the errant hound – execution at the kennels.

The headmaster of Berkshire's Enbourne Chase School has also complained about the Vine & Craven's uncontrollable dogs. The pack has invaded the grounds twice so far this season with neither permission nor an apology. He says he is now considering holding the school's cross country run over land belonging to the hunt!

The Enfield Chase were in the doghouse on December 20th, when their hounds went careering through a car boot sale at Fairfield psychiatric hospital near Hitchin. Hospital manager, Chris Mould said, "Our patients were frightened and relatives were very angry". Joint master, Tony Courtenay, did not bother apologising, but remarked dismissively, "It is a pity that it happened, but it is just one of those things".

In September, residents of St Lawrence, on the Isle of Wight, were annoyed at being disturbed in the early morning by hounds from the Island's foxhunt scampering through their gardens. A dog fox was caught and disembowelled on Keith Rowe's lawn. "I don't know why they can't leave foxes alone," he said, "The ones round here are very friendly and most people like them."

Labour MP Tam Dalyell had the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire's hounds all over his land on November 3rd. The Binns estate was given to the National Trust for Scotland by Dalyell's family, and complaints to the NT have been formally lodged.

The L&S are in further trouble now after their hounds frightened an elderly woman on the Kinneil estate in October. Bo'ness Community Council has urged the estate's owners, Falkirk District Council, to ban the hunt. Council chair, Willie Roger, said "It was all very well when the land was privately owned, but times change and the concept of allocating the hunt access to Kinneil is outdated".



(Bath HSA)

Saboteurs running away with the Palmer Milburn Beagles in November.

Kangaroo Shoot Goes Ahead

AUSTRALIAN hunt saboteurs were unsuccessful in their bid to prevent a major kangaroo cull in the Hattah Kulkyne National Park in October.

The saboteurs miscalculated the position of the culling site and took up positions ten kilometres away. Their intention had been to stand between the kangaroos and the guns and so make shooting impossible. Police confirmed that, had they managed to reach the right place – a closely guarded secret – the cull would have been called off.

Six hundred and fourteen Western Grey Kangaroos were shot in one night and their joeys clubbed to death with blunt instruments. The bodies were heaped into deep but narrow trench graves, already prepared with earth-digging machinery.

A total 153,000 kangaroos are due for culling in New South Wales, and four million nationwide. The environment ministry is concerned about the increased degradation of scrubland caused by over-grazing.

'Attempted Murder' Claim as Sabs are Run Down

THE HSA HAS called for a full police inquiry into an incident in which two hunt saboteurs say they were deliberately hit by a hunt follower's landrover on New Year's Day.

Peterborough sab John Knowles told HOWL that eight vehicles filled with supporters of the Fitzwilliam FH, were used to pursue a single vanload of saboteurs from the Lincoln group. The sabs were blocked in just as the Peterborough van arrived in answer to their CB distress call. As men rushed from hunt landrovers towards the trapped Lincoln van, John said he left his own vehicle and walked over 'to try to calm the situation'.

'The first landrover drove at me in an apparent murder attempt. I jumped to one side, possibly hitting the windscreen with my temple. I held the handles of the door, expecting the vehicle to stop, but it didn't and I was thrown off at about 60 mph'.

Other saboteurs who left the Peterborough van as soon as John was hit, say the landrover turned, went up onto the grass verge, rammed into the van door and then drove into a sixteen year old girl, Holly Sutterly.

John and Holly were both treated in hospital and were still not fully recovered after several weeks of recouperation. John suffered injuries to his legs, hip, spine, shoulder and head; Holly was knocked unconscious for fifteen minutes and suffered extensive leg injuries.

When Huntingdon and Norwich sabs attended the Fitzwilliam's Haddon Cross Roads meet on January 12th, there were further outrages. Saboteurs say one of the Norwich group was 'kidnapped' and forced into a hunt landrover, then locked in while two others were assaulted.

A spokesperson claimed that when the saboteur was released by a women in the group, she was lifted bodily into the air by the driver and then 'punched continually'.

"The police watched for a while, and then intervened, but no-one was arrested."

An official complaint is being lodged with Cambridgeshire police, and saboteurs are demanding tough legal action against the unacceptable behaviour of the hunt supporters. Any future developments will be reported in HOWL.

Police Chief Slams Hunt Violence



(Wolves HSA)

A North Staffordshire hunter lashes saboteurs with his whip.

RIDERS WITH THE North Staffordshire FH who attacked hunt saboteurs have come under fire from a police chief.

Superintendent Mike Worthington told journalists that he was shocked by the aggressive behaviour of their hunt. "I have been attending hunts for many years, but I have never seen anything quite so aggressive from huntsmen before", he said.

The attack took place two hours after hounds moved off from a meet near Bridgemere in November. Riders rode into saboteurs, trampled and whipped them. Wolverhampton sab, Neil McIvor, said "they charged at us, whooping and yelling like something out of a wild west film. Their whips were raised and they cheered as they rode towards us. I had to grab the reins of a horse to prevent myself being trampled, but the rider kicked his horse up to a gallop and struck me with the bone handle of his whip."

Neil had to have stitches to seal the wound in hospital.

The police, who were there in force, had a video team with them and several plain clothes 'undercover' officers. Supt. Worthington said they would be studying the video and photographic evidence "to see if we can identify anyone using such violence".

One would not have thought this would prove a very taxing task. Photos taken by press photographer Steve Bould and published on the front page of a West Midlands newspaper, show clearly what was going on.

Oddly enough, police were 'unable' to arrest any huntsmen on the day however, although they had no difficulty in arresting four hunt saboteurs for public order offences. The four sabs were released at the end of the day without charge.

Red Deer and the Trust. A personal view by Ian Pedler

Ian Pedler joined the HSA in 1964. In 1973, he set up Save Our Stags (SOS) as a splinter group aiming to raise awareness about the problems of stag hunting amongst HSA groups and to co-ordinate regular sabotage of one pack in particular, The Quantock Stag Hounds.

Through SOS, large numbers of sabs from all over the country gained first hand experience of stag hunting. The direct action campaign against the Quantock reached its peak between 1978 and 1981 when the hunt were down to a mere handful of riders, and close to disbandment.

Between 1979 and 1981, with the SOS campaign at its height, Ian also served as a member of the LACS Committee. Clashes with Richard Course, then the League's Executive Director, led to Pedler's resignation from the Committee, and the beginning of an instructive one-year appointment as the League's Sanctuaries Manager.

In this article, he takes a critical look at the implications of a stag hunting ban.



(Save Our Stags)

Death in the morning. Huntsmen of the Devon & Somerset Staghounds sit impassively beside the young hind they have just slaughtered.

It must be doubtful if anyone reading this was even remotely surprised by the decision of the National Trust to suspend, for three years, a democratically constituted vote of the membership to outlaw stag hunting on its land, in favour of another survey on the feasibility of alternative forms of deer control.

The facts were simple enough. Having been forced by dissident members to place the issue of blood sports to a general vote of the entire Trust membership and a majority in favour of a ban on deer hunting arrived at, the governing body decided to convene a special committee meeting to decide whether or not to implement the ban. It would then appear that the Chairman of the National Trust, Dame Jennifer Jenkins, wife of the former SDP leader Roy Jenkins, had somehow used 50,000 proxy votes to stave off acceptance of the decision and go instead for the three year suspension.

The issues here, other than lack of democratic principle, would seem to be should the National Trust become involved in the blood sport controversy and, if so, what form of control should be implemented. To the first question the answer must surely be yes, should the membership so desire, which not withstanding vote rigging, they apparently do. As to the second, one must remember that the central issue in all this pivots on the argument now so vigorously expounded by the latest play-thing of the British Field Sports Society, namely the former executive director of the League Against Cruel Sports, Richard Course, who defending his new masters at a public meeting in Dulverton on 3rd December last year stated that an outright ban on deer hunting would spell the end of the deer. That without the hunt the local farmers would no longer have a reason to tolerate the deer and the damage they cause and in a very short time would wipe them out. This may be a total condemnation of the hunting farmers of Exmoor and the Quantocks, but is most certainly not an argument in favour of the continuation of stag hunting. But unfortunately, this would be the case, for while it is perfectly true to say that an end to fox and hare hunting would make little overall difference to the number of these animals killed annually, the same cannot be said with regard to deer hunting.

To anyone who has been involved with deer control in this area it is an unmistakable fact that a blanket abolition of deer hunting with hounds, backed up without a serious alternative, will be disastrous. Quite simply the people who live in deer hunting country will no longer have a reason to tolerate the deer and will decimate this unique collection of animals, leaving nothing but a few scattered individuals. It has happened twice before and will happen again. Therefore, a workable compromise has to be found that will safeguard the interests of both farmers and deer. There are a number of ways that this problem could be approached, for example:

1. The Government could pay the farmers for not killing the deer, in much the same way as they are now paid for not ploughing open moorland.
2. A Government-financed deer control team could be appointed with a mandate to maintain the herds at the acceptable level of around 1000 deer.
3. Financial inducement could be offered to the British Deer Society to appoint and operate a deer control team in the area.
4. Funding could be made available to the Exmoor National Park Authority and the Somerset Trust for Nature Conservation to undertake such a control programme.

All the above ideas, feasible though they may seem, are fraught with many difficulties and would encounter considerable opposition, simply because little or no deer damage compensation would be forthcoming to the local farmers. Consequently, it would appear that any type of control venture would have to prove self-financing and that funding would have to come from within the area of control itself. Regrettably there would seem to be only one suitable solution to the problem and that is the possibility of a limited stalking operation. A number of professional stalkers would have to be appointed (maybe with the help of the British Deer Society and all proficient in the use of fire-arms and deer management) who would supervise all shooting. The stalker would pay a fee for the privilege of shooting an Exmoor deer (much as in Scotland) and from this fee, coupled with the sale of the venison, would come the salaries of the professional stalkers and the

continued on page 8

Red Deer and the Trust

A personal View by Ian Pedler

continued from page 7

compensation payments for the farmers. Landowners could be encouraged to harbour a limited number of deer on their land and to inform the stalking centre as to their number and size, in much the same way as they now do for the stag hunt. There would be considerable problems to iron out with a plan such as this, but with compromise and tolerance it could succeed to the benefit of both sides.

Unfortunately, there are going to be numerous people in the animal rights movement who will find any attempt at the shooting of red deer for sport or profit both repugnant and unacceptable, but until such time as the League Against Cruel Sports and the Hunt Saboteurs Association address themselves to the serious consideration of alternative deer control methods and accept that we do not live in a perfect world, the issue will remain in the hand of pro blood sport institutions such as the National Trust and the British Field Sports Society. The net result of this will continue to be that any argument for humane or civilised control will always revert to the assumption that hunting with hounds is the only way and this is patently not the case.

The final word must go to the world's acknowledged expert on deer management, Kenneth Whitehead, who stated quite categorically in his 1980 book 'Hunting and Stalking Deer in Britain through the Ages'. . . "The claim, often put forward, that stag hunting with hounds is the ONLY satisfactory way of controlling the deer population in this part of England, is not borne out in practice, because occasional deer drives still have to be held to kill surplus stock, particularly hinds. Anti-hunting supporters can argue that, since some deer have to be shot, complete control should be effected by shooting. Such a thing is of course possible, but whether farmers, deprived of their favourite sport of hunting, would tolerate ANY deer at all on their land is extremely doubtful."

Ian Pedler

Holloa Appeal is Successful

A CROWN COURT judge has overturned the conviction of a saboteur for hollering.

Harry Cross was arrested for causing 'alarm, harrassment and distress' to Brocklesby Hunt whipper-in, Gareth Payne by hollering to his hounds last season. When a magistrates court found him guilty, Harry appealed and had the conviction quashed this September.

The judge asked both Harry and Payne to demonstrate a holloa to the court, then confessed that neither he nor the two magistrates sitting with him could see how such a noise could be said to have caused alarm, harrassment or distress to the hunt.

The Public Order Act could not have been breached, he ruled, by an action that was perfectly lawful.



Police block saboteurs' vehicles outside the Southdown's kennels at dawn during September cubhunting. A saboteur makes notes. *(Hastings/Bexhill HSA)*

PEACEFUL SABOTAGE STILL TREATED AS ILLEGAL

THE FIRST HALF of the current foxhunting season has been marked by a persistent refusal by British police forces to accept peaceful sabotage as a legitimate activity.

Despite frequent complaints about their conduct, and the fairly good record of the courts in dismissing cases brought against sabs under section five of the Public Order Act, the upward spiral of arbitrary arrests has continued unabated.

There were at least nine in October. Charges included: Slapping a whipper-in after he had just thumped a saboteur (and got away with it); urinating against a hedge, and blowing a hunting horn. They were arrested at meets of the Hampshire, Burton, East Kent, New Forest and Holderness Hunts, but none have been charged with any offence. Two saboteurs arrested at a meet of the Wheatland have been charged, but their case was adjourned.

November began with seven arrests at a single meet of the Surrey Union. There were four at the North Staffordshire, three at the East Essex, two at the Middleton and one each at the Bramham Moor and the East Sussex and Romney Marsh. Two of these were for hornblowing – a charge that had to be dropped in one case when the huntsman of the East Sussex told the police he didn't want the sab to be arrested! There was one arrest for whistling and one for obstructing police during a dig-out. The others were for unspecified public order infringements and none have come to court.

In December, another nine arrests were made at a meet of the East Essex; seven of them for approaching a dig-out. There were three at the Cottesmore for watching the hunt from a footpath, and one at the Chiddingfold for declining to give a name and address to the police.

A saboteur was arrested for spraying anti-mate at a meet of the New Forest Buckhounds in January, bringing the total in the last three months to 41.

We expect that this figure falls short of the true total. It has been gleaned from returned Hit Report forms, odd letters, and press clippings. If a member of your group is arrested, regardless of whether or not they are released without charge at the end of the day, please remember to inform HSA. If our efforts to put a stop to the practice of wrongful and arbitrary arrest are to bear fruit, it is vital we monitor each incident fully.

Nine Months for Hunt Bomb Hoaxer

SOMERSET BLOODSPORTS fanatic, Jim Newberry Street, was jailed for nine months in October for planting a bomb under his own landrover.

In an attempt to discredit the HSA and other peaceful animal rights organisations after an unknown group bombed a Bristol vivisector's car, Newberry Street placed a nail bomb beneath the landrover in his home village of Seavington St Mary on June 10th.

He then phoned the police, claiming to be from an animal rights group and telling them where to find the bomb. Police sealed off the village, began evacuating it and called in more than eighty officers. But it was not a masterpiece of deception.

Police were puzzled when they asked Newberry Street to look under the landrover but saw him locate the device by feel alone. They stopped being puzzled when they found a nail, identical to those used in the bomb, under a cushion on the driver's seat. When questioned about this coincidence, Newberry Street confessed, and asked for two similar offences (hoax calls about bombs in London) to be taken into consideration.

On June 21st, the BFSS still had the audacity to put a statement in Horse & Hound warning 'all field sports enthusiasts to be vigilant against possible terrorist attacks by Hunt Saboteurs.'

Some people have no shame.



(Oxford HSA)

The Oxford van with its shattered back window, just days after the acquittal of a Bicester whipper-in.

CPS DROP MORE HUNT PROSECUTIONS

BICESTER WITH WHADDON CHASE whipper-in, Ian Jones, walked free from court on January 17th when the prosecuting solicitor suddenly dropped all charges. It was the latest in a long line of unexplained decisions by the Crown Prosecution Service to abandon criminal proceedings against leading hunt personnel.

Jones was in court to answer a charge of unlawful and malicious wounding after an incident on September 1st when a female hunt saboteur from Oxford was hit over the head with a riding crop. The saboteur, who had been peacefully calling hounds at a cubhunting meet, had to be taken to hospital to have her wounds dressed.

Jones' defence witnesses, who alleged that he had only acted in self defence, were not exactly compelling. One of them, Liam Thom, who described the assault as 'one little knock on the head', displayed open confusion about the details of the incident. When questioned about this, he replied, 'I can remember the points I can remember because Mr Jones asked me to remember those points'.

But, despite the clear interest of the police in obtaining a conviction, and despite Jones admitting that he had hit her, the Crown Prosecution Service's solicitor chose to drop the charge. He then asked for Jones to be bound over instead, but was met with a blunt refusal from the bench. The magistrates (from the Woodstock bench but sitting in the Bicester court house), said they were not convinced that Jones had been to blame.

Similar decisions in other parts of the country have been reported in these pages before. It is happening with increasing frequency.

On October 3rd, the remaining formalities in the case against the five followers of the Cotswold Vale Farmers were dealt with at Gloucester Crown Court. As we reported in HOWL 45, saboteurs had already been told they would no longer be required as witnesses to the savage beatings they had received, as the charges (affray, unlawful wounding, carrying an offensive weapon, and criminal damage) were all being dropped.

In this court hearing too, the prosecutor asked for the defendants to be bound over instead, but Judge Rupert Bursell refused to give his consent. He even awarded them costs. In the Bicester case, Jones' solicitor tried to cite the release of the Cotswold Vale defendants as case law relevant to the freeing of his own client!

Messrs Trotman and Rouse, huntsman and whipper-in respectively with the Waveney Harriers, were in court on November 30th on various charges, including one of threatening behaviour towards saboteurs. After calling just one of the several sab witnesses at his disposal, the CPS prosecutor declined to continue the case, dropped the charges, and called no further witnesses. The magistrates, who seemed genuinely surprised at this strange turn of events, had little choice but to free the pair.

The CPS were slightly less culpable at the trial of South Devon kennel huntsman, John Norrish, before Teignbridge magistrates in November. The prosecution did at least make an effort to conduct part of the case against Norrish; charges of threatening behaviour and provoking violence at a meet last April when a saboteur was once again beaten over the head with a riding crop.

But when the bench acquitted him of this, the CPS dropped a second charge against him under section five of the Public Order Act without explanation.

Norrish openly admitted striking the saboteur, but claimed he had done so only because he was afraid his victim might have hit him if he hadn't. 'I hit him once on the front of the head with the soft part of the leather', he explained.

According to his solicitor, Norrish is such an obviously blameless picture of placidity that his friends all call him 'Saint John'. Some magistrates, it seems, will believe anything as long as they're not being told it by a hunt saboteur.

* * *

Following the withdrawal of charges against Ian Jones, Oxford sabs told the press that it seemed the court had effectively given the hunt a licence to assault saboteurs with immunity.

HOWL therefore makes no comment about the fact that on the following Saturday, their van was attacked during a meet of the Bicester hunt and the back window smashed with a riding crop. When the driver got out to speak with a hunt rider, he claims he was charged at and beaten twice over the head with a riding crop. The wound he received required three stitches.

'NON-NEUTRAL' INSPECTOR GETS ADVICE

POLICE INSPECTOR Morris Smallwood, the Cumbria Constabulary's Hunt Liaison Officer, has been cleared by the Police Complaints Authority over his conduct at the court hearing of the Carlisle Four.

Regular readers will recall that Smallwood gave evidence against four hunt saboteurs which, in the opinion of the Judge hearing their appeal, should have been rejected because he had taken a 'non-neutral stance'. Inspector Smallwood has something of a soft spot for hunting. At the conclusion of the hearing, the saboteurs filed a complaint against him with the PCA (see HOWL 44 for fuller details).

But although the investigating superintendent initially led them to believe the complaint was well-founded and that Smallwood was likely to face demotion and possibly a criminal prosecution, the Authority's final report has been a disappointment.

It states that, 'The officer's denial, supported by his colleagues and documentary evidence, does not prove the complaint beyond reasonable doubt'. In the words of the report, Smallwood has merely been 'strongly advised' to watch his conduct in the future.

The sabs are still awaiting a firm date to be set for the long delayed judicial review of their original case.



(Oxford HSA)

A Bath sab models a horn, specially customised for him by followers of the Heythrop FH, to blow flat notes only.

SABS LAUNCH LEGAL OFFENSIVE

SIXTY HUNT SABOTEURS from the South of England have begun a fightback against the police for wrongful arrest and false imprisonment.

The actions reflect the HSA's determination to resist the erosion of civil liberties implicit in the attitudes of some police forces towards hunt sabotage. The tendency for police officers to arrest saboteurs on vague and unsubstantiated charges simply to remove them from hunt meets, represents an abuse of the public order act, and is becoming more and more widespread.

London solicitors MacKenzie Knight will be acting for the sabs in 23 different legal actions involving a total of five police forces. The Sussex, Hampshire, Thames Valley, Kent and Dorset forces all face court action.

Claims include the case of 17 saboteurs arrested in September by Sussex police at a meet of the Chiddingfold, reported in HOWL 45. Although all arrested for alleged infringements of the Public Order Act, none were subsequently charged with an offence.

COTTESMORE CASES THROWN OUT

THE LAST OF eleven hunt saboteurs arrested at the Cottesmore FH last season was brought to court in November.

All had been charged with breach of the peace for carrying out such normal HSA tactics as hornblowing or calling to hounds, and all except one were acquitted of all charges.

The sole conviction was of a Leicester sab who found himself summonsed after making a complaint to the police that he had been attacked by the hunt on a public footpath and had his horn stolen.

The prosecution alleged he was in breach of binding-over requirements imposed at an earlier hearing. He was fined £80. No hunters were arrested following his complaint.

On December 8th this season, three more Leicester sabs were arrested when they refused to stop watching the hunt from a public footpath. The police are clearly not going to allow failure in the courts to influence their decision to go on arresting people for nothing.

INJUNCTION NONSENSE

THE LATEST moves by hunt legal 'experts' to serve injunctions on saboteurs to prevent them attending meets have not been very auspicious.

A private eye called Simmonds, employed by Cripps Harries Hall on behalf of the Fitzwilliam FH, was recently sent round to intimidate the parents of Peterborough sabs, Nick Brown and John Knowles.

John's disabled and elderly parents let Simmonds in, thinking he was the insurance man. Once inside, he managed to persuade them to phone John so that he could talk to him about the injunction. He did not stay in the house very long.

The BFSS are believed to have spent around £50,000 so far in the attempt to get an injunction served on Norwich sabs to keep them away from the West Norfolk FH.

The case was adjourned in December but is expected to reach court again in the near future.



(Oxford HSA)

Pictured left above an HSA leaflet to Bob Knight, Master of the Old Berkely Beagles, at the Vale of Aylesbury's New Years Day meet at Thame. The office eagerly awaits his completed membership form.

BAIL CONDITIONS AND SECTION FIVE – AN UPDATE

The long drawn out legal case resulting from the use by the Dorset police of Section 5 of the Public Order Act (P.O.A.) against a group of sabs in 1987 has finally been concluded. The full background to the case may be found in issues 39 and 43 of Howl. The main argument being tested by the High Court was whether a magistrate had the right to imprison sabs for refusing in court to comply with bail restrictions preventing the sabs from attending hunt meets in England or Wales whilst awaiting trial on a charge of breach of Section 5. The main point for consideration was that breach of Section 5 is not in itself an imprisonable offence and therefore bail should not be withheld under any circumstances.

In September 1987 the Dorset police arrested 49 sabs at a cub hunt of the Cattistock Foxhounds and charged them under Section 5 P.O.A. When the case came to court in February 1988 the prosecution sought a two month adjournment. In addition, bail was only granted on condition that the sabs gave an undertaking not to attend hunt meets in England or Wales (Scotland has a separate judicial system). Former H.S.A. chairperson Flod Pamment refused to agree to these conditions and was subsequently held in custody. The remand in custody was considered to be unlawful and a full Judicial review was called for. In July 1988 the High Court ruled that the magistrates had exceeded their powers and did not have the jurisdiction to withhold bail in cases involving Section 5 where the maximum penalties exclude imprisonment. The custodial order against Flod was quashed. However, the Treasury Solicitor, acting on behalf of the magistrates, sought to have the appeal reinstated so that the argument could be put again. This second appeal came to court finally on 2nd Oct. 1990 with the barrister Adrian Fulford representing Flod. The decision to quash the custodial order was again upheld. What does this mean in practice? Essentially it means that in future cases involving Section 5, or any other non-imprisonable offence, the magistrates should not be in a position to make it a condition that the sab *agrees in court* to refrain from attending hunt meets and that if he/she refuses then bail will be withheld. It is important to note that the condition to stay away from hunts can still be imposed by the magistrates if they wish but the sab *does not need to give an undertaking in court to that effect in order to obtain bail.* If this situation should arise again and you are uncertain of your position you should consult your solicitor in court and ask him/her to refer to case law (Quote case QBDCF 1459/88 Regina v Blandford Justices ex parte Pamment). If the condition to stay away from hunts is made against you bail *must* still be granted and then it is a matter for you to decide afterwards whether to continue to sab or not until such time as your case is dealt with.

Full details of the adjudication may be found in the Guardian law report of Nov. 10th 1988 and in the Times law report of Oct. 22 1990.



Oh No! It's Section Five!

Back, by popular demand: another article about Section 5. This article consists of three parts: s.5 in theory; s.5 in the field; and s.5 in the police station.

In Theory

A person is guilty of an offence under s.5 if he or she "uses threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behaviour, or disorderly behaviour, within the hearing or sight of a person likely to be caused harassment, alarm or distress thereby". Effectively that divides into two parts. The first is the threatening, abusive, or insulting bit, which needs no explanation. The second part is more difficult: "disorderly behaviour". I have heard that defined in two ways. One is "conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace", and the other is "conduct likely to cause harassment, alarm, or distress". The theoretical argument is that by preventing a hunt from killing animals, your conduct is disorderly. In the vast majority of cases that have come to court, this theory has been dismissed as the rubbish that it is. Unfortunately, most police forces haven't yet cottoned on to this.

In The Field

As with any piece of law, what really matters is the way the police interpret it. If your local police have decided that horn blowing is contrary to s.5, then there is little you can do on the day to change their mind. Consequently there are two things that matter: one is to avoid being warned for it, and the other is to avoid being arrested. Many forces will warn you at the meet: this is not the warning that s.5 requires. You must already have done something, and be told to stop. If you then continue (or if you do it again later) they can arrest you. Avoiding arrest means quite simply this: don't let them physically catch you. I have often seen sabs literally stand and wait to be arrested. Why?? Running away from the police (as opposed to resisting arrest) is not an offence. If the police are exceeding their powers and being a nuisance, then why make their job any easier?

In The Police Station

Hopefully it won't come to this! But if it does, a few words of warning. Now that they've arrested you, the police will look for evidence to convict you. Witnesses (hunt and police) will be useful, but the thing they know will convict you is an interview. It cannot be said often enough: the best defence is to say nothing. The police will put you under a lot of pressure, subtle and obvious, because they know how crucial it is. The interview is not an opportunity for you to clear your name (whatever they may say) it is their attempt to gather evidence. The interview is controlled by them, and they have much more experience in asking questions than you do in answering them. Before the interview starts, say: "I have been advised by my solicitor not to answer any questions." The police may try and discuss this with you: this is a trap to get you talking. The police station is not the place for legal (or moral) arguments. If they want to take you to court, you can argue about it there.

Finally: If you have been arrested for s.5 (or indeed anything else) please please please get in touch with the HSA about it. If you don't tell us what's going on, we can't do anything about it.

HUNTERS GUILTY OF ASSAULT

A STAGHUNTER WAS fined £600 by magistrates at Bridgwater on October 22nd for assaulting a protester and breaking his camera.

Edward Vickery, of the Quantock Staghounds, had taken offence when the protester, Chris Morgan, tried to photograph a deer running from the hounds last April. He rode over, attacked Morgan, and snatched his camera.

Fortunately, a protester behind Morgan photographed the confrontation and the resulting picture was used in evidence. It was later reproduced in the national press (see Today 23/10/1990).

Another hunt rider who assaulted saboteurs was Duncan Branch, a farming subscriber with the Chiddingfold FH. A court heard how he had got off his horse and run towards the two sabs shouting, 'I've been in the army and I can punch'.

He then assaulted both of them, lashing out with his fists and crop and causing them head injuries.

On January 17th, Branch was brought to book by magistrates and fined £400 for the assault, £250 in costs, and ordered to pay a further £50 to each of the saboteurs in compensation. Branch was described in court as 'looking like a werewolf'.

At least five other cases against hunt servants and supporters are in the pipeline as we go to press and are expected to reach court during the next few weeks.



(Simon Wild)

Hunt Saboteur Dave Fowler following the attack by Duncon Branch.

FOREST SABS IN COURT

A SABOTEUR who tried to prevent a huntsman from stealing her spray was found guilty of assault by Lymington magistrates in October.

Rachel White was arrested after slapping New Forest huntsman, Ian Hawkins. Hawkins had just wrenched her spray from her and poured it over her head. She was fined £50.

Three of the five Forest saboteurs arrested for causing the death of a Jack Russell terrier when it got trapped during a dig-out in October, were convicted by Ringwood magistrates on January 25th. They were conditionally discharged for two years.

CHIDDINGFOLD MASS ARRESTS – THREE GUILTY

ONLY THREE saboteurs have been successfully prosecuted as a result of the mass arrests at the Chiddingfold FH reported in HOWL 45.

The three were found guilty of obstruction at the hunt's Northchapel cubhunting meet, and given a year's conditional discharge. They were ordered to pay costs of £60 each.

MASTER CONVICTED OVER DONKEY ATTACK

THE MASTER OF the East Essex FH, Guy Lister, was found guilty of allowing his dogs to worry a donkey by magistrates in November.

Lyster was prosecuted on five counts under the Protection of Livestock Act after the East Essex pack rampaged through private gardens in Tolleshunt Major and chased a pet donkey. Its owner, Ann Fitch, told the court 'They were howling, snarling and snapping at the donkey's heels. There wasn't a redcoat or a huntsman to be seen'.

The donkey was so terrified it ran into a barbed wire fence and cut itself deeply as it pushed against it.

Lister pleaded not guilty, but was fined £250 by he bench. He is considering an appeal.

SABOTEURS CLEARED

THERE HAVE BEEN at least 16 acquittals of hunt saboteurs in various magistrates courts so far this season. Most cases had been brought for highly dubious infringements of the public order act.

Eleven were dropped by the CPS at Chichester in November due to the complete lack of evidence available to carry them any further. The police are being sued for wrongful arrest.

A Yorkshire saboteur arrested at the opening meet of the Holderness FH after he refused to surrender his horn to the police, had his case dropped in court during November. The prosecution announced an intention of pursuing a bind-over, but this too was abandoned a month later. Again, the police now face prosecution for wrongful arrest.

Petersfield magistrates acquitted two Southsea sabs of threatening behaviour in November. They stood accused of refusing to leave the scene of a dig-out where several sabs had been photographing the terrier-crew.

Finally, in the same month, the prosecution offered no evidence against two West London saboteurs who were arrested for public order offences. One accepted a binding-over order.



The battle of Altcar. Saboteurs run onto the coursing field during an early attempt to disrupt the Waterloo Cup. Love the flares . . .

Coursing — A brief introduction

'Coursing, hasn't that been banned?' This is quite a normal statement from many people who believe that hare coursing no longer occurs. Nothing could be further from the truth with 23 coursing clubs registered with the National Coursing Club (NCC) in England and Wales. Then there are all the other individual coursers who go out (usually without permission) with their lurchers and greyhounds. Add these together with all of the lampers (people who go out at night and shine powerful beams onto hares/foxes/badgers and set their lurchers onto them) and recognised packs of hounds (harriers, beagles, bassets) and you can see the amount of pressure on the already disappearing hare, not forgetting all of the cruelty involved.

Before I go into any detail about coursing lets take a look at the past history of the anti-coursing activities including HSA actions in trying to stop the killing on the coursing fields.

Coursing in Britain dates back to 1776 when Lord Orford started the Swaffham Club in Norfolk.

Over the many years the League Against Cruel Sports has been going they have helped many MP's in their attempts to get coursing banned in Parliament. On every single occasion a ban has been rejected. If it makes it through the Commons then the Lords kicks it out.

The HSA's actions against this lesser known bloodsport has usually been at the Waterloo Cup, the pinnacle of the coursing season. This is held at the end of February or the beginning of March where in the past hunt saboteurs have attempted to prevent the slaughter on several occasions. The two years of most note were in 1983 when a whole days coursing was ruined by pre-beating the hares out of the area and counter-beating the remaining hares. The next year was the year in which Eddie Coultson was nearly killed, suffering a depressed and fractured skull given to him by the coursing mob. Occasionally, other meetings are sabbed but with varying degrees of success.

Back to the present. There are approximately 100 days coursing a season, put on by the registered NCC clubs in which around 2200 course will be run. The season begins on September 12th and ends on March 10th. The coursing clubs usually use more than one area for their 'sport' during the season. For example, the Altcar club (who host the Waterloo Cup) use the area around Lydiate and the Withams. The North Herts club have a walk up meet and a driven meet at Wallington.

Organised coursing has a well defined structure, with set staff doing specific jobs, a laid out area etc. Below is a brief description of how a days coursing actually operates.

Hounds

Greyhounds are the most popular dogs used in coursing and the NCC has a standard set of rules drawn up to regulate the proceedings. They are often trained using a dummy hare or a live one in competition with another dog, over open country. There have also been reports of bagged hares being used in training and even domestic cats. There are also links between coursing and greyhound racing. Some racers are trained by coursing them and old racers may end their days in the coursing arena. Also, all greyhound racers have to pay fees which go to the NCC.

Other breeds which are used include Whippets, Saluki, Deerhounds, Borzois, Afghans and Lurchers (a cross between a greyhound and another breed).

Coursing Staff

There are three main types of people involved. The slipper is the person who releases the hounds onto the hare simultaneously, using a special attachment with twin collars. He determines whether the hare is fit to course (strong enough and without 'balled-up' feet i.e. not clogged with clay). If it is decided that the hare is not suitable then it will be left and the next one brought on. He is registered and trained by the NCC.

The judge is usually mounted on a horse for better visibility and awards points to the greyhounds according to their ability.

A gang of people, known as beaters, form an enclosure and drive hares towards the coursing field, using white flags on poles. Using advice from the local keepers they say that the hares are only driven along paths that they would normally use. At large courses (such as the Waterloo Cup at Altcar) hares may be kept in the area by artificial feeding. Beaters are usually employed by the day. Some clubs even use children, paying them as little as £1 a day.

Coursing area layout

The actual coursing area is normally grass or unploughed and ideally surrounded by a ditch and ridge or a hedge. As already mentioned the hunting is by sight and the hounds should lose the hare once it disappears through the hedge. However, both have been known to disappear over the horizon. Some clubs do have an artificial shelter, called a 'sough', into which the hare is supposed to be able to escape. This is more necessary in the Fens where the country is very open. The only people allowed onto this area are the judge and slipper – all bookmakers, spectators and owners have to stand outside. On larger fields there may also be up to four 'picker-uppers' whose job it is to ensure that the hare is dead if it actually gets caught by the hounds. All participants actually on the field should remain static and silent and no hares should be headed back onto the field but this is not always adhered to.

A days coursing

A clubs programme will be sent out about a month before the start of the season to allow owners to enter. An entry fee is required, which ranges from £4 up to £80 for the Waterloo Cup, which is then used for the prize money.

Names of hounds are drawn in pairs and

coursed against each other. A line of beaters will start up to three miles away and drive hares with the wind. As they approach the area the lines ends curve round to funnel the hares into the coursing area. When the slipper had judged the hare to be suitable he will allow it to run 80–100 yards ahead and then release ('slip') the hounds.

The object of the exercise is not to kill the hare but points are awarded accordingly to the positions of the hounds at various stages of the chase e.g. the first turn the hare makes as it tries to escape the hounds' jaws. Although the intention is not to kill, points are sometimes awarded to the hound which 'dispatches' the hare.

The hounds are identified by either a red or white collar and the judge indicates the winner by raising an appropriate coloured handkerchief. A blue one is also used to indicate a hound has been withdrawn e.g. a red and blue hankie raised together means that white has been withdrawn and red is the winner. A yellow hankie indicates a tie and the hounds will have to run again later. If there are insufficient hares to complete the card then the prize money is divided between the heat winners.

Walk-up coursing

If the area surrounding a static course does not contain sufficient hares, or is unsuitable for beating, then the slipper and beaters will often start walking across fields in a line (with the slipper in the centre) putting up hares themselves. When a hare is moving then the line stops and the hounds are released. Only the judge is allowed in front of this line.

Irish coursing

The Irish coursing is different to the English way of coursing. The reason for this is that the hares are trapped several weeks before the meeting and taken to the coursing field where the trials are to take place. This is known as Park coursing. The coursing park is comprised of an enclosed field which contains two small compounds at the top end and an enclosure at the bottom end which houses the hares to be coursed. At the beginning of each course one hare is released into the main field and the slipper gives the animal about eighty yards start before releasing the two greyhounds. For the hare to escape it must reach the top compounds into which the two greyhounds cannot get. From here, the hare is taken back to the bottom enclosure to be coursed again on the same day or subsequent days.

So that is how coursing is run, but what arguments do the coursers use to justify their 'sport'?

In the booklet published by the NCC called 'The Truth About Coursing' they ask the question 'What is Coursing?' Their reply is 'Coursing is a sport testing the merits of two greyhounds in their competitive pursuit of a hare.' Another question 'Is the purpose of coursing to kill a hare?' Their answer is 'No.' As you can see, they do not try to justify it as a pest control or culling exercise – their only justification is that it is their sport and they should have the right to do it if they wish.

In coursing literature the killing of the hare is not considered to be important but there is up to one point awarded to the hound that actually kills it. If the kill is not important the hounds could be muzzled to prevent the slaughter but the coursers reject this idea. The hare would then 'only' be terrified whilst being chased and possibly left to die of exhaustion/burst heart/ruined lungs/hypothermia etc. etc.

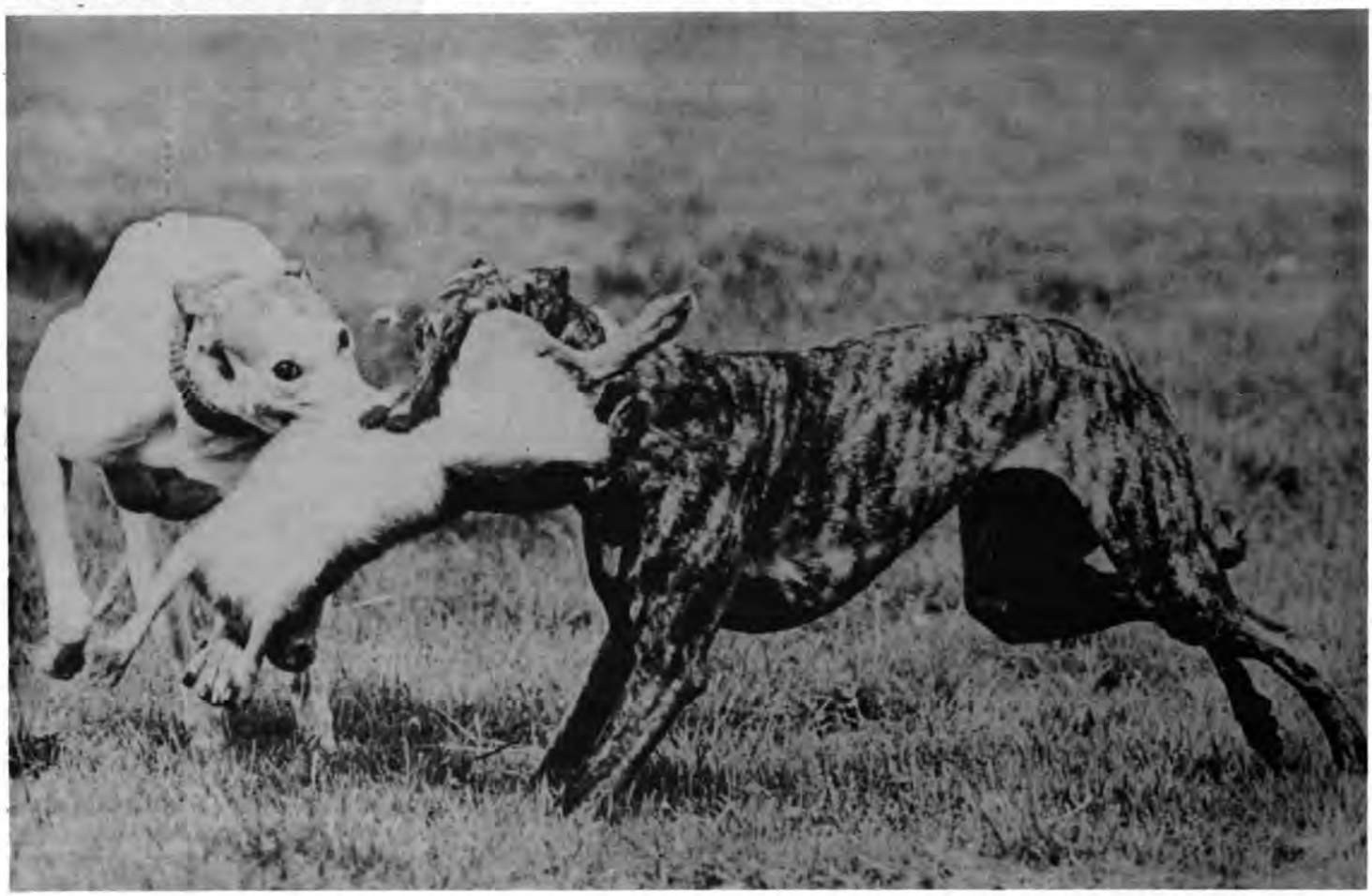
When a greyhound grasps a hare in its powerful jaws you can very often hear the screaming which will become more intense if the second one joins in, a tug of war ensuing. It could be many minutes before the pickers-up arrive to relieve the hare from this suffering.

The hare has quite a large territory in which it lives so the beaters usually have to walk more than a mile to get enough hares into the coursing fields. Any hares left after the days 'event' will be crowded into an alien territory with a lot of other hares also in a strange area. During the actual course then, the hare will be in a foreign landscape and will be greatly disadvantaged by not knowing the lie of the land, escape routes etc.

In the Shooting Times of 22nd–28th March 1990 an article appeared about a census about the hare population. In it, it was stated that there was an abundance of hares, especially where shooting, hunting and coursing occurred. However, the accounts for the Waterloo Cup shows a figure of £363 for hare restocking in the coursing area. This shows that the report is a cover up for the serious decline of the hare. The coursing supporters club has now started to admit, after years of denials, that they bring in hares from out of the area to be coursed.

The NCC says that it is time to open up and allow the general public to see what coursing is all about because they have got nothing to hide. However, trying to obtain meets and information on coursers activities is still very difficult. Cameras are still discouraged at meetings. Any information that members have, or can obtain, would be more than welcome to allow us to relaunch our activities against this obviously cruel pastime and relegate it to the dustbin of history where, despite some people's beliefs, it is not yet.

Cameron Evans



The barbarity of Hare Coursing.

Point to Point Racing —
What every sab should know

Although not usually recognised as such, point-to-point racing is inextricably linked with organised hunting. It all began as an end of season festival where the local hunting fraternity would get together for a bit of friendly rivalry and racing. The races would literally involve racing across country from one point to another. In modern times however, it has developed into a much more organised "sport" and although still ostensibly an amateur event a spirit of professionalism and big business is now the order of the day.

Almost every point-to-point meeting is organised by one of the mounted packs (Foxhound, Staghound and Harrier). There is a separate committee to organise each meeting which has to report back to the particular hunt committee and get their approval for their plans. The actual races are run over specially designed and built courses, on land usually owned by a sympathetic hunt supporter. A far cry from the original concept of running across open land and jumping whatever ditches and hedges come your way.

The horses are not just any old nags picked out for the day. To be eligible to race a horse must be owned by either the hunts master/s, a hunt subscriber or a farmer living within the hunts country. In addition, it must have actually been out hunting with the pack for a minimum number of days during the season. Recently, new rules have been introduced concerning eligibility of horses, with regards to the prize money that they are allowed to have won and the races that they are allowed to have raced in.

As said above, point-to-point racing is supposed to be an amateur affair and, although the rules have recently been relaxed slightly regarding the types of employment a point-to-point rider may hold, the non-professional status is something that the Jockey Club is keen to preserve. (The Jockey Club, in conjunction with the Master of Foxhounds Association, is the "sports" governing body.) To be eligible to ride in a point-to-point race every rider must have a Riders Qualification Certificate, issued by the MFHA and signed by the relevant hunt secretary. The top point-to-point jockeys travel far and wide during the season (1st February to mid-June) and the rivalry and competition is quite intense. Sponsorship is on the increase and the MFHA Sponsorship Committee, in conjunction with the four main sponsors (Audi, Landrover, The Times and RMC) are currently engaged in a big public relations effort, attempting to raise the profile of point-to-point racing with the general public.

The hunting fraternity would be overjoyed at an increase in support for point-to-point racing. Firstly, they consider it to be a wonderful opportunity for people to mix with the bloodsporting fraternity and give supposed justification to their sadistic sport. Secondly, point-to-point racing is one of the major sources of income in a hunts annual accounts. The Burton Hunt made over £2000 from theirs in 1988 – this is a lot of money to a small hunt. The more prestigious meetings run by the larger hunts certainly make more than that.

With hunts under increasing pressure financially, disruption of their point-to-point meetings could be a crucial blow to them. Animal rights activists in the past have struck at them by removing/covering up direction signs to the meeting and damaging the jumps and courses used. HSA groups have also attempted to disrupt them. East Sussex sabs have run a campaign against the East Sussex and Romney Marsh Hunt point-to-point races, trying to bring to the public's attention the bloodsporting links and the financial gain the hunts make from it. They produced a leaflet and took out adverts in the press urging people to boycott the meeting. Lincolnshire sabs brought to their councils attention that money raised from the holding of point-to-point meetings on land owned by them goes to funding bloodsports. At the time of writing the council has just announced that these meetings will only be tolerated in the future if no money goes to hunting. I can't see the hunts holding the races purely for the benefit of others and hence they will have to find a new course, which is not a cheap prospect.

In conclusion then, campaigns against a hunts point-to-point meeting is something that everyone can get involved in whether an active sab, a supporting member or a member of a local Animal Rights group. I'm not saying that we should turn away from actively sabotaging hunts – we shouldn't – but the more pressure that they can be put under the better.

Michael Timmins



(Hastings/Bexhill HSA)

Saboteur retrieves the carcase of a fox killed by the East Sussex and Romney Marsh FH after it got stuck in a drainage channel.

Ban the Ball!



(Dan Watson)

A saboteur makes a shrewd contribution to the foxhunting debate for the benefit of press photographers. Duke of Buccleuch's hunt ball, Edinburgh, May 1990.

EASTBOURNE TOWN COUNCIL are to extend their ban on foxhunting from the Sussex downs to the Winter Gardens in the town centre, if the Deputy Mayor gets his way.

The move follows the annual hunt ball of the East Sussex and Romney Marsh FH on December 14th. Hunt funsters arriving at the Winter Gardens up to an hour late irritated police who felt obliged to keep officers at the entrance until they were all inside because of a demo by thirty hunt saboteurs.

One saboteur was punched and another thrown to the ground when a coachload of hunters carved a path through the picket line.

Deputy mayor, Maurice Skilton, was not impressed with them. "I really should have thought that this is something which might have been referred to the council in view of the fact that we have a policy against hunting on the downs", he told reporters. "I certainly would not have been in favour of having a hunt ball in Eastbourne. I will be trying to see it does not happen again".

* * *

A crowd of 200 demonstrators treated guests arriving for the North Cotswold's hunt ball to a noisy welcome in December. Stink bombs were let off outside the town hall at Cheltenham as hunt supporters filed in for their annual beanfeast. The fifty-strong contingent of police sent to guard the event were reluctant to return home empty-handed, so twelve arrests were made for alleged infringements of the Public Order Act.

DIRECTING RESOURCES

HSA Committee member Simon Russell questions the growth of 'designer packaging' in the animal rights movement

I ENJOYED MIKE HALL'S article in the last issue of HOWL. It was very amusing, a good joke, but that was what it was – a joke.

In my opinion, the last Committee was wrong both morally and in practice. The main thrust of his argument seems to point in the Greenpeace/Lynx direction; the high profile (read income) groups. Now, I'm not at all against effectiveness within the movement, but if we stop for a moment and look at these two groups and a few others, what do we find?

Greenpeace cover a wide variety of different issues, and so can draw in money from a wider section of the populace, depending on their personal concerns. The limited direct action they use is solely to gain publicity. They then work with other means to gain results. As such, Greenpeace has a fairly good record, but because of its vast difference to the HSA, cannot really be used as a role model. And can any of their successes really be accredited solely to them?

I for one think the direct action of Sea Shepherd, a much smaller group, has had just as much effect, along side the onshore efforts of groups like IFAW.

Lynx is a better choice, being a single issue group. As most people will be aware, Lynx was started when Greenpeace dropped their fur campaign, and in the process was given all the material Greenpeace had prepared – t-shirts, videos, and more importantly, contacts with people in the right places to sustain a relatively cheap advertising campaign. Lynx was virtually alone in campaigning on an issue which, even before they started, the majority of people deplored, and was regularly in the news with local group campaigns and ALF actions. It was a fruit ripe for the picking, but to give them credit, they have used their resources to the full.

Now lets look at the HSA, set up as a direct action group, (which thankfully it has remained to this day) because of the lack of results by the LACS and which, in the process, spawned the animal rights/liberation movement as we know it today. That much alone, we should consider a success. Of course the HSA should be expanded. No one could consider that wrong; but in which direction? What could we do outside the direct action field that the LACS doesn't do already, and possibly better?

Do we really have to double up on all the ways of fighting bloodsports, like BUAV, NAVS and Animal Aid do with their vivisection and Choose/Living Without/Cruelty Free campaigns? Do we really want to waste resources like they do? I hope not. Our strength is in direct action, and our strong local groups – who would consider sabbing as they do now, with or without the HSA. Are we to go off on a high profile limb, leaving them struggling to save lives like the old committee did?

possible. With that comes the side benefit of publicity. Hunting may never be destroyed by sabbing, but I know we can weaken it, show up its atrocities, and make damn sure that on a lot of

Our aim should be to raise our membership and our income and to invest that in helping our existing groups and creating new ones. Our goal should be direct action, and as much of it as hunts they do not enjoy the sadistic kick of killing.

With all the money and will in the world, could the HSA do any more than the LACS are doing now? Our strength is in our people, and with all due respect to Mike, he is a little behind the times. The HSA now has an office in Nottingham, but no paid staff. As he says, lets be creative in the struggle to end bloodsports, but do we really need to pay someone to do so?

Sabbing proves people are willing to put a hell of a lot of time, money and even the threat of personal injury into the fight against bloodsports. If that is a fact, why must it be so that all other jobs need to be done by a paid employee? I cannot see the logic. Animal groups with staff still experience a high turnover, so obviously paying people doesn't solve that particular problem. To be truthful, it doesn't solve any problems, just diminishes the bank balance.

Lets improve the HSA, but lets make sure the improvements are in the direction of direct action, and not just to make ourselves into another LACS/Lynx lookalike. The HSA may not have ended permanently any animal abuse, but neither have any other groups. Just because you have a cinema ad, and media stars pushing your organisation, it doesn't mean that you are more likely to be nearer success.

On our past record, I think we are a few points up on most groups.

Simon Russell

No Kills in Boxing Day Blizzards



(Simon Wild)

Saboteurs demonstrate at the Boxing Day meet of the Chiddingfold

NOT A SINGLE animal was killed at any of the Boxing Day meets attended by hunt saboteurs this year. Sabs were helped by some of the most atrocious weather of the season.

Most hunts fell victim to the combined demoralising effects of angry banner demonstrations, effective sabotage, horizontal rain and hammering winds. You could tell what a terrible time they all had by the unbelievably brave face they kept putting on for the benefit of the press. "We had a very good day, thankyou", said a woman from the East Kent, without going into any more illuminating details. I should bloody cocoa. Her hunt packed in, sodden, cold, and foxless at 2 pm.

They did marginally better than the Fitzwilliam (1.30 pm), the Vine & Craven (1.30 pm) and the Holcombe Harriers (12 noon), and quite a lot better than the miserable display put on by the Wick & District Beagles. This lot hunted for a whole half hour, and even that was time enough for half the pack to run one way after a couple of deer and the other half to scamper off with the sabs.

Worst of all were the L&S, who wouldn't even come out of their kennels to face the sabs gathered outside. Terriermen worked off their frustrations with typical good humour. They chucked rocks at sabs.

The rain wasn't enough to put off the Cheshire Beagles' huntsman though. In fact, it wasn't until he had fallen up to his neck in a freezing river that he decided to call it a day.

In Northern Ireland, sabs had prepared to disrupt coursing at Crebilly, but water-logged fields made intervention unnecessary so they were free to go off and find the Mid Antrim Harriers instead.

Amongst the other Boxing Day hunts patrolled by saboteurs this year were the Seavington, Cheshire FH, Middleton, East Essex, Blankney, High Peak Harriers, Sandhurst Beagles, Clinkard's Beagles, and the Hampshire FH.



(Bath HSA)

Hunt saboteurs crowd in to prevent the Beaufort from digging out another defenceless victim.

SOUTH WEST

BEAUFORT UNDER PRESSURE

BACK IN REGULAR action again after a quiet period in the mid 1980s, **YEOVIL HSA** are having one of their best seasons for years. With strong support in the town and several 'old hands' keeping up a regular commitment, the group's stability and experience is its great strength. This season, they've been making life difficult for the Seavington, the Blackmore and Sparkford Vale and the Cattistock FHs. The first of these did not impress the group in November when they were found walking their horses between coverts and making no discernible effort to pick up a scent. The Seavington country, already diminutive, is made smaller by the large number of farmers who have banned them, and by and large the hunt's future does not appear rosy.

The more professional Cattistock FH were annoyed when saboteurs halted the pack in cry on November 17th with some well-timed hornblowing; and decided not to advertise the following week. Both they and the Blackmore have started getting touchy about sab interventions but have not been able to put the group off.

BATH HSA were out 24 times during the cubhunting season alone, visiting any pack they could get a meet for, but more often than not settling down for the morning with **BRISTOL HSA** for a saunter in the scrub with their old pal, the Duke of Beaufort. Regular interruptions caused the blue-blooded hunt's aristocratic temper to run short, and after sabs from **BATH** and **BRISTOL** were twice seriously attacked late in September, a national hit was called in response. This took place in October, with groups from as far away as **PRESTON** and the **NEW FOREST** coming to lend support, and about 150 saboteurs altogether. The hunt were suitably cowed by the experience and police are following up enquiries about the earlier assaults on sabs.

BATH paid a couple of visits to the infrequently disturbed Mendip Farmers FH (depends what you mean by 'disturbed' – ed.) and found them in a bit of a pickle as a result of various internecine squabbles. It seems that, with no sabs to vent their considerable spleen on recent years, the Farmers have been venting it on themselves. The retiring master is said to have upset so many local landowners that the hunt were banned by many of them, and the situation was not at all improved when he finally absconded with the hound van and several of the better hounds.

In October, the Wick and District Beagles made the mistake of advertising some meets and were treated to **HSA** life-saving demonstrations several times as a result. **BRISTOL** and **BATH** sabs were greeted in the customary rough manner by members of the Avon Hale FH at their opening meet in Broughton Gifford. Hounds were easily called off nevertheless and a dig-out was prevented shortly before going-home time. Other victims of the **BRISTOL** and **BATH** hunt disposal unit this season include the Clifton Foot Beagles (whose country is so criss-crossed with rhines sabs would be better off in dinghies than landrovers), the South Wales Bassets, the South and West Wilts FH and the Pimpernel Beagles.



(Simon Wild)

Surrey Union, January 1991. Police try to hunt hounds on but get a poor response.

WILTSHIRE HSA have been out and about every week since late August, staying within their home county as much as possible and purposefully keeping their numbers low. Small group sabbing is alive and well in this neck of the woods. An average day sees just four or five experienced sabs in a single landrover.

Hunting-on is used regularly on beagles to great effect, but they have found voice calls now far more effective on beagles that horns. On foxhunts, hornblowing has played a more leading role. The groups low profile and manoeuvrability (thanks to the landrover) have allowed them to stay with hounds throughout the day and with minimum hassle from police or supporters. No kills have been recorded at any hunt they have attended. In fact, as one policewomen remarked caustically to the group when she was called out to deal with them by a beagle hunt in Beaufort country, 'I'm sick of them thinking we're their private army. If they think I'm going to get my feet dirty chasing you lot, they can get stuffed!'

Continuous pressure on one beagle pack has caused the abandonment of Saturday hunting. **WILTSHIRE** sabs have graced a large tally of hunts with their presence this season, including the Tedworth (very frequently), Avon Vale old Berkshire, VWH, Blackmore and Sparkford Vale, and Royal Artillery foxhunts; and the Wiltshire Infantry, Marlborough College, Chilmark, Palmer Milburn, Radley College, Wick and District, and Shrivenham Beagles.

MIDLANDS

POLICE CORDONS IN SHIRES

LEICESTER IS ONE of those towns where the HSA group has depended mainly upon colleges for its active members for the last few years. Sabs have been trying to attract greater support from people in the town this season in an effort to build up the number of regular and experienced sabs who will be available to the group for more than the usual three-year span of a degree course. This has not proved an over-night success. When weekly meetings were started up in the town to take emphasis away from the university and poly, it was still mainly students who turned up to them. Nothing daunted, the sabs have now put a newsletter out to every HSA member in the town and are expecting some positive feedback.

Meanwhile, out in the killing fields, **LEICESTER** sabs have been hob-nobbing with the **NOTTINGHAM** and **PETERBOROUGH** groups and spoiling the 'sport' of the Cottesmore and Fitzwilliam FHs. The main problem with the Cottesmore is that they have a private security system called the Leicestershire Constabulary. Four or five police vehicles guard the hunt every week and officers warn saboteurs that they risk arrest unless they stand absolutely still and quiet on the roadside. Disruption of the hunt is an out of the question illegality according to this force, but the closure of public rights of way is treated as routine police procedure. Few sabs take too much notice of legal advice of this sort and it has been found that in practice, few constables are very interested in haring across the frozen shire wastes to call them back. On December 8th, and in deep snow, even hunt riders found themselves outnumbered by the police. It was a day when hunting was for once about as difficult as sabbing.

The Fitzwilliam are easier to get at but not particularly friendly. **LEICESTER** sabs had their tyres slashed by hunt supporters on one occasion and were pleasantly surprised when the damage was mended by the hunt's terrier men. For light relief, two of the group headed north for a day with the Haydon FH on Tyneside. Hounds were in HSA custody within fifteen minutes of leaving the meet; a set back for the hunt that was only ameliorated by the intervention of several farmhands. The rest of the day was spent in repeatedly calling hounds away from under the huntsmans' nose at distances of up to 300 yards, and marvelling at his curious behaviour. This included trotting his hounds into a covert, leaving no one on point duty outside, then galloping off and leaving them there.

PETERBOROUGH HSA took part in the regional sab against the centenary celebrations of the Westerby Bassets and had a good day with the Belvoir in October. Pressure was also kept up on the Fitzwilliam however, and as the year turned, saboteurs became the victims of an escalating spiral of hunt violence (see news pages). When saboteurs called a regional action against them in response, the hunt didn't show up and the nearby Oakleigh and the Cambridgeshire hunts were visited instead. A television reporter accompanying the sabs was ridden into and verbally abused by the half-baked master of the Cambridgeshire, an indiscretion for which he paid dearly because it was recorded and broadcast all over Anglian region on the TV news that night.

NOTTINGHAM and **MANSFIELD** groups visited the Derbyshire village of Flagg on October 13th for a meet of the High Peak Harriers. Sabs took the hounds for several runs across the moors and when at last a fox was put up, horn and voice was used to send the pack straight back to the huntsman. The hunt ran into sabs again at Tissington a week or so later and this time ran into a police car with one of their horse boxes as well! When an invitation meet with the Rockwood Harriers was arranged, sabs turned up without an invitation and ran off with the pack, leaving the huntsman alone and friendless in thick cloud on the top of the moors. Other hunts visited by this group include the Quorn and the Belvoir (both of which had accounted for over 100 foxes during cubhunting alone); the Grove and Rufford FH and the Per Ardua Beagles.



(NWHSA)

Two Holcombe masterminds struggle to get their brains working while their companions do puppet impressions.

An unexpected victory was recorded during the late cubbing season when sabs driving home in the afternoon came upon a shooting party and sabotaged it effectively despite having guns going off over their heads.

During the cubhunting season, **LINCOLNSHIRE HSA**, together with the **SCUNTHORPE** group were out three times a week against the Southwold, the Blankney and the Burton FHs, and gained a great deal of valuable experience for some new members. Attempts to hold up coverts by the Burton's supporters, who used sticks and threw rocks to frighten cubs back into the undergrowth and amongst the hounds, were foiled by sabs who managed to chase the cubs out through supporters legs. Supporters then amused themselves by chasing sabs but to no avail and it didn't help them catch any foxes. Only two kills were seen by sabs throughout cubhunting.

At the same hunts during the main season, sabs were subjected to regular over-policing, culminating at one meet in three squad cars and two riot vans turning out to subjugate four saboteurs. Like their colleagues in Leicestershire, the Lincolnshire police like to threaten sabs with arrest for ridiculous offences, starting with 'getting out of the van'. This van has come under attack twice, most recently going for a Burton when the hunt who operate under the name ploughed their own van into it and caused three to four hundred pounds worth of damage. Some good media contacts have been built up during the season and some worthwhile press coverage achieved.

Early cubhunting in the West Midlands was enlivened by the arrival of **WOLVERHAMPTON HSA** at meets of the North Ledbury FH, Clifton on Teme FH and the North Hereford FH (together with **CHELTENHAM HSA**). In October, the group moved on to the Wheatland, the Ledbury and the Albrighton, the last of which has been upsetting farmers in the Burnhill Green area to such an extent that they've now been banned from much of the land. A couple of large scale sabs took place in November, one against the North Ledbury with the **BIRMINGHAM UNI, COTSWOLD, WEST MIDLANDS, WORCESTER** and **WOLVERHAMPTON** groups; and the other against the North Staffordshire FH as a regional response to the violent assaults on sabs carried out by that hunt in October (see news pages).



Hounds go AWOL during cubhunting and seek asylum amongst gentler masters . . .

NORTHERN IRELAND

SABS TARGET IVEAGH

SABOTEURS FROM THE **BALLYMENA HSA** have now joined the **BELFAST** and **NORTHDOWN** group to create one major HSA group in Northern Ireland. They make regular forays to find the Iveagh Harriers and report an encouraging season with plenty of local press coverage.

An aspect of sabbing in Ireland that sabs on this side of the water will not be used to is the spanner that can be chucked into the works by the security forces. Detention at a routine military/police checkpoint in October made the group half an hour late for the hunt's Lawrencetown meet. When the hunt put up a fox later in the day, sabs were able to intervene twenty minutes into the chase when the hounds were just yards away from their quarry. The fox escaped after sab horns cal-

led the pack onto a nearby lane and sent them the wrong way. The respite for the fox was received with ill-humour by hunt servants who gave the sabs van a good whipping and attempted several assaults.

The following week's hunting was abandoned after two and a half hours because the hunt failed to persuade the police to stop sabs following the hounds. Changing tack, the Iveagh's huntsman booked his next fixture in an as difficult to find a place as possible. Rougham Bridge. Things went quite well for the Iveagh (apart from the fact that local farmers had not invited them and were not pleased to see them) for about 90 minutes, but only because sabs were still scouring the country looking for the meet. On contact being established, the hounds deserted at once, the farmers applauded the sabs, and the huntsman packed up in a testy mood half an hour later.

In the run up to Christmas, sabs stepped up the pressure still further by arriving at the hunt's Scarva meet an hour early, delivering anti-Iveagh leaflets to villagers and holding a banner demo. This went down well with Scarva residents and with several local newshounds and it won good publicity on regional radio; b .t the hunt were thunderstruck. The day's sabbing proved equally fruitful despite threats from frustrated hunt followers and, once again, police were very impartial.

The huntsman's lungs were no match for the HSA's 'play in a day' horn tape once it was broadcast over a roof-mounted PA system, and the hunt slouched home in the usual trough of despondency. Although a handful of thugs armed with wooden clubs have been drafted in to intimidate sabs in recent weeks, the group is doing its best to ignore them and maintaining the pressure. The rest of the season looks very gloomy for the Iveagh.

EAST

HOUNDS IN RIOT CHAOS

THE EAST ESSEX FH have been up against it all season thanks to the efforts of saboteurs from **HALSTEAD, COLCHESTER** and **SUDBURY**. Police have placed a lot of restrictions on what they can do however, and have made a number of arrests for such heinous crimes as 'whistling to hounds'. Pre-beating in Essex always includes unblocking roadside drains, especially since the County Council has banned the hunt from digging them, and they therefore make safe havens for hunted foxes. Terrier men zealously block them each time the hunt goes out to guard against it.

At Toppesfield, in driving wind and rain during November, the East Essex had terrible trouble controlling and keeping track of their scattered hounds. Twice they rioted after, and killed, pheasants which is bound to endear them greatly to the local shoot. A week later, the hunt put up a fox from Bures only to have the hounds checked by sabs and the fox scamper off into a covert full of shooters. Not much wanting their breeches stuffed with buckshot, the hunt wisely decided to give it law. They don't have a lot of luck with shoots.

Apart from pheasants and donkeys (see legal pages), Guy Lister's maverick hounds are also prone to riot after deer. They nearly caught one on December 29th near Little Chelmshoe House, and the frantic efforts of hunt staff to call off the hounds and calm them down produced several minutes of utter mayhem.

The police were more helpful on December 12th, telling the five sabs who attended the Rivenhall Park meet which covert the hunt were most likely to draw first. Hunting was brought to a halt for an hour and a quarter when the sabs occupied the entrance to a drain in which a fox was thought to have taken refuge, but which eventually turned out to be empty. The hunt carried on but were unable to find another scent.

Sabs had a bad day in the mist at the following midweek meet, when hounds killed twice in Great Howe Wood whilst the group were trying to call them out. When a third fox ran to ground, seven saboteurs were arrested for attempting to reach it and only released on condition they all went home. By the end of the month, the hunt had made a policy decision to ensure that landowners or their agents were standing by each week to order sabs away from dig-outs.

HALSTEAD and **COLCHESTER** sabs gave the East Essex a break for one meet at the end of November to take a Radio 5 reporter out with the Essex FH, but their efforts suffered from unfamiliarity with the pack and its country. Sabs in this part of the country prefer to stick with a hunt they know something about.

NORWICH HSA started their season in early September with some good days against the West Norfolk's attempts at cubhunting. With a large new entry and a brand new (but rather surly) whipper-in to replace Pee Wee Adams, the hunt had an uphill struggle to keep their hounds in order and under some semblence of control. By January, the group had been out 35 times, most often against the West Norfolk, making sure their other local packs – the Waveney Harriers, Dunstan Harriers, North Norfolk Harriers and Norfolk Beagles – didn't feel neglected. The North Norfolk's huntsman became desperate enough on January 5th to threaten each of his hounds with certain death if they defected to sab horns, but reprieved them when it was pointed out to him that this would mean losing the entire pack. Sabs, were, by now, surrounded by eager hounds with tails wagging.

Things as going well for the group at the moment. With their annual street collection raising £450 this year, they have been able to buy a new minibus and a video camera. Sab numbers are up too, with several new members from the University and plentiful support from **LOWESTOFT** and **GREAT YARMOUTH HSA**.

In December, there was a women-only action against the West Norfolk, partly in response to the sexist insults and hassle women in the group have been subjected to all season. Hunt supporters, never the most quick witted of individuals, seemed a bit confused to begin with, but soon recovered themselves and smashed a camera and the wing mirror of the minibus to prove it. Sabs prevented any kills however, and other womens' days are being planned for the future.



(Herne Bay HSA)

Caught between the red devils and the thin blue line, a solitary Folkestone sab considers his next move in hostile country. East Kent FI on the Barham Downs.

SOUTH EAST

DESPAIR AT THE UNION

ALTHOUGH THEY'VE HAD a few days this season with the Southdown and Eridge, the Chiddingford and at the midweek fixtures of the Surrey Union, the **BRIXTON** group have been concentrating their efforts on the Old Surrey and Burstow. The hunt became so obsessed with avoiding them during cubhunting that they would frequently make themselves late for meets by driving backwards and forwards along obscure minor roads, trying to shake off their sab 'tail'. When they got fed up with this and summoned physical help from a few of their more palaeolithic followers, the hunt found themselves targeted by a 75-strong regiona action as a gentle reminder that violence i counter-productive. And this at six o'clock on Wednesday morning. . .

BRIXTON HSA have now been with the pac every week during the main season, forcin further evasive gestures from the hunt. They'v tried exchanging one fixture with another to foc the sabs (unsuccessful), but obviously can't tr anything too clever for fear of befuddling th limited mental grasp of most of their own sup porters. In recent weeks, they've stopped advertis ing their whereabouts but can usually still b tracked down without too much trouble. Accom panying the **BRIXTON** group on several outing this season, have been the **EAST GRINSTEAI** and **CROYDON** groups.

HERNE BAY and **FOLKSTONE HSA** together with sabs from **WHITSTABLE, CANTERBURY, ASHFORD** and **THANET** had a less successful cubhunting season than usual with their local pack, the East Kent FH, who worked very hard at giving them the slip. Sabs have put the record straight during the main season though, tracking them down every Saturday, seeing not a single kill, and preventing at least one dig-out.

WEST LONDON HSA have earned their reputation as a touring side over so many seasons now, that there can't be many hunts in the country still to have the pleasure of making their acquaintance. Bowing in on the main season at the opening meet of the Pytchley FH, seven sabs delighted a capacity crowd of 200 hunt supporters with a dazzling display of hunting-on skills that left hunt staff and mounted field stranded. The hounds seemed keen on the exercise but some of the followers weren't so sure, and eventually the group bade them a fond farewell and headed off for an urgent appointment with the North Bucks Beagles.

Apart from one dodgy moment when a whipper-in and two supporters accidently turned a hare back into the pack (which fortunately missed it), the day went well. Hounds were hunted on past the hare and hunt staff seemed to sense the game was up, virtually surrendering control to the sabs and then heading for home soon after 3 pm.

The young chaps from Eton College made two abortive attempts to hunt their hounds on November 3rd when **WEST LONDON** sabs were joined by the **BRIXTON** group for the afternoon. Five minutes after the start, sabs took the pack away, and within fifteen minutes the hunt had returned to the meet. An hour and a quarter later, they ventured out again under police protection, but quickly lost their hounds to sabs and gave up again.

Later in the same month, **WEST LONDON HSA** joined about 40 saboteurs from various southern region groups for a day with the Hampshire Hunt after a follower had tried to run a sab over. There were fewer hunt members out than usual, and the huntsman spent the whole day rushing from one draw to the next as if anxious to get home for his tea. By 2.50 pm they had boxed up and called it a day without a kill, so sabs moved on to pay a surprise visit to Roy Clinkard at Binstead. They found him just as he was packing up.

Mr Goschen's hounds put up a couple of foxes at Old Dean Common in December and chased one to ground. The huntsman and two terrier men initially left it when a sab threatened to disrupt any attempt to dig out. When four sabs checked the earth twenty minutes later, they found a bunch of terrier men busily trying to enter (in a manner of speaking) a couple of terriers. As soon as sabs called for assistance on the CB, the dig was abandoned. Meanwhile, the huntsman was cantering aimlessly about, wondering to which corner of his country his hounds had been scattered. He won't have to worry about that sort of thing any more after this season of course, because his hunt is being disbanded. Shame.

For the **TOLWORTH** and **KINGSTON** group the main part of the season has been devoted to the relentless pursuit of the Surrey Union. As usual, this abysmal hunt has been beleagured by several sab groups (including **NORTH DOWNS, BRIGHTON, BRIXTON** and **GUILDFORD**), at all weekend and midweek features, and has killed virtually nothing all season.

To say that hounds are unresponsive to their Huntsman would be missing the point because they rarely take any notice of sab horns either. The pack cavorts about the countryside while the huntsman pits his wits against them in the hope of getting the whole lot back home again before nightfall. While this is going on, anything can happen. At Capel, terriermen bolted a fox but were disappointed to see the pack ignore it and go bounding off after deer instead. In despair, the hunt went home two hours early.

Sabs saved two foxes at Holmbury St Mary from right under their huntsman's nose. All this has left him rather disenchanted with hunt saboteurs, and he's been venting his feelings of late by trying to run as many of them under his horse as possible. One sab was trampled badly twice as he sat in a fox earth. Other sabs held their ground, however, and the dig out had to be abandoned. The Union's misfortunes increased measurably later that afternoon when terrier man Rodney West pulled a fox from an earth by its tail and was about to blast it with his pistol when sabs rushed in, grabbed the startled animal and threw it clear. It ran fast and hard and evaded the scattered remnants of the pack.

Hunt thugs took revenge two days later by ambushing sabs at a 'dummy' dig out and beating them with sticks and crops. The hunt should have learned by now that Saboteurs cannot be frightened off by primitive gestures like that.

The Union have decided to face the future hunting alternate Saturdays and Fridays so sabs have been free on the odd weekend to visit the Old Surrey & Burstow, Roy Clinkard, the West Kent and the Crawley and Horsham.

Between them, saboteurs from **HASTINGS, BEXHILL** and **EASTBOURNE** have been out with the East sussex and Romney Marsh three times a week throughout the season. By mid January, this hunt had been sabotaged 45 times with 20 of their 22 cubhunting efforts getting a visit. Huntsman 'Goff' has notched up 28 kills in that time; three of which were killed in the normal way; three were bolted and killed above ground; and 22 were as the result of dig-outs. Because they are a fairly small group, **HASTINGS** and **BEXHILL** sabs are not always able to prevent digging out, but they reckon the hunt's record is still very poor.

Sabs have developed a good working relationship with hunt servants and terriermen and rarely encounter any violence or police harrassment – but have made no compromises about their effectiveness as saboteurs. The hunt seem to accept the situation. In early January, the hunt's terriermen helped sabs try to find their driver after hounds had gone home, and then gave them a lift back to civilisation in their van. And printed on the hunt's meet card in bold capitals are the words:

THE MASTERS OF THE EAST SUSSEX AND ROMNEY MARSH HUNT ISSUE THIS WRITTEN NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS, SUPPORTERS AND HUNT SERVANTS WHICH FORBIDS ANY RETALIATION, EITHER VERBAL OR PHYSICAL, WHATEVER THE PROVOCATION, TOWARDS ANYONE WHO SEEKS TO DISRUPT HUNTING.

Cynics amongst us would note that these regulations don't actually say the hunt can't START trouble if they want to, but it's certainly a move in the right direction and indicates a degree of acceptance!



Undercover sab signals secretively to hidden camera to say his infiltration of the Old Surrey and Burstow is going well and hunt supporters suspect nothing.

SCOTLAND

L&S LOSING COUNTRY

EDINBURGH AND BORDERS HSA and **STIRLING HSA** are presently celebrating a decade of continuous action against the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire FH, although the hunt itself has absolutely nothing to celebrate. They've made themselves so unpopular with so many rural communities that their available country seems to shrink weekly.

Having lost the only regular Tuesday meet left to them, Kinneil Woods, by frightening an elderly woman half out of her wits as she exercised her dog, the L&S have had to scrap midweek fixtures altogether (except for the occasional bye). Cubhunting was a complete farce. In a five week period, they managed to secure only two meets! They have also lost their only paid professional terrierman, Ian Marfleet, to the Exmoor FH in faraway Somerset, and now rely upon the services of about twelve boys – only four of whom are of normal height, inbred cruelty having stunted the growth of all the others.

A poor turn-out of less than thirty riders for the hunt's opening meet were treated to a skilled display of life-saving techniques by the sabs. A fox chased across National Trust land was reprieved when sabs turned the pack and hunted them on along the heel line. In the weeks that followed, hounds repeatedly scattered from huntsman David 'Warty' Simms at the sabs' bidding.

On one occasion, Simms took advantage of an altercation between his tormentors and a few foot followers, making himself scarce with as many hounds as he could find and hoping nobody would notice. The mounted field missed it, but the sabs didn't, catching up with him as he battled to stop the pack rioting after a hare. As the hounds scattered the hounds once again, one mounted rider, galloping up to help Simms, tipped clean off his horse into the mud and became a dismounted rider.

This unfortunate rider was joined on the ground by a number of his colleagues a week later when the hunt hacked about over the rough and unfamiliar country of the Pentland hills in a desperate bid to secure a sab-free day. This was treated as a matter of some urgency because a reporter from Scotland on Sunday had announced his intention of accompanying them and they were anxious to avoid the usual embarrassment. The effect was spoiled, not only by the number of riders who couldn't stay in the saddle, but by the arrival of the sabs who had got the meet from an unsuspecting supporter. To cap it all, of course, it was the poor reporter who got the sharp end of Simms' tongue for 'leaking information to the antis'!

Writers and supporters were becoming increasingly frustrated and irritable by this stage in the season and apt to fly into an uncontrollable rage each time sabs pulled hounds from a scent.

One week, when the hounds bottlenecked together as they tried to get under a fence in full cry, sabs leapt in and sprayed the verge and road ahead of them, then used voice calls to pull them off when they checked. Maddened hunt supporters attacked a sab car and pushed two of the group into a ditch after this while an eloquent whipper-in went purple in the face, screamed 'bastards!' at the sabs, and tried to decapitate one with wild sweeps of his upturned crop. Simms tried to rally his distracted hounds while all this was going on, but the fox was well away by then.

The hunt have become so demoralised by sab successes they even flew off the handle when the group stopped hounds rioting after a couple of roe deer. Tempers did not improve as the Christmas season approached and terrier men found small greetings cards on their windscreens which read, 'You have just been sabbed by the Edinburgh and Borders sabs – Have a nice day'. As it turned out, this was about the nearest thing to a 'nice day' most of the hunt would recognise because they later managed to make what sabs believe was their first kill of the season. This was achieved only after terrier men conducted a two-hour woodland search for the fox earth their quarry had gone into, and only because sabs were badly outnumbered and unable to intervene.

As the sabs left the scene, things became increasingly nasty. Sabs say a group of hunt supporters pushed one of them to the ground and broke her glasses. Then the terrier men piled in, swinging their spades at the sabs and kicking indiscriminately at anyone that fell. This attack left six saboteurs needing hospital treatment; two requiring skull X Rays after repeated kicks in the head. Only one man was arrested.



(NWHSA)

Sabs bring the Cheshire Forest FH to a complete halt.

NORTH

SABS IN DIG-OUT VICTORIES

NORTHWEST GROUPS GOT off to a slightly later start to the season than usual with a visit to the Cheshire Forest FH on October 6th. This hunt have become regular hosts to the sabs this season and are in serious trouble. The weekly contest for control of the hounds is rarely won by the huntsman, and sabs are left wondering what induces the hunt committee to keep paying his wages. Since the hunt's top priority is now keeping clear of saboteurs, the huntsman and his whips have taken to carrying CB radios with them into the field to co-ordinate evasion. Sabs are not often fooled by this, but the same cannot be said of the mounted field, who keep getting left behind.

With the pack usually finding themselves boxed up and taken home by lunchtime, sabs get the opportunity to move on to another hunt on most afternoons. Both the Royal Rock Beagles and the Cheshire Beagles had their opening meets disrupted because of this.

The Royal Rock were a bit flummoxed when they bounded off from the meet, only to be headed straight back again by **LIVERPOOL** sabs jumping from cover in woodland just ahead. Cheshire police are always around in large numbers, but are generally quite fair and have done little to interfere with sabbing.

With **NORTH WEST** groups concentrating their efforts on packs in Cheshire this season, their old friends at the Holcombe Harriers have doubtless felt resentful and neglected. Sometimes the sab presence at that hunt has been as low as one; but **MANCHESTER, BOLTON, LIVERPOOL, PRESTON, WREXHAM** and **BANGOR** sabs would like to reassure old Raymond and co that they'll try their very best to pay him another visit in the not too distant future.

Over in the North East, **HULL HSA** are having a busy season, usually at the expense of their local pack, the Holderness FH, but taking in the York & Ainstey South and the Hunsley Beacon Beagles along the way. The town is about to spawn a new university group and this is expected to go into action before the end of the season. **HULL** sabs were joined by other **YORKSHIRE** groups during the Holderness' cubhunting season, for a series of outings that left huntsman William Deakin in a bad humour and under arrest for public order offences.

Unfortunately, the arm of the law proved shorter when it came to dealing with a foot follower for stealing and damaging a sab's horn. No proceedings have been started. Although sabs went to some trouble to liaise with police during the close season, the local constabulary have proved themselves zealous advocates of some of the sillier sections of the Public Order Act, telling sabs that the Holderness are not to be followed, driven in front of, distracted by sab horns, holloas or hand-claps, or even inconvenienced by the sight of saboteurs getting out of their vans to stand in the road.

This was at its worst at the opening meet when, despite police assistance, Deakin could not persuade his hounds to kill anything. The only time he did get them onto a scent, they belted full-tilt across a main road, frightening motorists and leaving hunt staff floundering. They did not kill.

On December 13th, sabs from all over Yorkshire came together for a day against both the York & Ainstey packs (North and South). The South set out half an hour late, put hounds into a covert and then watched while sabs called them all out again. Huntsman Bloor prevaricated and entered the pack again, but sabs took them out at once and ran off with them. When Bloor caught them up, he scarpered behind some houses and boxed up – just seventy minutes after leaving the meet.

The Ainstey North at least stayed out all morning, but were very delayed at the meet, waiting for the police to arrive, and spent the rest of their time constantly disrupted by the sound of sab horns. In the afternoon, one group of sabs went off to destabilise the Catterick Beagles whilst the other chanced across a posse of shooters and successfully prevented any shots being fired.

YORKSHIRE area sabs have been very occupied with the Middleton FH this season, restricting most of the hunt's few kills to dig-outs. Not that new master and huntsman Fred Houghton-Brown has had it all his own way at dig-outs either. On November 17th, sabs rushed in to occupy an earth near Leppington before terriermen could get to it. There was only one policeman available to evict the sabs, but to speed the job up he allowed terriermen to tie one sab's hands behind his back with a belt and help in pulling out the rest. In the ensuing pulling and shoving, two **HUDDERSFIELD** sabs were arrested but the earth was finally cleared and dug.

The sabs' resolve paid off however, because when a second fox ran to ground, and sabs ran in once again to occupy the earth's entrance, police decided against another mammoth clearance operation and told a disappointed bunch of terrier men to go away.

On December 12th, saboteurs found another Middleton dig-out in progress near Kirkham Abbey. The terrier crew ignored the sabs at first, then stopped digging, blocked the two entrances

and left. Surprised at their good luck, the sabs at once cleared the soil away, but as they did so, found a very sorry looking injured terrier bitch looking up at them from the opened tunnel. It had severe cuts to its face and was in a state of severe stress. Coaxing her out to safety was difficult because she seemed too terrified to move at first. Sabs took her straight to a vet where she received immediate treatment for her wounds. Her owner made no attempt to recover her, but spent the rest of the day driving his pick-up at sabs and threatening to murder them.

Yorkshire area sabs include groups from **HUDDERSFIELD, YORK, HULL, POCKLINGTON, LEEDS** and **SCARBOROUGH.** Other packs visited by them this season include the Sinington, the Hunsley Beacon Beagles, the Bramham Moor, and the Hurworth. Peak District grouse shoots were disrupted three times after the inglorious 13th.

BRADFORD HSA travelled to the kennels of the Rockwood Harriers at Emley on October 25th to help them celebrate their opening meet. One supporter, observed staggering about, clutching at a bottle of whiskey, told sabs the hunt were all too drunk to catch anything, but sabs took a professional attitude and called hounds off every scent they stumbled onto. Assuming the hunt were either packing up for lunch when they returned to kennels at 1.30 pm, or else retiring for a well-earned paracetamol, sabs adjourned to a hostelry only to find that the huntsman had sneakily taken his hounds out on the far side of the kennels and resumed hunting. When the group caught up with him, he gave up, went back to kennels, and stayed there.

SHEFFIELD HSA have been lavishing all their usual care and attention on the Badsworth FH since the season began. At the opening meet, a fox was run to exhaustion and it died near the railway track before hounds finally over-ran it. The huntsman's son picked up the carcass and hurled it into the pack.

Fortunately, a much better day was had at the hunt's kennels fixture on November 24th. When hounds bolted a fox from the woods, the huntsman and whips moved in to try and turn it back rather than allow it to run on towards a thin line of sabs. Foxes are not stupid however, and this one ignored the riders and ran straight for the five sabs who froze still until it had passed. As the pack made to follow, the sabs quickly covered the fox's line with spray and checked the hounds for half a minute – long enough for the fox to make good its escape.

Outnumbered and held back by the police, the five sabs could only watch as terriermen dug for another fox thirty minutes later. But this unpromising situation was salvaged when a fox shot out, caught the diggers off guard, and was chased, somewhat hopefully, by a terrier. The huntsman, who had been waiting for it to be properly bolted, tried to put his hounds onto it but the sabs were too quick for him. They sprayed the line and obstructed the pack until the scent was lost and the fox safely away.

With a new van in service this year, **CARLISLE HSA** have been out on most weekends, sometimes joining up with sabs from **BARROW, WORKINGTON** and **LANCASTER**, and making life unpleasant for the Cumberland Farmers, the Blacombe Beagles and the Melbreak FH.



A member of the Hampshire hunt indicates the direction in which he would like this Basingstoke sab to go.

SOUTH

SABS IN ONE-NIL WIN!

SABS FROM **READING** paid a visit to the Garth and South Berks FH on December 12th. Despite a harsh and bitter wind and driving snow, the hunt insisted on casting hounds and making sabs run about in the cold. Hounds ran well to sab horns and false cries (anything to keep warm) and nothing was killed, but four terrier men tried it on at a rabbit warren just as everyone else was getting ready to leave. When sabs asked them to leave the warren alone, they replied that there *might* be a fox down there and called on the police to keep sabs out of the way.

Anxious to get home for their fireside muffins, the police said they thought *everyone* should leave. One terrier took this a bit too literally and went racing off from its startled owner for a lengthy scamper round the snowy fields. Sabs eventually caught the beast and returned him.

NEWBURY HSA have gone fully mobile this season with an old ambulance called Mr Whippy (well, that's what it says here), and can usually be found in the company of **BASINGSTOKE** group at either the Sandhurst Beagles, the Hampshire FH, the New Forest FH, The Garth, or more usually the Vine and Craven.

Anyone who thinks its a bit ominous or fatalistic for a sab group to travel around in their own ambulance will be interested to know that they even keep it stocked with homeopathic remedies. Surgery hours are negotiable – just knock on the back doors next time you see them.

It is probably only wise to take precautions against any hunt ill-humoured enough to call two of its hounds Tebbit and Thatcher, but that's the Vine and Craven for you. Eight sabs used horn and voice to split the pack for twenty to thirty minutes at Aldbourne on November 17th, and on December 4th just two sabs did the same thing when the pack rioted after a hare.

Hampshire police made a reasonable job of upholding the law when sabs were threatened by a gang of twenty heavies brought in by the New Forest FH at Minstead on November 24th. Twice they escorted **BOURNEMOUTH** and **FOREST** sabs out of ugly situations and told the heavies not to follow them. This was all very well, but still resulted in peaceful hunt saboteurs surrendering the right to remain in the forest instead of hunt followers getting arrested under section five of the public order act. Saboteurs are frequently arrested under it for doing a lot less.

BOURNEMOUTH group also had a day out with the Wilton FH in December and were present at a one-off sab against the New Forest Buckhounds in early January.

CHICHESTER and **BOGNOR** sabs met the **PORTSMOUTH** group at a meet of the Hursley Hambledon FH in December. A number of hounds found scenting rather difficult, despite plenty of foxes afoot, after sabs stroked their noses with a little anti-mate. Late in the day, the pack was seen thundering down the main A272 on a strong scent and with their huntsman nowhere in sight. Fortunately, there were no casualties.

Going home, **CHICHESTER** sabs checked up on the Meon Valley Beagles, found them still out, and sent 21 couple scattering across the fields with voice and horn from the car window. As it grew late, the beaglers cut such sad and pathetic figures as they roamed the twilit lanes looking for errant hounds, that sabs lent them a hand.

Four members of the group enjoyed themselves against the Chiddingfold at Kirdford on December 15th. A fox was seen by sabs, its line covered, and the wood it ran into beaten. When Jeremy Whaley took his hounds in a little while later, all he could put up were a couple of deer (which he tried to blame the sabs for). Hounds heads were kept up all day, in contrast to those of their masters, and they finished split between three different coverts. There were no kills.

OXFORD HSA have been out in strength this season, usually three or four times a week, and most often with the Old Berks FH. This hunt, with ex-con Tony Carter now at the helm, do not appear to be over-popular with the local community. Sabs were surprised on October 29th

when a motorist pulled up alongside them, asked if they sabs, then tossed an envelope containing an £11.00 donation through the open window.

After splitting the Old Berks pack early on at the opening meet, sabs moved on to find the Shrivenham Beagles who, surprise surprise, were living it up with Old Berks terrier man, Fletch. Sabs say that playful Fletch was so pleased to see his old mates from Oxford again, he completely lost control of his car and rammed it into the sabs' van. They say he was rather less pleased when he discovered he'd just written his own vehicle off without noticeably damaging **OXFORD'S**, so he jumped onto the bonnet of the sab landrover, booted in the windscreen, then fell off and broke his elbow. Police are investigating . . .

At the Longcott meet, the group were joined by sabs from **WYCOMBE** and **AMERSHAM**. After initial success in checking hounds on a strong scent and turning them back, sabs were mystified when the hunt opted to spend the rest of the day running the pack backwards and forwards across the main Oxford to Swindon A420, presumably as some kind of punishment. Luckily they all survived, but the day closed with a Master remarking to sabs, 'I think that's one-nil to you lot!'

As usual, the **OXFORD** shopping list of sabotaged hunts is impressively long. It includes the VWH, Bicester, Beaufort, Marlborough College Beagles, Stowe School Beagles, Garth, Vine and Craven, New Forest, South Dorset and Heythrop foxhunts.



(Lincoln HSA)

The Burton's second whip tells a sab from Lincoln to smarten himself up and get a job.



(Vale & Valleys HSA)

Huntsman with 19th century sideboards and 19th century passtime pokes a sab with a 20th century stick. South Wales Bassetts, December 1990.

WALES

ALL-WEATHER SABOTAGE

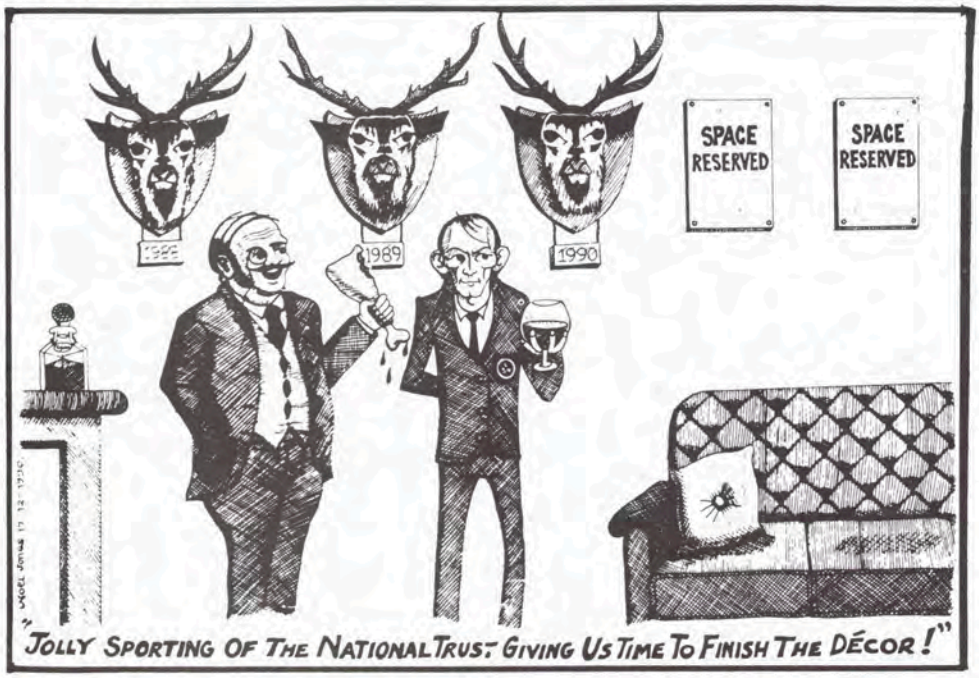
WITH NO VAN of their own, **VALE & VALLEYS HSA** have been beset with transport problems this season. But by joining forces with **CARDIFF UNI** sabs and the **POLYTECHNIC OF WALES** group, they have been out as often as possible.

During cubhunting, the Glamorgan FH were targeted several times – a hunt which normally only sees saboteurs on Boxing Day because it won't go out on Saturdays. Tactical nattering proved a winner at the Monmouthshire FH's Penrhas meet on November 3rd as sabs and hunters discussed the meaning of life in quiet country lanes and the local fauna went about their business undisturbed.

A regional excursion to the Pentyrch FH was called off for safety reasons when sabs arriving at the meet found double the usual number of ugly psychopaths gathered there. Two sabs were badly assaulted at the same meet last season and the group decided that to go ahead then would only have invited further trouble. The day was salvaged with an excursion to find the South Wales Bassets who obligingly boxed up soon after sabs arrived.

Severe storms accompanied the group on two visits to the Llangeinor FH at the turn of the year, making hunting virtually impossible and sabbing fairly unpleasant! A mountain hail storm became so fierce at one point during the Hirwaun Common meet that even the terrier crew baulked at venturing out in it and abandoned a dig-out. It's an ill wind . . .

Saboteurs from **PEMBROKE HSA** and **ABERYSTWYTH** group caught up with the South Pembrokeshire FH at the final meet of their 'Hunt Week'. It is their centenary year. There was a banner demo in the square at Tenby before sabs moved on to scatter the hounds and leave hunt staff to waste a lot of time trying to regroup them.



POT CALLS KETTLE BLACK!

WEST COUNTRY farmer Keith Sherrell shot two foxes on his farm in November – then threatened to report their owner to the RSPCA for cruelty!

The 'owner' of the foxes is Dr Stephen Harris of the University of Bristol. His research into fox ecology has proved beyond doubt that hunting plays no significant role in controlling fox populations (see HOWL 38). He monitors the local urban and country fox population with the use of small remote-control radio transmitters fixed onto collars worn by the foxes.

Compassionate farmer Sherrell considers this to be cruel. The two he shot on his farm were wearing them when they died. He claims the collars could choke a fox to death if it caught on a tree root. He presumably thinks they would prefer to be shot instead.

The Harris team's current research is aimed at predicting the speed with which rabies could be spread by the fox population if it were introduced to Britain.

The sophisticated French, meanwhile, are way ahead of the field. In the last few months, scientists there have been bombarding the countryside with frozen balls of fish-meal laced with rabies vaccine. The foxes are supposed to eat them and become immune.

The French, of course, will be hoping farmer Sherrell doesn't find out about it. He might not approve.

ON THE FRINGE

Keith Mann's regular round-up of news from the fight against illegal bloodsports

Since 25th September there have been roughly 7 convictions for badger related offences. I refer to the 25/9/90 because that was the day the *lads* from Manchester & Builth Wells were sent to prison for 3 months at Brecon Magistrates court. Around 100 animal rights activists were there to welcome them and a large police presence ensured they got there safely. The big men – now nothing more than terrified children – were wisked into court behind a thick line of police officers and amidst a barrage of well-earned verbal abuse.

In court they were tough again because the majority of people in the public gallery were friends and relatives, with only a small number of 'anti's' allowed into court. The magistrates, having sat through the most horrifying animal abuse *they* were ever likely to see, for some unknown reason, decided to hand out just half of the maximum 6 month sentence available! Then followed a well organised police operation ensuring the *lads* made it safely to prison. Six weeks later, on or around November 5th, they will have walked from custody. Can 6 weeks in prison possibly have changed the ways of hardened "terrier lads", two of which wore their Working Terrier Club ties in court?

At Leicester Crown Court on 27/9/90 2 of 4 men convicted at Market Bosworth in October 1989 were to appeal against conviction. On the day though, just one turned up, the other 3 presumably accepting guilt. Alistair Frank Pick of 26 Curzon Rd., Aylestone, Leicester spent the day trying to persuade the judge that he was a nice man that only killed foxes and not badgers, his barrister (Richard Griffiths – Chairman of the Carmarthenshire FH) even produced a pile of threatening and abusive letters that Pick had received in the hope that the judge would feel sorry for him perhaps.

He failed dismally. The judge didn't even want to see the letters, nor did he believe a word Pick said. At the end of the day he told Pick he was a liar, that if he ever appeared in his court again he'd go straight to prison and gave him a further £900 costs to add to his previous fine of £1000! Pick who is the regional rep of the Fell & Moorland Working Terrier Club also developed a yellow streak when he worked out he was now the underdog and refused to leave the court until a taxi was called to wisk him to safety.

At Telford on 5/11/90, 3 "terrier lads" from Chorley in Lancashire were trying to get their case kicked out before trial on the basis that the prosecution had taken too long in preparing the case and that the forensic lab. had lost vital evidence. Barry Peachey and Granville Rooley were the 2 main defence characters yet again, the latter being a solicitor and the former, A.G. Fox of Shooting News fame – a "Badger expert" and ex terrier man (retired through disability) – who appear as a double act in the majority of badger cases. The hearing took all day and although they seemed to have a reasonable argument (in the eyes of the law) the magistrates dismissed the appeal and set the trial date for March 4th 1991.

NEW BADGER BILL

The British Field Sports Society (BFSS) have seemingly realised what a fundamental cock-up they made by allowing their chairman, Sir Nicholas Bonsor, to sabotage the bill to further protect badgers (see HOWL 45). Now the same individual is the face behind the BFSS master-plan to protect badgers through their latest PR exercise. The proposed private members bill is a five point plan which when read into does virtually nothing to protect the badger sett and even less to deter the badger digger.

They want to:

(1) "Improve the ability to convict those who try to escape prosecution by claiming to be digging for foxes. They will have to show that they were authorised by the owner or occupier of the land."

(2) "create a new offence of entering a terrier into a sett in pursuit of a badger."

(3) "Protect badger setts from any interference likely to harm a badger which would allow sensible stopping of setts by fox hunts."

(4) "Give courts new powers to disqualify badger diggers and baiters from owning dogs."

(5) "Introduce prison sentences for convicted badger diggers and baiters."

Problems here include:

(1) Not having made contact with the land owner in court will make no difference to the defence. Badger/fox diggers are usually trespassing anyway. The typical defence "couldn't find landowner, fox legal quarry/vermin", leaves them happy to trespass.

(2) Will add an extra £100 to the fine.

(3) This clause seems to still allow setts to be dug by developers, as long as the badger isn't harmed (i.e. moved to another location), by diggers/terrier men who are in pursuit of a fox and by "sensible" earth stoppers (terrier men/badger diggers).

(4) As mentioned in HOWL 44, convicted animal abusers simply say "it's not *my* animal", and it isn't! Another reason for dog registration.

(5) The courts already have the power to give 6 months for cruelty to the dog and seldom use it, if the BFSS ask for sentences around the 6–10 year mark for badger digging/baiting then this will be a worthwhile clause and make the bill worth supporting.



(Keith the Fringe)

Richard Griffiths, badger diggers' barrister and chairman of the Carmarthenshire FH, at Leicester Crown Court.

UNNECESSARY SUFFERING

At Colchester on October 2nd, David Nash of Markmanor Avenue, Walthamstow, London was found guilty of causing unnecessary suffering to a fox which he had trapped in it's earth, stabbed and baited. An interesting point to this case (as with just one other I recall) is that the fox was rightly found to be captive in the stop end of it's earth. So, if a fox is dug from it's earth and killed, it's legal. When a fox is dug down to and trapped in a corner it can and should be argued that the animal is captive and therefore protected and to inflict *unnecessary suffering* would be an offence. Surely therefore it follows that at some point during the average dig out the victim will become captive (unable to escape) – it must be if it's to be killed.

Is it not then an offence to dig out and kill foxes bearing in mind it isn't necessary to kill them in the first place? Nash received a 10 year animal ban, £700 fine and £300 costs.



(Keith the Fringe)

Police form a cordon around the car bringing a badger digger to court at Brecon as an angry crowd presses in.

COMMITTEE PAGE

Elections for the 1991–92 Committee

CV's are invited for candidates for election to the 1991–92 Committee. Candidates must be members of the HSA of at least one year's standing, as of March 31, 1991. Candidates must be proposed and seconded by two other HSA members: both proposer and seconder must also have been members for at least a year, and neither may propose or second any other candidate, or themselves stand for election. Contrary to popular belief, there is no information which *must* be included, in a CV, but it is common practice to include the following: how long you have been sabbing and/or how long you've been a member of the HSA; whether or not you're vegan or vegetarian; your age; what job you would like to do on the Committee; your employment status; the direction you would like to see the HSA take. CV's should not exceed 150 words.

Motions for the 1991 AGM

The next HOWL will carry not only CV's, but also motions to the 1991 AGM. These fall into two categories: policy resolutions and constitutional amendments. Both require a proposer and a seconder, who do *not* have to have been members for a year. Copies of our current constitution are available on request from the office. A donation of £1.00 would be appreciated, to cover photocopying and postage.

Group Donations

Aside from helping to fund national events like the Northumberland Beagling Festival and grouse-sabbing on August 12th, the HSA is also committed to helping local groups financially. In line with this commitment, this year's committee has donated or loaned money as follows: Loughborough £140; Furness £200; Bradford £100; Lincoln £120; Bath £200; Newbury £100; Hull £300; Sheffield £300; Mansfield £100; Nottingham £300; Newcastle £250 – a total of over £2000. Unfortunately our generosity has caught up with us, and with HOWL to pay for we've had to put donations on temporary hold. More soon, we hope. . .

Hit Reports and Legal Incident Forms

Some groups are extremely conscientious about filling these in and sending them to the P.O. Box – and some are not! The fruits of this are partly represented by HOWL itself. The other side is the stock of information held by the HSA nationally. Like I say, some groups do, some groups don't. But I should warn you that one of the things taken into consideration when loans/donations are requested is how frequently a group sends in hit reports.

RAFFLE WINNERS

The winners of the 1990 HSA Raffle were as follows:

£500 – 181525 P Davies
£200 – 175229 A Moore
£100 – 208410 E Rodgers
£10 – 170788 C Bradley
£10 – 074660 K Haines
£10 – 209751 A Ford
£10 – 012903 S Whitehouse
£10 – 076223 B Prior
£10 – 079554 J Tomkins
£10 – 095572 T Carpenter
£10 – 187500 M Arnold
£10 – 026769 E Wright
£10 – 219890 A Wood
£10 – 194443 B Mizen
£10 – 014951 T Solley
£10 – 067491 L Woods
£10 – 023286 Krisman

On the Fringe

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Over in Belfast the following men were convicted of cruelty to a fox after they were caught with a bagged fox in a trench just before it was to be released into the care of seven dogs. They were fined £120 each and banned from keeping animals for 2 years.

Martin Peter Owens (1973)
Horn Drive,
West Belfast.

Sean Vincent Price (1968)
Horn Drive,
West Belfast.

John Fitzgerald Shannon (1972)
Horn Drive,
West Belfast.

James McNally (1964)
Horn Drive,
West Belfast.

And to add insult to injury, in November Darlington Magistrates fined Owen Patrick Hanlon of Nickstream Lane, Darlington a paltry £75 for allowing his dogs to be carried "in a manner likely to cause suffering", after he was caught with a "terrified" fox and 2 dogs in the boot of his car. Hanlon said he thought the fox was dead when he put it into the boot. The Magistrates gave him a conditional discharge and an RSPCA spokesman hailed the case a success!

HUNTSMANBALLS

'Anti-hunting resurgencies are reported in North East England where police response has been notably effective, and in the South and South West . . . Two copies of a recruiting poster recovered from a campus, offered payment of £30 a day plus lunch for anti-hunting demonstrators'.

The Field, Nov 1990.

'I dislike horses intensely . . . If we could do without subscriptions, I'd do away with the horses altogether. They do get in the way'.

Cyril Smith, Cottesmore earth stopper, Sunday Correspondent 4/11/1990.

'We try our best to control the dogs, but its just one of those things'.

Grove and Rufford FH spokesperson following death of two hounds on the A614. Ratford and Bawtree Trader 30/8/1990.

'Beagling is lawful and to stop it by force is the first step towards anarchy'.

Inspector David Clements, Hexham police, in The Journal 7/9/1990.

'Even though Life Peer, Lord Pritchard lists foxhunting as one of his fave recreations, he said he agreed with the campaign (against the fur trade) . . . I'm against cruelty to animals and I would not want to kill any animal just for the trim on my robes'.

Daily Mail, 29/9/1990.

'I'm fed up with the fucking newspapers. I've been in the News of the World and I don't want any more of it'.

Rev. Rex Hancock, Rector of Holford, Somerset, and supporter of the Quantock Staghounds; Independent 11/4/1990.

'Should I minister to professional killers? Answer my question. Should I minister to staghunters? . . . You can be raised from the guttermost to the uppermost. You can become a Christian. You've jolly well got to give me fifty quid. Why should I be interviewed for nothing?'

Rev. Rex Hancock, Independent 11/4/1990.

'The only thing I object to is them blowing horns because this is tantamount to being cruel to the dogs. It is irresponsible and we have lost two or three young hounds, which proves to be very distressing'.

Tom Wilson, Joint-Master, Iveagh Harriers, Banbridge Chronicle 20/12/1990.

'They say snidey things in a sly sort of voice'.

John Norrish, Kennel huntsman, South Devon FH, talking about hunt saboteurs. Mid Devon Advertiser 2/11/1990.

'Why don't you bugger off and leave us alone?'

John Norrish to hunt saboteurs, quoted at his trial and reported in Mid Devon Advertiser, 2/11/1990.

'Sadly, the imperfection of a minority of minds who see sport in slaughter, is helping to thwart the effort to make this country a safer place in which to live'.

Editorial, Hull Daily Mail 27/10/1990.

'The saboteur's idea of non-violence is totally different from our idea' (You can say that again).

Stephen Sherwood, New Forest Joint Master, Southern Evening Echo 27/10/1990.

'I am the average person'.

Aubrey Thomas, HSA Committee meeting, 18/11/1990.

Fox Cubs



PO BOX 1
CARLTON
NOTTINGHAM
NG4 2JY

Fox Cubs is a branch of the Hunt Saboteurs Association for children aged 7-14 who would like to join but are too young to go out sabbing.