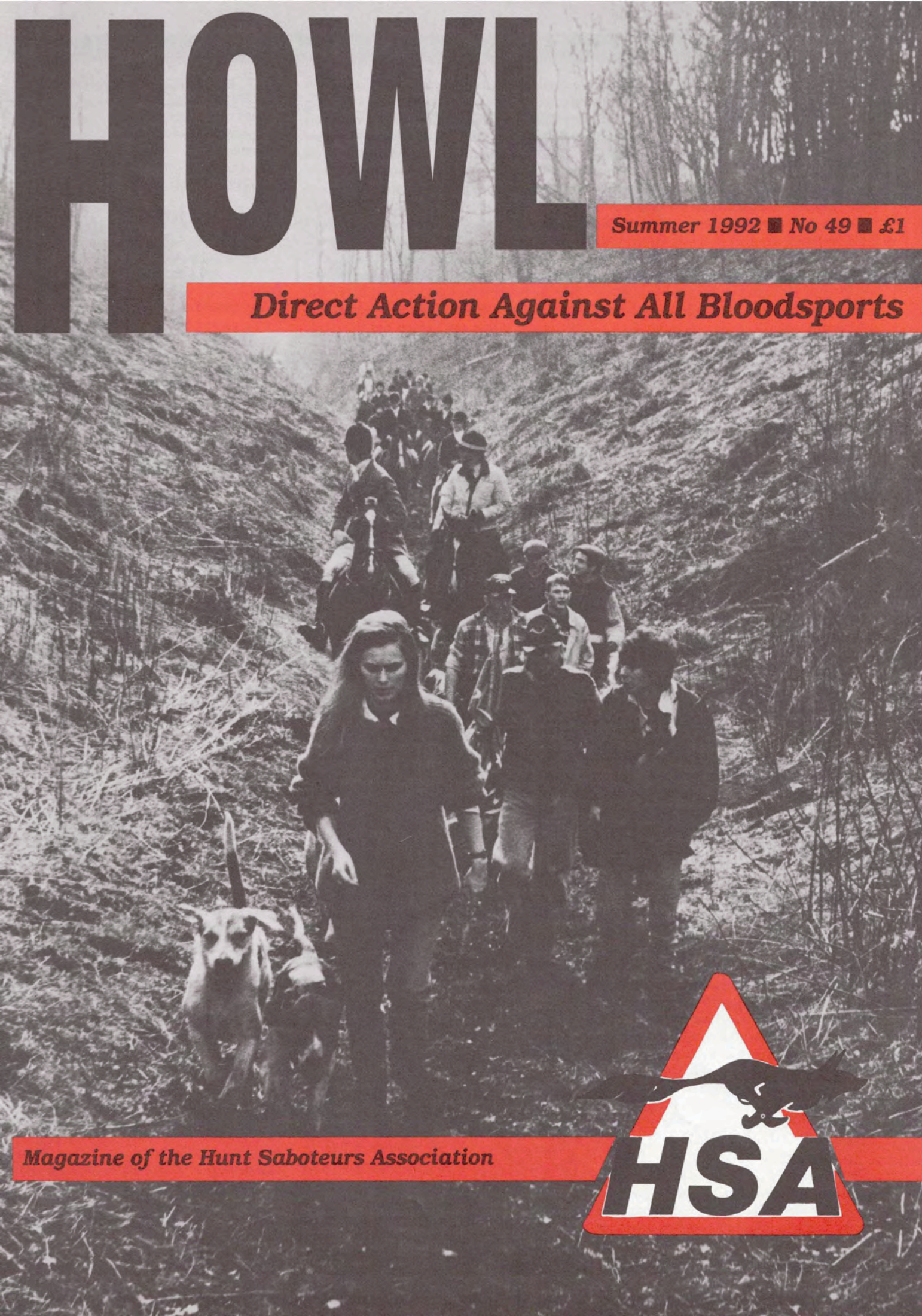
HOWL

Summer 1992 ■ No 49 ■ £1

Direct Action Against All Bloodsports



Magazine of the Hunt Saboteurs Association

HSA

HOWL 49 Editorial

Hopefully this issue of HOWL will be out on time , if not it will be because I'm trying to sort out this new computer we have bought. so ...first of all,I'd better apologise for any thing that has been missed out or looks bad. Hopefully,this will be the last time I'll do this because we will have a HOWL editor independent of the HSA committee.
The computer has cost us £2,000 which,will I know have you saying (or should do)
"How much!!?""That's at least 4 vans sabs could have bought!!"
Well,on this issue alone, the computer will have saved us £1500,so in two issues, it will have paid for itself.

Not only will it produce HOWL there are many functions it can do ie.produce leaflets ,store info on hunts etc.,(and much,much more!!) All this will take time...please bear with us.

Once again there is plenty of legal news and enough group news to show that many groups are active. If your group is not in, then write to us and let us know. The usual reason a group is not included is that we don't hear from them.

On a more positive note the article "What now and where next" hopefully shows / explains what the H.S.A. will be doing over the next year or so. This is something which we have been trying to do for a long time and it is only now that we feel that the HSA is strong enough to make the move forward.

I would like to thank all the people who help me in the office and helped put this issue together.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the committee, sabs and membership to thank STEVE POOLE for all the work he has done with HOWL over the years. Personal commitments has forced him to take a brake from the editorship, but will carry on writing news for us.

Cameron.

LETTERS

Pleased

Dear HOWL,

So pleased to have the latest magazine.How well you are doing and I think, the best issue yet. I'm very pleased you are having "a comradely debate' with the League, we all need each other in the fight against cruelty. "United we stand....' and all that.

Best wishes to all those who work so hard to provide such a good magazine and to those who take risks with so much courage.

A.Sheppard.
Dyfed

Assault

Dear HOWL

I would like to thank all the sabs who were present at the scene of my assault by a number of New Forest yobs during the last meet of the New Forest FH on sat 4th April. In particular one girl who helped drag one of the lads off of me whilst I was being punched in the face when I was trapped in the back of a nearby car. Also, I would like to thank Ken and Frankie and those present from the New Forest Wildlife Animal Protection Group for there help and understanding, during and after the attack.

I'm sorry I didn't get a chance to thank everyone who helped me on the day, whilst I was there. I'm very grateful to all those who helped me out of a very scary situation.

Miles Cooper.
Oxford.

Trust House Forte

Dear HOWL,

I would like to comment on the advent featured in the notice board column of your last issue of HOWL, concerning Trust House Forte hotels offering trips to Boxing Day meets for guests amusement. First it's no longer Trust House Forte, the name was changed last year to Forte Hotels U.K. Ltd. I am a member of the HSA, I am also a shareholder of Forte Hotels and a regular guest. We have enjoyed Christmas at Forte's since 1978, never in all our years, have we been offered a trip to a Boxing Day meet for our amusement, though i'm sure it does happen at a minority of hotels throughout the country, so why single Forte's out.

HSA members might like to learn, Forte Hotels are one of the few concerns that allow people to take their pets on holiday free of charge, lots of hotels like DeVere, five star Royal bath don't allow pets at all.

While my little dog enjoys the best of every thing, I never forget animals around the world, from the fox to the laboratory animals who need our help. We also have a HSA sticker in our car at all times.

Mary Steel.
Northants.

New Convert

Dear members of the HSA,

I write this letter asking you to send me as much literature, magazines, leaflets and posters as possible. I'm currently serving a sentence of 2 yrs. 3 months and am very sympathetic to the cause, I have been vegan for a few years now and will never touch meat or any animal products. Bloodsports should be banned totally and I stand my ground so far as the Hunt Saboteurs fight. Fox hunting is cruel and I cannot see the enjoyment people get out of participating in such a sport. What gives hunters the right to kill for the fun of it?

Once released it is my intention to join the HSA in the fight to ban bloodsports. Since I have been in prison I have met a guy who has put me on the path of Animal Liberation, Mr John Curtin, I wish him well and all best for the future. I also wish the Hunt Saboteurs the best off luck in their fight to ban bloodsports.

D.K. Harley.
JB2935 'D Wing"
HM Prison Stocken
Stocken Hall Rd
Stretton
Nr. Oakham
Leics.LE15 7RD.

Holiday Hunt

Dear HOWL,

I refer to winter 1992 No. 48 issue of "HOWL" and your request for hunt information.

My husband and I have for many years spent Christmas and New year holidays at The Bear Hotel, Woodstock, Oxfordshire when it was managed by Mr and Mrs Porter.

The management has now changed and you can imagine our horror over last season's festivities to see the hunt assemble.

Needless to say, we will not be visiting The Bear Hotel again.

S.E Weight
Wolverhampton.

Sabbing Worthwile

Dear HOWL,

I have been out sabbing with the Oxford group most saturdays since late January, and I find sabbing a worthwhile and rewarding activity, since I was no longer prepared to just pussyfoot around writing to M.P's, etc.[I am also in LACS]. I am saddened by the fact that not everyone in my local League group shares my support for sabbing.

On saturday 4th April I was in the New Forest with some of the Oxford group taking part in the joint-hit against the local hunts final meet of the season. Trouble started when we saw hounds chasing a fox and one of our group took the hounds of the scent with his horn .A van load of terrier thugs turned up and they laid into him, and stole his horn. The police had words with the sab for horn blowing, but did nothing about the terrier yob's conduct. I got the distinct impression from that incident that the police were on the hunt's side.

This form of policing must surely warrant civil actions since they are supposedly employed to prevent that sort of thing and to be fair to every one. Had it been us attacking our opponents, and stealing their property no doubt we would be nicked and charged pronto.

On a final point I wonder how many sab groups meet up with country people who have hunt trespass problems. I must point out that LACS publish a leaflet concerning this issue for the benefit of anyone living in hunt infested places. Next season I intend to carry a few copies of this leaflet every time I'm out, in case we come across any anti-hunt landowners who have trouble from the hunt. Can I suggest that all groups do the same, and order copies of "Troubled by the hunt" leaflet from the LACS before next season.

Also we should keep an eye on local papers for trespass reports, and see that victims are sent a copy of the leaflet. Banning land to hunts is another good method of sabotage as

the League have shown with their sanctuaries on Exmoor.

Peter Bates
Swindon.

LACS and Deer

Dear HOWL,

I am disappointed that Ian Pedler has repeated his assertion that a ban on stag hunting could "condemn the deer to lingering death from shotgun, crossbow and snare in silent isolation."

I notice he has totally ignored my reply to his last article in HOWL in which he made his same claims. Ian is totally wrong in alleging that the deer herds of Exmoor and the Quantock Hill would be under threat in the event of hunting with hounds being banned. He claims that pro-hunt farmers would, out of spite , not tolerate the deer on their land. He suggests that the absence of hunting would turn the area into a poaching haven.

This is of course exactly what the hunters say.

The facts are very straightforward.

1] There is currently an experimental pilot scheme under way, under the overall supervision of the Government and fronted by the British Deer Society. The scheme involves the cooperation of local farmers, shooters, conservationists,forestry interests and the League. The scheme is designed to established proper deer management techniques in areas where deer damage occurs. Such schemes will be established well before a ban on hunting becomes operative.

2] The majority of the land needed inhabited by Red Deer is already in the hands of bodies or individuals who have the survival of the deer at heart. Those groups include the National Trust, Conservation Trusts, Forests, Forestry Commission,the League and other pro-deer land owners and farmers.there are also pro-deer societies such as the Exmoor Society, and the Devon and Somerset Residents Association for the Protection of Deer. In other words, the deer not only have many friends but also plenty of habitat on which they are welcome. Public Opinion Polls have already revealed that pro-hunt farmers are a minority who do not own enough deer territory to threaten the survival of deer - even if a few of them were nasty enough to put themselves out to kill deer on their few acres.

3] Poaching is already a problem - despite the claim by hunters that they provide a vested interested to deter poaching. However, the growth of Deer Farming is leading to a lowering of prices for venison - thus making poaching less profitable and more risky. And of course some of the convicted poachers have turned out to be hunt supporters!

4] All the methods of killing deer mentioned by Ian Pedler, i.e. shot guns , crossbows and snares, involve serious criminal offenses. A new Wild Mammals [Protection] Act, would mean that persons prosecuted for such offenses would not only face the existing penalties under "poaching" laws and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, but would also face additional charges of up to £5,000 and / or six months in prison.

If there was any truth in the hunters' and Ian Pedlers claim that removing the cruelty of stag hunting might mitigate against conservation of the deer as a species, we would be faced with a terrible dilemma. Which would be the lesser of the two evils? However, the argument is false. The fact is that legislation against the inflection of cruelty would enhance the conservation of the species by elevating deer to a new status and value. The passage of legislation in Parliment would be a clear illustration of the fact that instead of the days of the last century when the only people interested in preserving deer were those who wanted to hunt and kill them for sport, the whole nation now values the deer as part of Britain's natural heritage.



Paul Ames joint master of New Forest FH looks on as New Forest and Winchester sabs occupy an earth. (Photo J.Richards)

John Bryant
.L.A.C.S.

Did You Vote?

Dear HOWL,

To any HSA members who failed to vote in the general election on 9th April, you may have had your own reasons for not voting,but now that the Tories are in again for another 5 years you can bet your bottom dollar that bloodsports enthusiasts nationwide are jumping in delight because your failure to vote has helped to preserve their bloodletting for the future and quite possibly well after the turn of the century.

I live in an extremely pro-tory and equally pro-hunt area and down to the last man all hunt supporters voted on 9th April, so any HSA member who could have voted but didn't can hardly whinge now their failure to vote has helped preserve bloodsports.

For the first time in centuries a political partie had the guts to have written into its manifesto a bill to ban hunting with hounds, it was a unique opportunity and may never happen again,you only have yourselves to blame.

I for one will most hartely be glad to see bloodsports banned, then I can have my weekends and weekdays during autumn / winter free to my self, instead of wearing out my old car.In the back of my mind something tells me certain HSA members don't actually want to see bloodsports banned because they enjoy seeing hounds and nabbing them, but may be I'm wrong.

Bernadette Aardern.
Cheshire.

GB V Australia !

Dear HSA, I have recently arrived from Australia to settle in the UK for approximately 2 years. From the day of my arrival I was struck by the amount of cruelty and disrespect shown for your country's wildlife. This is not as you would well be aware, an exclusive problem to UK.Australia has one of the worst track records for animal cruelty. For example - "spotlighting" "a sport" practiced by farmers and city folk alike whereby thousands and thousands of kangaroos every year are shot for "fun" and left to die a slow and painful death. Many joey's left in the dead mothers pouch soon die of stress and hunger.

It gets me very angry when I read about not only foxhunting but any bloodsport. I'm sure these "sportspeople" would still probably still approve of slavery all in the name of "tradition". I'm shocked to see the numbers of women involved in these hunts. This confuses me as women are often regaled as protectors, stemming from our maternal instincts. I would like to be of help to your organisation during my stay here. Please let me know what I can do to help.

Kind regards.
Jaylene Farrell.

NEWS

HUNTS / BADGERS

The Crown Prosecution Service has begun proceedings against Michael Weir, master of the Dartmoor Foxhounds, and three other members of the hunt in the first case ever to be brought under the amended Badgers Act of 1991.

The four men, who were due to appear before Tavistock magistrates on june 12th, are accused of illegally digging into a badger sett near Pricetown last November, and it is understood that the Master of Foxhounds Association will be defending their action in court.

The Dartmoor are not the only foxhunt to find themselves under police investigation for alleged infringements of the Badgers Act in recent months. Both the Warwickshire and the Beaufort hunts faced accusations this year that their earthstoppers were 'hard-blocking' setts.

Wiltshire police photographed setts obstructed with plastic drums and buckets after the Beaufort hunted at East Tytherton near Chippenham in November, and were called to Compton Bassett near Calne in January when setts were blocked with logs and packed soil. Although both of these incidents co-incided with meets of the Beaufort hunt and police followed up site visits by interviewing prominent hunt members and supporters, they were strangely unable to find sufficient evidence that the hunt were responsible. HOWL believes it is a matter of pure coincidence that the heir to the throne happened to be riding with the Beaufort when the first incident was reported.

In April, the Warwickshire were investigated by the RSPCA for allegedly obstructing sett entrances at Edge Hill with heavy stones. Hunt master Robin Smith-Ryland offered an interesting new interpretation of the law when he openly admitted that three entrances may have been packed with rocks, but that since there were plenty of others for badgers to use, it was "not such a big deal". But according to the local resident who found them, at least twenty holes had been filled by the hunt. No prosecution followed.

Both these cases illustrate the difficulty of bringing cases under the Badger Act. Without hard evidence of hunt responsibility the CPS is reluctant to initiate prosecution. But on the positive side, the role of hunt saboteurs as front-line investigators - taking photographs and witnessing future infringements of the Act - has never been clearer. The outcome of the Dartmoor case may be of crucial importance in encouraging or deterring future prosecutions.

More hunts hit by prohibition

In a renewed upsurge of interest, council chambers up and down the country debated hunting bans on land under their control in January.

District Councils at North Hertfordshire and Swale, the Borough Council of Guilford, and Wantage Town Council all passed bans. Motions were lost on Gloucestershire and Leicestershire County councils and on Test Valley District Council. An attempt by West Lancashire District Council to create a new by-law banning hare coursing on all land in the district failed when the Home Office refused to ratify it. The by-law would have made the annual Waterloo Cup blood junket illegal.

Bloodsports supporters have accused councillors at North Herts and swale of 'posturing' and making empty gestures by banning hunting on land where none takes place anyway. But, as anti-hunting campaigners have pointed out, the ban will discourage hunts which are evicted from land controlled by neighbouring councils from even thinking about extending their activities to North Hants or Swale.

An attempt by the Dumfriesshire Foxhunt to get round a ban previously imposed on them in the town of Annan by Annandale District council was lost. The hunt had sought permission to re-enter the town by approaching Annan Community Council but were defeated in a secret ballot. The Eglington Foxhunt were officially banned from Eglington Country Park at about the same time after rampaging through it without permission.

In a close vote amongst students at Wye Agricultural College, Kent, a motion to ban the college beagle pack was defeated. A second motion proposing that the pack drop the college's name was left unresolved, but the college principle later wrote to the hunt asking them to do so and stressing that he did not want the college to be associated with them. A ban on the use of college land for hunting is likely to follow. The pack is not funded or run by the college, but is a tenant on the estate.

National Park in grouse funds scandal

Nearly £1000 of public money is to be handed over to the already offensively rich Duke of Devonshire to compensate him for some damaged grouse butts in North Yorkshire.

Yorkshire Dales National Park is to give the Duke his hand-out because it has a technical responsibility for any damage caused on private estates by public access. Last year the Duke alleged that butts on Bardon Moor, part of his 30,000 acre Bolton Abbey Estate, had been damaged by saboteurs and has now poked his hand into the public purse for repairs.

A fawning spokesman for the National Park told *Shooting Times* that it was the first time the Duke had claimed compensation in twenty years. This would seem irrelevant however, unless he has also suffered damaged butts for the last twenty years. He does not claim to have done so.

Hunting - A catalogue of chaos

The second part of the 1991-2 foxhunting season saw a dramatic escalation in incidents of hound rioting. Hunts have been causing more unwelcome havoc in rural communities than ever before.

Many farmers and landowners are indicating that they have had enough. As one Northern Irish farmer put it after the Iveagh Harriers ran amok in his fields, killing three lambs and trampling winter barley, "What you have seen here today is the destruction by a group of outsiders coming in with no regard whatsoever for the local community". Richard Shervin, a County Down farmer, saw his cattle scattered by hounds from the local staghounds as they pursued a carted deer. More than thirty County Down farmers have now banned hunts from their land.

In England, another farmer, Raymond Shail from Castlemorton near Ledbury, had two of his sheep trapped on a narrow ledge in a quarry after the Ledbury FH chased them over the edge in February. And Martin Hann, a Devon pig farmer publicly threatened to shoot hounds from the South Devon FH if they worried his pigs again. When the hounds from the nearby Dartmoor FH crashed through fencing at the South Brent Rest Home in January, the owner impounded the dogs against payment for the damage ! Legal action is expected to follow.

Other villagers are turning to the law for protection. John Westwood who lives on 20 acres at Pett Bottom in Kent is taking out an injunction against the East Kent FH after hounds invaded his land for the sixth time without permission in March. The hunt told him they were unable to control their dogs once they were on the scent of a fox. David Firth of Nether Broughton is taking similar action against the Quorn after having his garden trampled over.

Elsewhere, angry villagers have demanded that huntsmen exercise more control over kills. Kath Campbell of Bellingham, Northumberland picked up a terrified fox to protect it when hounds from the Borders FH chased it into her garden, but it was snatched from her grasp by the pack and ripped up in front of her. Eric Giffin, a pensioner at Hanbury, Worcs, had to watch while the Worcesetershire FH invaded his garden, killed a pregnant vixen and ripped the fully developed cubs from her womb. Five children were witness to a similar incident, this time involving the West Somerset Vale FH, as they played in their garden at Holford in March. When the Albrighton FH went marauding through gardens at Sheriffindales, they didn't kill anything, but still demolished flowerbeds and broke a fence.

In Cornwall on New Years Day a fox destruction society ran after a fox on the beach at Lansallos cove and opened fire on it within range of several children playing on the rocks. In Essex the Puckeridge and Thurlow FH rioted through a school playing field at Castle Camps.

In a particularly serious and tragic incident at Harpenden, Herts, in January, hounds from the Enfield Chase rioted through a 13-acre wildlife sanctuary and brought down a pregnant deer, killing her. "One of the huntsmen just grinned", said owner Grahame Dangerfield. "They all turned round and rode off". A cat sanctuary was invaded by hounds from the East Sussex and Romney Marsh FH earlier that month, scattering cats in all directions. Some have still to return. Hounds from the Lanarkshire and Renfrewshire FH ran through the Hessilhead

Wildlife Sanctuary in January, and the Ledbury (again !) crashed uninvited through a sanctuary at Eyton Old Hall near Leominster.

Members of the public trying to enjoy the quiet of the countryside are regularly subjected to peace-shattering mayhem as hunts invade local beauty-spots. The Quorn terrified a pregnant women with her child in the outwoods near Loughborough, and the neighbouring Cottesmore have been crashing about in Bourne Wood - from which horses are banned. The Isle of Wight FH have been frightening both animals and visitors at the Robin Hill Country Park, despite being asked to keep away by park managers, and the Belvoir FH churned up rare plants, destroyed duckboards and vandalised fencing in a glade in the protected Holwell Nature Reserve in January.

This catalogue of chaos and total disregard for the rights of ordinary country people to protect their homes and land from the arrogance of foxhunting classes is made all the more disgraceful by the sanctimonious posturing of the huntsmen themselves. In an unbelievably pompous editorial published in the *Field* (April 92), Sir Stephen Hastings argued that because bloodsporters were in a minority, their Liberty should be protected, not curtailed by the democratic process. "Libert in turn", he advised, "rests on two essential foundations: the concept of property and the rule of law". Sir Stephen, who appears to have gone to school during the mid-eighteenth century, clearly believes that his right to hunt foxes is enshrined in his enjoyment of property under the law. Yet there can be no currently legal British passtime more regularly displaying such massive disregard for the property of others and its protection in law, than that of foxhunting.

Council disciplines worker for 'sabotage' effort

A lorry-driver who drove between a cornered deer and hounds from the Quantock Staghunt in a bid to save it from death was suspended from work by Somerset County Council.

Colin Pearce, a NUPE shop steward, acted instinctively to block a narrow lane and protect the exhausted young stag as it cowered in the front porch of a private house at Merridge near Taunton. But hunt servants intervened and dragged the frightened animal off to be shot and ritually dismembered.

Following a complaint from the hunt, Pearce was suspended for 'dangerous driving', but reinstated after sackfuls of mail were delivered to County Hall in Taunton applauding him for his stand against the hunt. NUPE is now appealing for the written warning Colin received from the council to be retracted from his record.

Huntsmen knackered

Tony Courtnay, joint master of the Enfield Chase Foxhunt, was found guilty of running an illegal knackers yard by magistrates at Dunstable in April.

Courtenay had been transporting unfit cattle and horse carcasses from his Toddington farm to the hunt kennels at Broxbourne for feeding the hounds - although quite how he came to have a lion's head in his deep freeze, or what he was planning to do with it, remains something of a mystery. He was fined £2,250 plus costs of £1,500.

In Devon, a volunteer worker for the Silverton Foxhunt was given a conditional discharge with £600 costs after being found guilty of causing unnecessary suffering to a cow he was slaughtering for hound food. Anthony Welham, who is not a licensed slaughterman, took twenty minutes to kill the animal with three shots from a .22 pistol and finally a knife in its throat. The cow was fully conscious throughout its ordeal as no trouble was taken to stun it.

Hunt animals in road and rail havoc

Two hounds belonging to the Old Berkshire FH were killed by a high speed express train in January as the pack crossed the main line near Shrivenham after losing the scent of a fox. As usual, opportunistic hunt servants tried to blame the tragedy on hunt saboteurs for 'luring' the dogs to their deaths. British Rail simply labelled the hunt, 'a nuisance'.

Two hunt horses were also killed recently when a car ran into them on a main road near Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire. A pack of dogs belonging to the Wilton FH ran out in front of cars on the busy A338 at Dowton, Wilts in February. Fortunately, although one was hit by a frightened learner driver, there was no major accident and the hound limped away unharmed.

Bag men tackled

A bunch of Essex terrier men got the surprise of their lives in January when two women leapt from their car to sabotage them as they dug into a fox earth near White Colne.

The two women were driving past when they saw the terrier men trying to pull up a fox and force it into a bag. As they ran up, shouting at the men to stop, two foxes ran off - but the women were sure there was another still in the bag. The terrier men grunted abuse at them and slouched off.

The East Essex Foxhounds were hunting the area at the time but, since bags were mentioned, characteristically denied all knowledge of the digging party. Joint master, Guy Lister conceded the possibility however that the men were 'hunt watchers'.

Hunted deer in 'appaling deaths'

Staghunting may not be the most common of British bloodsports any more, but it remains one of the most horrific.

A pregnant hind running from the Quantock Staghunt in January, suffered what has been described as 'an appaling death' when it plunged into a quarry at Triscombe in Somerset. Falling first onto a ledge about 40 ft down the cliff face, the injured animal spent an agonised night before making a desperate leap in total darkness to the quarry floor, some 70 ft below. It died in the attempt, the fall shattering its back legs, and splitting its stomach to reveal the unborn calf.

A local vet examined the carcass and told the RSPCA that it had probably jumped to its death in a condition of severe stress. The hunt simply said that they were 'sorry'

In a separate incident in Northern Ireland, the County Down Staghounds pursued a carted stag for twenty miles to Strangford Lough in January. The frightened animal ran into the icy waters of the Lough and swam along its coast as the hounds trailed it on the shore. Local farmers who labelled the incident 'barbaric', believe the stag was forced back into the water three times by the hunt before swimming too far out into the Lough and drowning.

Poacher kills deer 'by accident'

An unemployed poacher from Goldthorpe, Yorkshire, told magistrates that he and a friend had been trying to kill foxes on Cannock Chase one night last January, but his three lurchers had brought down a deer instead.

The accused man, Wayne Dougherty, had first told police that he was acting alone and that he had hidden the deer behind a fence because he thought it had been hit by a car (!) It was only when evidence was offered that the deer had in fact been killed by dogs, disembowelled by a human, and that Doughty had lurchers, poaching lamps and a bloodstained knife in the back of his car, that he changed his story. He did not explain why he and his friend had decided to travel from Yorkshire to Staffordshire just to kill foxes, and claimed not to be aware that Cannock Chase was nationally famous for its deer herds.

A deer carcass would be worth about £120 as black market venison. Rugely magistrate, Nancy Walker fined Doughty £500 and advised him never to set foot on the chase again. "We are proud of our deer here", she told him, "and we take great exception to things like this happening".

Trigger-happy council blasts geese

Tory controlled Wandsworth Borough Council went ahead with its plans to massacre 300 Canada Geese in Battersea park, London, in January

Claiming that as many as 800 of the birds had settled there, destroying vegetation and "polluting" the lake, Leisure and Amenities Committee chairwoman, Kathy Tracey, the wife of the former Tory Sports Minister, at first tried to bring in Rentokill to do this job. But the firm pulled out after Labour councillors discovered the plans and demanded a full public debate.

The issue was finally pushed through a full council meeting after animal welfare groups wishing to state an objection were refused per-

mission to address councillors. Welfare groups, which included IFAW, RSPB, Bird Aid, and the RSPCA, believed there were no more than 30 geese living in the park and argued that if control were necessary, it should be done by egg-piercing rather than shooting.

Commission stops wholesale slaughter

The Forestry Commission has suddenly abandoned its policy of "controlling" fox numbers with hired marksmen - to the great annoyance of the BASC.

Announcing a U-turn in a policy that has caused the death of some 6000 foxes every year, the commission states that the fox is now to be considered an important natural predator on its estates and a benefit to woodland ecology. Shooting will now take place only if adjacent landowners suffer livestock loss from fox predation.

One might have thought that the conservation-conscious BASC would welcome such an enlightened view. Not a bit of it. The only animals the BASC seems interested in conserving are the birds its unimaginative members enjoy pumping pellets into. Its "Gamekeepers Advisory Committee" (a lobbying group with a vested interest in the annihilation of any species that feeds on so-called game birds) has announced a cynical campaign to reverse the commission's decision.

Children See Deer Killed By Vale Of Aylesbury Hounds

Children watched in horror as a startled baby deer was mauled to death by the Vale of Aylesbury hounds when they were hunting in a wildlife sanctuary at Coleshill, Bucks on Saturday 7 March 1992. Despite numerous protestations from local residents not to hunt on the common the Vale of Aylesbury continued in their pursuit for blood in front of children who were playing nearby.

Within minutes a baby deer jumped up from the undergrowth and was quickly grabbed around the neck and hindquarters by two hounds and a short tug-of-war ensued. Hunt servants were unable to bring the hounds under control and when the deer was finally released it fell back into the undergrowth to die.

When the hunt were questioned by residents as to whether the deer had escaped they were quick to claim that it had, and promptly rode away without apologising for any distress they may have caused. A search of the area ensued and the body was found where the hunt's Whipper-In, Steve Thane, (of Chiddingfold FH fame) had been standing.

Master of the day, Chris Henry, was handily 'unavailable for comment' for the press but did eventually manage to creep out of the woodwork some days later to say that the hounds are trained to ignore deer, which was closely followed by " they (deer) are not a problem we are concerned with" and last, but by no means least, "there was no sign of the deer at all". (Well, really)

The deer's death came only two days after the Vale of Aylesbury had chased a deer along a footpath in Church Wood, Ibstone, Bucks almost trampling hospital worker Doreen Jones whilst she was walking her dogs. Joint Master, Alan Wynn, insisted that they were after foxes and would never hurt a deer. When questioned about Saturdays incident in Coleshill Mr Wynn refused to comment perhaps realising that he had actually embarrassed his own hunt in public.

Following the killing of the deer the local parish council met to discuss the best course of action. A letter was duly sent to the hunt telling them what they thought of their behaviour and that if they didn't return, the village would not beat all upset. A petition was also organised between sabs and residents asking for a formal apology and a promise not to hunt on the common again.

At the beginning of May a letter was received by villagers sent by Chris Henry [Master on the day] in it was the following "Owing to the change of the profile of Coleshill and the people living there, it is probably inappropriate for us to draw the common area in the future".

So yet another area of land the hunt dare not go near because of the public outcry against them.



Oxford sab Miles Cooper with the body of the baby muntjac killed by the Vale of Aylesbury Foxhounds on Coleshill Common, Bucks, 7th March 1992. Photo: John Presley

Vale of Aylesbury FH Driving Conviction:

Police, firefighters and a vet were called to the A41 Tring bypass sliproad after the Vale of Aylesbury FH hound van crashed following the hunt's final meet of the season at Wendover, Bucks, on Saturday 21 March 1992.

Hertfordshire police, who dealt with the accident, closed the road for two and a half hours while 36 hounds and two horses were rounded up.Two hounds were subsequently destroyed by a local vet. a passing motorist's car was also written off in the crash.

The driver of the hound van, Mr McCann, had to spend the night in hospital to recover from the accident (shame !) and was duly charged with drunk driving.

Appearing before Hemel Hempstead magistrates on 10 april Mr McCann pleaded guilty to the charge and received a 1 year driving ban, £250 fine and was ordered to pay £25 costs. A fireearm was confiscated by police at the scene.

LET'S RESHAPE

Here is a personal view from Robbie [Amersham sabs] about the state of sabbing and the HSA. Hopefully more people will write short / long articles for HOWL in the future!

Let's face it, sabbing has been going on for decades and to a cynic looks like it may become as traditional as the hunt itself. If we are to put an end to hunting as quickly as possible then we must tidy up our whole act.

The very name saboteur invokes images of countryside vandals or class warriors. This is simply not true and it is our duty to let people know exactly what we are and what we do. Without public support we will remain a subterfuge group on the side lines of society gaining little ground on a big playing field. We must remember that our aim is to stop the cruel abuse of our fellow earthlings. If to stop this bloody nightmare we have to sacrifice our clique mentality [see issue 48] isn't that a price we can afford?

We must make no mistake, parties from the left and right do not care about the cruelty of hunting. They just want our votes and will make all the right noises to get them We should take care not to be lured into politics and should stick to our own ideals. All persons from all political backgrounds should be welcome to join the HSA. This will only help us to destroy our press image as class warriors and to develop greater public confidence.

The membership of the HSA should be open to all people providing they do not practice bloodsport's and agree to work with other sabs as sabs, regardless of race, creed or colour.

Next we need to blitz the nation with information about hunting and about direct action. With greater public support we gain more members, more funds and more votes. We will become more credible and our cause will have to be noticed in Westminster. The public deserve to know what is happening in their countryside. If we manage to make one hunter realise what they are doing and manage to convert them to our way then surely this is a step towards our goal.

This is a small point but it must be made; we must improve our relations with the police as much as possible. Their presence has at many times stopped serious assaults on the sabs. When sabs are frustrated don't abuse the police. It only gives the police more reason to dislike us.By all means carry on moaning about their behaviour, but provoking officers with sarcasm etc only harms our relationship.

Lastly but not least we need better organisation all round. New groups need tactic talks and setting up properly with greater support from the HSA. Established groups need to make new members feel welcome and help learn the tricks of the trade

We also need better inter-group communication and the idea of regional assemblies could meet regularly and communicate even more regularly to organise hits, spread news, discuss tactics etc. This way the HSA can become more involved with the groups locally AND be more powerful nationally.

As sabs together we must win this battle, regardless of our race creed or colour. Let's have a proper reshape of the whole thing to stop hunting before next century: To protect our humble brethren forever!



Oxford van after being rammed by tractor on the Ytene MH 20th April 1992.

ARE YOU A TERRORIST?

Well if you're reading this magazine you probably are. Or to be more precise if you were in Northern Ireland you would be. Nina from N.I. explains

Sabs in Britain are well used to being stopped to have their driving license checked and police quoting various bits of the Public Order Act at them but across the water we have to put up with a whole range of "emergency powers" given to the RUC to deal with "terrorists" in 1974, [its a long emergency]. Every week we are stopped and questioned under the Prevention of Terrorism [Emergency Provisions] Act. We are legally obliged to give our name, address, date of birth and details of our recent movements, [in practice we are usually asked much more], We are then searched and have the cars searched. In one recent incident we found the hunt, "The Iveagh Harriers", coming along the road escorted by several RUC men carrying sub-machine guns [the women aren't allowed to carry guns]. The RUC stopped both our cars, we were surrounded by 5 [bullet-proof]RUC cars and a total of 12 officers, [their were 7 of us]. We were all searched, then they searched the cars, they took my bag from the car and demanded to know whose it was, I said it was mine, he took out a bottle, which he'd opened and sniffed earlier, and demanded to know what was in it ,I told him it was water, he told me to drink it to prove it. They searched under the bonnet and pulled up the back seat, then they confiscated the hunting horns. I demanded to know under what legislation they were doing this, after pressing the officer for an explanation his colleague went back to his car and produced his machine-gun [all RUC men carry handguns] he walked back towards me with his gun, at this point I decided we weren't going to get very far so we returned to the cars.We were detained for around 3/4 hours before we were allowed to go, we spent the rest of the afternoon being followed around the countryside by between 3 and 5 RUC cars which made it impossible for us to do anything.

Just before the start of the season 5 of the more experienced sabs were arrested under the P.T.A. in connection with A.L.F. activities, one of them has been remanded into prison while the other four have bail conditions preventing them from travelling in the countryside or travelling in a car unless they are accompanied by one of their family. Our C.B.'s were also confiscated.[As the 5 are charged under the P.T.A. there will be no jury at the trial just one single Judge which makes it extremely easy for the police to get a conviction with very little evidence and as interviews do not have to be taped under the P.T.A. many people are convicted solely on the basis of written confessions].

The arrest and subsequent harrasment were obviously an attempt by the police to sabotage the saboteurs. Fortunately we're a little more experienced at sabotaging than they are and so we have been out every week this season and not seen one kill,the Iveagh Harriers have now stopped advertising in Horse and Hound meaning that only one out of around 22 hunts here still advertise. We have also reported 3 huntspeople to the police for illegal activities, while one huntsman has made a counter-allegation of assault against me.

So despite living under one of the most oppressive legal regimes in Europe we are still surviving. Meanwhile if sabs in Britain would like to help us, does anyone have any good tactics for dealing with a bunch of fascist nutters with sub-machine guns?

Nina Wilson.
Legal Officer,
Northern Ireland HSA.

LEGAL AID REFUSAL

Far be it from me to suggest that there's a legal conspiracy against hunt saboteurs, but... it has come to the HSA's attention that increasing numbers of sabs are being refused Legal Aid. Funnily enough, this increase seems to have come about just as the tide of section 5 cases has truly turned in our favour.

The decision on whether or not to grant Legal Aid is based on several factors. These factors are laid down in what are called the Widgery Criteria. These criteria are not supposed to be exhaustive, but are the guidelines on which the decision is usually made. These criteria are:

(1) if there is a real risk of a custodial sentence;

(2) if the defendant's reputation is in real danger;

(3) if the case is complex either because there is a considerable number of witnesses to be cross-examined or due to intricate point(s) of law;

(4) if witnesses need to be traced;

(5) if the defendant would have problems following the case (e.g. if juvenile, foreign, or of very low intelligence)

If you are refused Legal Aid initially, you can then appeal against the decision. Your first action, however, should be to contact the HSA immediately.

The appeal is, obviously, most likely to be successful if you satisfy one or more of the criteria outlined above.

If your appeal is unsuccessful, there are two options open to you. One is to try and find a solicitor who is prepared to represent you free of charge - again, the HSA will probably be able to help you with this, but only if we are told immediately after your application is turned down.

The second alternative is to represent yourself. This is quite a daunting proposition for most people, but several sabs have recently won resounding victories conducting their own defence. Naturally, the HSA can provide a lot of help with this - but only with good advance notice. **And the real lesson behind all this? Don't get caught!**

THE END OF THE CHESHIRE BEAGLES

It's been fifteen months since Merseyside Hunt sab Mike Hill died as a direct result of sabbing the Cheshire Beagles.

Much was said and done following his death. What follows, I hope is an account of sabbing in Cheshire, the state of the cheshire Beagles and where we as sabs active in Cheshire will go from here!

As most of you know, the following week after Mike's death 250 sabs descended on Cheshire and prevented any hunt taking place in or around Mike's death. This season has seen us active and effective, two arrests,both hunt supporters!

We had two notable days, the first saw a group of builders at a farm, egged on by the Cheshire Beagles hunt staff, attack sabs with rottweilers, baseball bats and ram a sab van with a skip truck, only the fact that the van was half empty was serious injury avoided. The next was when Alan Summersgill was found out hunting and ran to hide in a house while ten police vehicles and a helicopter came to his protection an hour later! there penultimate meet saw three hunt staff and half a dozen supporters, an embarasing sight.



Five horn blowers - no hounds... Ytene Mink Hunt 19th April 1992

They're not finished and nor are we, but it is them who are a dying breed. The Cheshire Beagles killed once too often. They will be stopped as all hunts will be eventually. Please remember Mike Hill and thanks to all who came, helped or supported.around that area.This was a great source of embarrassment to the hunts and especially the police , who the following week mobilised 120 officers with helicopter, mobile control centre [complete with jail], videos and all other paraphernalia at their disposal. Supporters from all over the country also came, still we sabbed them, all those arrested were found not guilty. Two received £500 compensation for wrongful arrest and the others are suing Cheshire constabulary.

there next meet saw less police and in the words of the Joint Master Charles Hardy "I wish they hadn't been there, they were less than useless'. We completely wrecked their days sport , as police in tracksuits and heavies found our determination too much. Roy Moras the huntsman dared only to take half his pack out, and promptly lost them!

Their last but one meet saw an increase in heavies and sabbing made impossible by over zealous policing.

At the final meet we saw all stops pulled again, loads of cops with all their ground control equipment had still not learnt that their radios failed to work over long distances and eighty sabs evaded them and managed to suitably harass our friends in black white and red.

Alan Summersgill [driver of the truck which killed Mike] raised his head twice between february 1991 to march 1992 [less than Salmen Rushdie!]. Once judging hounds in Cumbria and once at a Cheshire show with a large force of Fell and Moorland Working Terrier chaps.

As October arrived this season, we had to come to terms with a coroner's enquiry which chose not to call important witnesses and gave a verdict on Mike's death of "death by misadventure".The prospect of a hunt that hadn't taken on new subscribers and looked like being impossible to find. Our pessimism was strengthened when we found out that their opening meet had been at 10am on a Thursday morning, and was defended by 100 police officers.

We received a lot of interesting information on the Cheshire Beagles from sympathetic people living in there country! one master had left due to stress; many of there meets refused to have them due to adverse publicity and many of their support were lost due to them going further underground.

They were found and sabbed many times last season, a pathetic ineffective hunt with few supporters and half its staff. Two masters have succeeded in alienating police and press.

To avoid our attentions they took extreme measures, obscure times for meets, even having to tie balloons to gates to show their ardent supporters where they were. we continued to hit the other Cheshire packs, but we went to the beagles when found.Their response; ignore us, pack up and go home. A hunt that can't hunt, a police force known as the Gurkhas by other police forces [they take no prisoners!].I never thought that I would sab in Cheshire again after Mike's death. This season has seen us active and effective, two arrests, both hunt supporters!

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Please remember Mike Hill and thanks to all who came helped or supported.

What's wrong with angling?

Angling is Britain's most popular bloodsport and is responsible for causing pain, stress, fear and death to thousands of millions of fish every year. Everyone can identify with the terror of the majestic stag or wily fox when hunted for miles, but slimy, voiceless fish don't have the same appeal. Please don't let yourselves be open to accusations of speciesism and give all living creatures equal consideration.

Many animal rights campaigners seem to shy away from angling, whether sabbing or whatever, because they are not conversant with the necessary facts, especially on the pain issue. The following sections explain why angling is as much a bloodsport as any other.

There are three types of angling; coarse, sea and game fishing. Coarse fishing is by far the most popular and also the cruellest form of angling. It is carried out throughout the year, except during the close season (in most cases) between 15th March and 15th June, when the fish spawn. Coarse fish are mostly inedible and include all freshwater species except salmon, trout and grayling.

When caught, these fish are not killed instantly upon leaving the water, but exposed to an environment they are not designed to cope with. Primarily, they can't breathe. Other factors include stress imposed due to the sudden change in temperature, noise, vibration, oxygen concentration, light intensity and damage to a protective mucous layer. If fish survive this ordeal, they are often put into a keepnet. These nets are designed to contain fish underwater, before being released at the end of the fishing session. However many fish will receive injuries from the net mesh or from being squashed together with other fish and many will die due to depletion of oxygen over a period in these devices. Keepnets are most popular at fishing matches, enabling each angler to weigh his complete catch at the end of the match. Many pleasure anglers use keepnets simply as a personal ego boost.

Sea angling is practiced from piers, beaches,rocks harbour walls and boats. One fundamental difference between coarse and sea fishing is at a competitive level; sea fish are weighed at dead- weight. As most fish caught are edible, it is rare for them to be released. Fish targeted includes shark, cod, conger ell, turbot plaice and dogfish, to name but a few. The most brutal form of sea fishing is most probably shark fishing. Exhausted and in agony from hooks and gaffs (metal hooks on poles used in landing big fish) through their flesh, the sharks are dragged aboard and beaten upon the nose until dead.

Game fishing quarry include salmon, sea trout, brown trout, rainbow trout and grayling. These fish again usually end up eaten and the usual method of killing is with a club called a priest, although sticks and stones are also used.



another victim of angler's carelessness.

Hatchery-reared trout are used to re-stock game fisheries and a substantial degree of "vermin" control is undertaken at both fish farm fishery, including the extermination of predatory fish and fish eating birds. Game fishing tends to be the most expensive type and is considered rather eletist by its participants.

FISH AND PAIN.

The Medway report, published in 1980 and sponsored by the RSPCA, proved that all vertebrates, warm or cold blooded, are capable of experiencing pain. The scientists involved in compiling the report exposed the farcical idea that fishing is humane, to be utter rubbish. In fact Dr. McWilliams, fish biologist and member of the National Association of Specialist Anglers, even admitted, "avoiding subjecting fish to some degree of stress when fishing is impossible."

The pure barbarity of angling becomes clear on examining the process of hooking, playing and landing a fish. A fish is deceived into impaling itself on a (usually) barbed hook, resulting in the infliction of an injury. The angler may then "play" the fish in order to tire it and allow it to be landed. On leaving the

water, a fish is unable to extract oxygen from the air and is subjected to extreme stress. During the handling process, a protective mucous covering which provides the creatures waterproofing and protects it from infections, is damaged. If a fish has swallowed the hook, the hook's retrieval is very difficult, the suffering is prolonged and is likely to result in damage to the fish's gut and subsequently death.

The moment the fish leaves the water, it enters an alien environment in which it is ill-equipped to cope. The gills collapse and breathing is virtually impossible. After oxygen is exhausted from the bloodstream, bleeding may occur from the gills. Combined with the trauma of capture and handling, considerable stress is inflicted. Following return to the water, an exhausted fish may remain motionless for a long period, during which it is at risk from predators and environmental damage.

People who say that it cannot be proven beyond doubt that fish can feel pain, must also admit that the same can be said of any animal other than humans. Only the latter can report in words the sensations experienced. However, society at large does not accept that the reactions and squeals of warm-blooded animals are purely mechanical. Based on our knowledge of fish biology, there is no logical reason why this widely-held belief should not be extended to include fish.

It has been convenient for anglers that fish have been considered in the past not to feel pain. The Medway report noted that the methods used in angling "if performed in a laboratory on unanaesthetised fish, without license, would very probably be in contravention of the(1876 cruelty to animals) act.." Incredible for an act created by vivisectors, not renowned for their compassion for living creatures!

OTHER VICTIMS.

Angling litter includes all types of hooks and weights, and vast quantities of nylon fishing line, which is only slowly biodegradable and with or without attached hooks and weights is potentially lethal to birds and mammals for a long time. Waterfowl especially swans, who are particularly susceptible. They suffer lacerated beaks and throats by swallowing tackle and slowly starve to death. Entanglement may also result in lost limbs. Other animals too are at risk such as wild birds, dogs and cats.

An RSPCA report from 1990 stated that during just one week in 1990, an inspector had to assist 14 swans tangled in tackle. Freddie the dolphin, who lived for a long time near Amble in Northumberland, was wounded by fishing tackle at least four times. Entangled animals attract considerable publicity and are frequently reported in the local press, but most incidents will go unreported, due to lack of witnesses.

Anglers maintain that only a minority of their number deliberately discard tackle. This may be true, but most tackle in the environment is of the "lost" variety. Hooks are snagged on bankside vegetation, underwater obstructions and sea beds-often resulting in snapped lines. The only way to prevent injuries and fatalities due to lost and discarded fishing tackle, is to ban angling!

Fish and tackle victims are not the only creatures suffering at the hands of anglers. Any fish eating species which is thought to compete with angling interests is at risk. Seals, herons, otters and wildfowl are killed by fish farmers, who breed primarily trout and salmon for re-stocking fisheries and of course for the meat eating public. As many as 5,000 seals a year are already killed by fishery interests and there is pressure for widespread organised "culling" to be re-instated in Scotland. Mink, in addition to being hunted, are increasingly being killed by angling bodies and have been branded with as bad a reputation as the poor fox had 20 years ago. This year has seen a new victim - the cormorant, a sea bird, which is reportedly moving inland after being starved out of its natural habitat by overfishing. No creature is safe in the name of profit and the pleasure of dragging fish from the water.

Lastly, litter must must not be forgotten as a huge problem associated with angling. Bait tins, beer cans and plastic ring pulls are amongst the piles of anglers' trash, disfiguring the bankside and inviting further wildlife damage. Many clubs have been banned from angling venues due to the persistent menace of litter. As if this isn't enough, banks are left as mudslides, with vegetation hacked down to facilitate access to the water.

SABBING ANGLING.

The number of sab groups including angling in their activities is increasing. On the whole anglers are less likely to get pleasure out of the suffering they cause than hunters and enjoy instead the mindlessness of outwitting a fish into impaling itself on a hook, they don't tend to be inherently violent. This is a bonus if you are a small group, as you can sab more anglers than you might want to confront if they were all blood crazed terrier boys. The other thing about sabbing angling, is that it can form a satisfying end to a day, after dealing with a hound pack.

A number of different tactics have so far been effectively employed:

1. One of the best has got to be the use of a canoe or rowing boat to make the anglers pull their lines in and disturb the fish. They may not even realise you're sabbing them, unless you've got a purple mohican.

2. The fish can be disturbed by throwing medium-sized stones in the water - not huge rocks as they may stun the fish through vibrations in the water.

3. Standing behind anglers, having a noisy chat about how many they've caught, can cause a shadow, disturbing the fish.

Pre-feeding is not now thought to be a good idea, because unless huge quantities of groundbait are used in an area, you will just be doing the anglers job for them by attracting fish and encouraging them to feed. Additionally, the huge amounts of food needed may well not be eaten and will rot, causing pollution.

There are a number of things that can be done to sab matches, which are described in the HSA Tactics booklet or on a fact sheet available from the Abolition of Angling. We also want to hear about any new ideas for tactics and whats going on in different areas, so please do get in contact.

The angling fraternity are getting worried about the reducing numbers of people, especially youngsters, taking up their passtime and have responded by organising a pro-angling week from 22nd to 30th August 1992. The idea of the week is to involve as many of the public as possible and get more media endorsement of angling. The week opens with a celebrity angling match in the Leicester area, with lots of other things promised. It's a perfect opportunity to get active and make these animal abusers realise what they're up against.

Marianne Macdonald.

CAMPAIGN FOR THE ABOLITION OF ANGLING
PO BOX 130, SEVENOAKS, KENT, TN14 5NR.
0836-279758.



Shooters pack up at Kilnwick. Photo: Adrian Parker.

'ALWAYS BEEN GREEN.'

With more shoots been sabbed hopefully we will see more articles about the different types of shooting. As I'm sure you're well aware we have been sabotaging Grouse shooting for a number of years now with great success. Since all types of shooting have seen our attentions now Phil Lucas from Yorkshire has written the following article to explain the different types.

"Always been green" is a slogan you may see next to the letters BASC (British Association for Shooting and Conservation?) on a car sticker. The BASC is the latest to jump on the green bandwagon and represents thousands of shooters who kill various species for sport. They are responsible, directly and indirectly, for the death of thousands more animals than all of the organised hunting with hounds. Conservation to the shooting fraternity is selective conservation. The only animals that benefit from the sort of conservation shooters waffle on about to defend their pastime, are game animals; which are non-indigeous to this country anyway. It is true that shooters plant coverts and encourage undergrowth in coverts. Unfortunately a lot of people are fooled by this and think that, although they may not approve of shooting, the habitat it maintains is good for other animals. However, unless you happen to be a game animal, shooting does nothing for you; apart from shoot, dig, gas, trap and snare you out of existence.

Controlling Vermin

Most shoots are managed by gamekeepers. The job of the gamekeeper is to provide as many gamebird's as possible, organise beat lines and gun sitings to show good birds on a shoot day; and kill as much so called vermin as possible. Although they will deny it vigorously in public, to a gamekeeper, nearly everything that moves and is not game is vermin. There may be numerous shoots in your area, each with its own gamekeeper and underkeepers. Each of these keepers will kill more than your local foxhunt, possibly, and definitely more than a harehunt. The list of animals persecuted is sad - fox, stoat, weasel, rat, grey squirrel, mink, jay, jackdaw, crow, magpie, rook, even cats and birds of prey. If you go and inspect a known shooting area and find a wood with a pheasant release pen you may find a gibbet line strung between two trees. This is how the 'keeper displays all the vermin he has killed. Not content with persecuting animals, they display the often mutilated carcasses for all to see.

Shooting also involves the scattering of large amounts of lead pellets all over the countryside. Millions of lead cartridges are sold every year and emptied into the environment that shooters claim to conserve. The R.S.P.B. and Wildfowl Trust have reported numerous deaths due to ingestion of shotgun pellets, involving swans, geese, mallard and general other species. Apart from the shot, try counting the amount of empty cartridges next time you go walking in the countryside. Couple all this with the activities of gamekeepers and you're "starting" to face the grim reality of shooting and conservation.

The type of shoot depends on the species shot, terrain and financial backing. Let us first concentrate on the most "sporting" variety - driven shooting. Driven pheasant shooting is perhaps the largest and best known. Pheasant poults (young birds) are bought or reared and released into release pens in woods on the shoot. After a while they will be allowed to roam free, although feed hop pens will be positioned so that they return to the relevant woods for food. Many 'keepers feed by hand as they walk their beat. The season runs from the 1st October to 1st February. Several days shooting will be organised by the shoot owner, club or syndicate depending on the amount of poults released.

Shooting is bought or by invitation. It can be extremely expensive with payments for the actual days shooting plus the cost of every brace of birds the shooter wishes to keep. Shooting is a lot more privately run than hunting with hounds.

A days shooting will consist of several drives which means that beaters, friends or hired for the day, will beat game to flush them out of cover over the heads of the strategically placed "guns", who slaughter them. Many guns are bad shots which results in thousands, hundreds of thousands of wounded birds which are either retrieved by dogs or die in agony. A few hundred birds can be shot during one day. If a shoot, say, shoots 10 days per season it can slaughter about 2,000 birds and thousands of additional animals classed as vermin. At least ten million pheasants are shot every year by sporting, conserving people.

Partridge shooting is not found on the same scale as it used to the partridge has seriously declined due to the food chain being destroyed by agricultural death chemicals. It is not unusual to find mixed pheasant and partridge shooting and the procedure is much the same as pheasant shooting, except that partridge tend to lie up in fields, hedgerows, and root crops. The season runs from the 1st September to the 1st February, although they are generally not shot until October.

Grouse shooting has been written about many times previously in Howl. The grouse is a moorland bird, living in areas such as Wales, North England, and Scotland. Gamekeepers keep moorland as the perfect environment for artificially high levels of grouse to thrive so that they may be beaten over the heads of guns in strategically sited butts to be shot in large numbers. Yet again, there is persecution of predator species and the moorland is rotationally burnt to encourage new heather growth, (food for grouse)- preventing any regrowth of natural flora. Grouse moor owners dislike people walking across their moors and formed the moorlands association in the North of England to fight against the campaign for free access on



Pigeon shooters packing up at South Warnborough after sabs found them. Photo: S. Wild

unenclosed land such as moors and heath. They claim free access is a danger to wildlife on the moors. Perhaps they should have a word with their gamekeepers about their activities, notably the killing of protected Raptors (poisoning birds of prey) which anti-shooting activists have been accused of killing and planting to discredit shooting. A problem with grouse shooting is that it is big money with wealthy, powerful people involved. It is also carried out on large traits of so- called private land- however, if properly planned, it is one of the most vulnerable to pressure sabotage. The season runs from 12th August to 10th

December, although the first 2 or 3 months are the most important Sabotage has been increasing over the past few seasons and is likely to continue to do so.

Other birds that can be "shown" as part of a days driven shooting are wild birds such as woodcock or snipe. The woodcock is classed as an exciting bird as it is so difficult to hit due to its erratic flight pattern. The season runs from 19th October to 31st January. A prestigious honour in the shooting world is to become a member of the woodcock club. This has to be witnessed and involves the shooting of 2 consecutive woodcocks with a "left and right" without the gun leaving the shoulder. I wonder how many birds have been wounded in the attempt. Driven shooting may also involve fox, hare and duck. Duck can be "shown" on a shoot which has ponds/ wetlands on its area. Hares used to be driven and slaughtered. They supposedly ate too much pasture grass' crops or heather. It is not as common nowadays. Fox driving is rampant - notably in Wales where they use hounds to flush foxes out of woods or across rides to waiting guns. The massacre that results sometimes includes hounds.

As well as driven shooting there is walk-up shooting or rough shooting. Any number walk along until they put up animals and shoot them - usually anything that moves. The larger groups may separate and take it in turns to beat for each other. Dogs may be used to point and flush animals as well as retrieve. This is as widespread as driven shooting but probably kills less animals. A lot of people rent or lease rough shooting over large areas although keepering tends to be not so intensive but often forms part of the days sport. Special days may be set aside for drey poking - grey squirrel dreys are poked to make them bolt, they are then shot. Alternatively, a days rabbit shooting or walked-up crow shooting together with the destruction of any nests seen.

Wildfolwing also accounts for many birds lives, inland and coastal species of duck and geese are shot from September to February. The shooter's lie in wait either at dawn or dusk and wait for fowl to return or leave their feeding grounds (called flighting). The effects of the lead shot have already been mentioned but wildfowling is also an extremely vulnerable bloodsport both to sabotage and for local campaigns. Some South of England authorities have recently come out against wildfowling due to local campaigning by hunt saboteurs and concerned groups and individuals.

When the game and fowl seasons have ended most shooters turn their attentions to "vermin" shooting of which pigeon shooting is the most popular. More pigeons are shot than pheasants every year due to the lack of a close season, pigeons are 'fair game' all year round. Shooting takes place from hides which are constructed from bales of hay or professionally built and then camouflaged by netting and branches from trees. Decoys are placed to attract birds and are either manufactured from wood or plastic or are dead birds that are propped up with sticks. These are placed in a field to lure pigeons down to their deaths. With roosting taking place before and at dusk shooters wait in a wood for pigeons to come to roost and then kill them. Whatever the methods pigeon shooting is mass murder.

Finally we have to consider deer shooting and stalking. Deerstalking is widespread in the Scottish highlands where they are spied, stalked and then shot with rifles. Apparently increasing in popularity deerstalkers claim that unless culled the deer will die of starvation. They do not however mention that the deers natural habitat is being eroded all the time and no matter how much deer 'management' is undertaken this will never stop. All the time when we are sabotaging bloodsports we are told that nature needs managing or controlling. I find it outrageous that the biggest pest on the planet can condemn other animals by classifying them as pests and for simply existing. Basically, all the claims from bloodsport freaks of pest control, conservation and culling are absolute nonsense. They shoot for sport, for enjoyment and are responsible for the persecution for nearly every living creature you can think of - in large numbers and in many horrific ways.

With the recently failed wild mammal protection bill also appears numerous press articles stating our intentions to step up activity against shooting and angling. There is a lot of talk that we should concentrate on hunting first as we have more chance of disposing of it in parliment. To me hunt sabotage is all about not waiting for politicians to act but save as many animals lives as possible until they do. If we have a choice of hunts to sabotage we try to concentrate on that which kills most, why is it then that is logic isn't taken further to properly include shooting on our agenda? We are still learning about our tactics when sabbing shoots but, as with hunting, with time and perseverance we will work out our tactics properly and become more effective.

If the bill had gone through we were facing our last hunting season, we would be in a serious position. We are not prepared sufficiently to take on the shooters so we have got to get to grips with it now otherwise we will be thrown in at the deep end and lose vital momentum that a hunting ban would hopefully generate. Not to mention millions of dead animals at the hands of the gun freaks.

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SILAGE

Compiled by Steve Poole.

First out of the bag this month is an interesting report compiled by the Chief Constable of Humberside, DA Leonard, which states that although £40,700 of ratepayers money has been spent on policing hunts in a single season, he would not be recommending any future costs to be borne by the hunt. And why ? Well, firstly because 'such meetings are not commercial events conducted for profit'.

Well, I may be a bit wet behind the ears, but I thought the reason all those subscribers handed over vast sums of money every year was so that hunt servants could be paid their wages, kennels maintained, vet bills paid, hounds fed and so on. Hunting is a business, not a charity. If it doesn't make a profit its because it isn't very popular. Happily, I am not alone in this opinion. Canny district councillors in Mid Devon recently turned down an application from the Tiverton Foxhunt for domestic rate relief on their kennels because, as chairwoman Susan Meads explained,

"I used to go hunting when I was a girl and I remember putting money in the hat at the end of the day. The hunt was run as a business and we cannot go giving rate relief to any recreation-based business that is not doing very well."

Mind you, many foxhunters these days have difficulty remembering the money they put in the hat at the previous meet, never mind when they were little girls. Since it was established that the collection of cap-money without a license is illegal, hunt servants have become increasingly prone to collective amnesia. Seen making a collection at Bicester on Boxing Day, Whaddon Chase hunt secretary Robert Vallance could only remember handing out leaflets *inviting* people to make a donation to the Campaign for Country Sports, in the comfort of their own homes. 'The CCS is going on the offensive', explained Vallance. Offensive is the word ...

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Good to see the Co-op bank touting for more ethical business by telling corporate customers involved in bloodsports to close their accounts. Might look even better if the Co-op could be persuaded to close some of its own butchers shops.

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Here's one to warm the cockles of the chief constable of Humberside's heart. Sussex police were so busy harrasing hunt saboteurs one Saturday in January that there were none left to investigate five church break-ins and thefts of petty cash. About twenty saboteurs were disrupting a shoot near Midhurst. "We were fully committed", explained Inspector Colin Turresll of the Chichester force, to Canon Dermond Fogarty of St Mary's, Midhurst.

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Hunt saboteurs in Rutland will be outraged to learn that the £20 a day they receive for disrupting Captain Brian Fanshawe's hounds (see Silage, HOWL 48) falls lamentably short of the national average. Fieldsports intelligence experts have supplied *Silage* with a secret memorandum which reveals for the first time the scandalous disparity between HSA wage levels around the country. Bottom of the league, but well ahead of the miserable peasants of Rutland, are the sabs who attended Fell Week this year. The £30 a day they picked up wasn't much, but compensation came, according to hunt supporter John Jackson, in the appetising shape of 'a packed lunch from Linda McCartney' (*Whitehaven News 2/4/92*). What with all those frozen vegetarian pasties she makes for my local supermarket and all, I don't know how she finds the time.

No wonder Paul's looking thin.

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Just ahead of them came some unidentified saboteurs from Cheshire. Apparently they 'won a wage claim for £40 a day' in February - a rise, so my informant tells me, of 33% (*Countryweek 13/2/92*). A hunt supporter called 'Name and Address Withheld' was good enough to inform readers of the *Evesham Journal* (26/3/92) that eighty sabs who had just disrupted the Croome and West Warwickshire FH were getting £45 each plus a packed lunch.

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But top of the table are those yuppy sabs from Bristol Polytechnic. Bill Waller from the Berkely FH has disclosed that £50 a day is the going rate there (*Independent 14/4/92*). Not bad eh ? Unfortunately, a veil of secrecy still hangs over payments to saboteurs in the New Forest. Hunt chiefs know only that they come from 'colleges across England' and that they are 'paid mercenaries' (*Southern Evening Echo 30/1/92*).

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Can the Bristol students hang on to their place in the sun ? Will the Rutland peasants go on strike ? Will the AGM call for national wage agreements ? Watch this space ...

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Hats off to the thoughtful and ingenious police of Nottinghamshire, who phoned the 'Wheels' van-hire company in January to ask whether their vehicles were insured for anarchists !

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Britain's hunts have been demonstrating an unenviable knack for negative public relations of late. It wasn't just the masked thug who swung a heavy metal hammer at *Carlisle News* and *Star* photographer Eleanor Mason as she tried to take pictures of the Cumberland FH (so earning himself a graphic spread on the front page that evening). A reporter on the *Lancashire Evening Telegraph*, Sharon Dale turned up at a meet of the Holcombe Harriers and was treated to a torrent of abuse.

"They branded me an Aids carrier, a slut, a pauper, a peasant, scum, and one made rude remarks about my virginity ! And those are just the printable remarks", she reported. This earned the hunt the memorable headline, 'Louts in red coats made the air turn deepest blue'.



Artificial Fox Earth 'Littlewood' Horningtoft, W.Norfolk

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A reporter from the *Ardrossan Herald* rang a joint master of the Eglington for a comment on a story she was writing in January, to be told brusquely, 'It is no concern on yours at all' (!). But this is actually quite polite for a joint master. Edward Lycett-Green of the Portman FH appeared in the *Stour Valley News* in February, telling a Dorset villager who complained about his rampaging dogs to 'go and watch *NEIGHBOURS*". Prince Charles is not a joint master but he showed former HSA press officer Chris Williamson that he knows how to debate like one recently. 'Oh shut up', he said. And that one went in the *Daily Express*. Martin Jones of Worcestershire FH is an honest joint master. 'We don't set out to upset people', he told the *Bromsgrove messenger*. 'We try exceptionally hard to be polite, but sometimes things go wrong'.

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There were some dirty dealings in Loughborough in January. When the local paper ran a phone-in poll to test public support for lifting the town-centre ban on the Quorn next Boxing Day, the hunt quickly put a message on their answer-phone asking well-wishers to 'ring as many times as you feel able by Sunday Evening'. Needless to say, the Quorn won the poll.

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The pitiful list of horse-fanciers, jockeys and farmers (well, that accounts for at least a third of them anyway) dregged up by the Campaign for Country Sports to illustrate the 'strength and breadth of support for hunting' was nothing if not imaginative. Not only does the Old Berks hunt secretary Edward Leigh Pemberton turn up under the artfully 'neutral' guise of 'Land Agent'; but we also find Tricky Dicky Course described as a 'Conservationist', Michael Clayton as an 'Editor' (any particular publication, Mike ?) and Sir Raymond Carr (well-known only for his *History of Foxhunting*) as a 'Historian'. The list doesn't bother to tell us what the Duke of Beaufort does, but he's probably a dog-breeder or something ...

I AM THE LAW

Two and a half years ago, Thames Valley Police went into Judge Dredd-mode and decided that being a hunt sab was illegal. Twenty West London and Oxford sabs were arrested, while numerous others escaped only by some dint of hard exercise. That day marked not just the start of their quest for justice [successfully completed in Aylesbury Crown Court last autumn] but also the point when the HSA went over onto legal offensive. For years we had to put up with the most appaling treatment from police forces across the country ,without recourse to anything stronger than a police complaint: suddenly that changed, and the last 12 months has seen this strategy finally bear fruit. The following article, reprinted from Arkangel 7 with minor amendments, details the results.

Forget the Sun/Mirror/Express/Mail 'get-rich-quick' bingo: the HSA is running a far better scheme. All you have to do is join up, get arrested, sue the police, and -- bingo! You're rich. Winners so far;

First prize; Oxford and Newbury sabs

The case arose after Oxford and Newbury sabs demonstrated at the Oxford County Show in June 1990. Eleven sabs were arrested and detained overnight [18 hours in all to attend court Monday morning. All of them refused the offer of bind-overs, and no charges were brought.The action for unlawful arrest, etcetera, was soon underway. A year and five months later the police [Thames Valley] caved in with an out-of-of court settlement totalling £22,000 plus costs. Sadly despite this payment, they haven't managed to say "sorry", and still maintain they've "got the balance right'. See below for more juggling with justice by Thames Valley police...



Oxford sab viciously assaults two police officers whilst causing considerable damage to the pavement with his face. Northants MH 23/5/92

Second Prize; Bournmouth/New Forest sabs

Readers of HOWL will remember that in March 1990 followers of the South Dorset FH overturned a car containing several local sabs. [For which two hunt supporters have been successfully prosecuted.] A device was subsequently found in or near a shop belonging to a member of the hunt. Dorset police did a stunning piece of detective work and arrested the sabs. Eat your heart out Hercule Poirot. The sabs sued for unlawful arrest, etc., and the police settled out of court, to the tune of £14,000.

Third Prize; West London and Oxford sabs

One thing you need to be a police officer is a sense of proportion. Thames Valley Police displaced that and other fine qualities in November 1989, when they arrested all the sabs they could catch, partly with the aid of a low-flying helicopter. Unlike their country colleagues, Thames Valley Police didn't have the decency to pay up before the case, so now they're stuck with court costs too. The £12,000 was awarded in varying sums to nine sabs from the two groups. Rumour has it that this season they'll be wearing t-shirts saying: "Sponsored by Thames Valley Police".

Joint Fourth Prize: West London sabs

Two West London sabs have been awarded £500 each from separate incidents, one in Hampshire and one in Leicestershire.

Two of the country's most notorious forces wisely settled out of court. As one Hampshire copper bleakly commented: "Five hundred pounds for an hour in custody ? Not a bad rate of pay." Better than police overtime, anyway !

Sixth Prize: Merseyside sabs

In the aftermath of the Cheshire Beagle Riot charges, many sabs were on bail conditions not to attend hunts. Cheshire police duly arrested two sabs for breach of bail - despite the fact they weren't out on bail. Forty five minutes provided the sabs with £250 each in an out-of-court settlement.

Who's next ? Seriously though, the way most police forces treat sabs is absolutely appaling, and I'm sure we are all glad to see them on the receiving end of British Justice for a change. No one should be arrested for trying to save animals from a horrendous death, and money alone cannot compensate for it. (But it helps.)

FELL WEEK

The idea behind this the 4th Fell Week was to put pressure on the six footpacks who hunt the fells/mountains of the Lake District. These six packs,the Blencathra, Coniston, Eskdale and Ennerdale, Lonsdale, Melbreak and the Ullswater F.H. place the killing of foxes at the top of their priorities. At the end of March sabs from all over the country gathered in Cumbria to try and stop these hunts from going about their dirty business.

Saturday 21st March saw local sabs in action against the North Lonsdale F.H. A pack which, as far as we can ascertain, have never been sabbed before. Due to our lack of numbers, we weren't as effective as we could have been. Even so, we managed to gain control of half the pack. The huntsmen responded to this by boxing the hounds up and loosing them onto another fell.

Mon 23rd saw the start of the week proper. Over 80 sabs travelled to Grasmere to sab the Ullswater F.H. Despite the hunt moving up the opposite fell to that we had anticipated, we soon caught up with them and with the use of the voice and horn calls, 12 hounds were soon enjoying our company more than that of the hunt. The end of the day saw 2 sabs attacked by hunt thugs for trying to resuscitate an elderly hunt supporter who had collapsed with a suspected heart attack. Luckily, the sabs injuries weren't serious -which is more than can be said of the afore-mentioned follower, who died.

The next day the Melbreak had the pleasure of our company at one of their lowland meets. Due to the huntsmen spotting a sab van in the area, the hounds never turned up at the meet. We eventually found them a couple of miles away down the road at Croasdale. The huntsmen packed up as we got into the fields.

Wednesday 25th we paid a visit to the Blencathra F.H. (John Peel hunt) considered by many to be the premier fell pack. Hunting took place in thick mist and pouring rain. Within minutes of moving off from the meet, the huntsmen lost the whole pack to sabs. A good day was had considering the conditions we faced. The day was ended with no kills.

Thursday morning saw the huntsman of the Melbreak peering out of his cottage to find 5 vans of sabs blocking the road to the kennels. To pass away the time waiting for the police to arrive, we played football. Leeds won thanks to a lot of cheating. An hour after the hunt should have started saw the hounds moving off from the rear of the kennels. They then proceeded to walk to the intended meet. The huntsmen spent the rest of the day high on the fell tops trying to avoid us. Once again no kills.

The next day we expected violence from the Blencathra as they were the only pack out. Thankfully our fears were unfounded. After an initial attempt at hunting, the huntsmen gave up trying. We followed the pack along the fells

in what turned out to be a pleasant walk on a somewhat warm day.

Saturday saw us visit our old friends, the Coniston F.H. at Troutbeck. The hunt had been forewarned we were coming and drafted in a large number of thugs, apart from their regular psychos. This day turned out to be the worst so far because as we turned up, the hunt were already on the fells, so we never really got to grips with them. The pack split into two and a small number of hounds hunted a fox. Despite our efforts we failed to stop them.Supporters later claimed a kill.

On Sunday, the last day, we travelled out of the Lake District and into the Yorkshire Dales, to meet up with Maurice Bell and his unregistered pack, the Wensleydale F.H. This was by far the easiest day, as the hunt never ventured out of the kennels.

All in all a very successful week - only one possible kill at the hunts we attended, which is quite an achievement, as each hunt expects to kill at least one fox every time they go out.

Our thanks to all who attended, Workington, Leeds, Nottingham, Liverpool,Manchester, Sunderland, Sheffield, Newcastle, West Midlands, Peterborough,and Carlisle. Thanks to the H.S.A. Dave C. and C. McLeary for the donations towards the cost. See you next year!

Alan, Cumbria.

WHAT NOW AND WHERE NEXT?

Over the next 18 months the HSA will be increasing still further the information and training currently provided to hunt saboteurs. Additionally we'll be trying to set up strong regional co-ordinating structures, and increasing the involvement of sabs with the HSA. In the article below the HSA's Legal Officer Jamie Hepburn examines what the future holds...

The last two years have seen enormous changes within the the HSA. For a start its size has almost doubled from 70 groups and under 2000 members to 120 groups and 3000 members. The groups seem to be out more frequently as well, which means that there is vastly more sabbing going on - and therefore many more animals saved from a horrendous death.

There have been other changes too - in the HSA's internal structure. Three years ago the HSA committee was doing little to actively encourage and improve hunt sabotage (with the notable exception of the Tactics Officer of the time). Sab groups were pretty much left to their own devices, while the committee got on with the job of running the national organisation. Over the last two and a half years this trend away from direct action has been reversed, and the HSA committee is now dedicated towards increasing and improving the level of direct action.

So - what now and where next? First of all, we'll be increasing the number of Sabbing Skills Days which we provide. Over the last year we've been constantly looking at ways of improving SSD's, and as a result of our own discussions and the feedback we've had from participants we now feel that the quality is satisfactory - but the quality is lacking. We're hoping to average one per month.

We also feel that sabs should have greater access to the running of the HSA. Consequently each month we will have the committee meeting in a different region, so that everyone who wants to can come and see how the HSA committee operates, and voice their opinions. (Part of each meeting's agenda will be set aside for any topics that local sabs want to raise.) In any given month we will try and have the SSD and the committee meeting in the same region, to increase the opportunities for discussions, etc.

Secondly, we will be helping to set up strong regional co-ordinating structures. In the past the national HSA has taken a rather laid-back view of regional organisations: if people wanted to set them up, all well and good; if not, so what?

As it happens, we cannot afford to be so blase anymore. We need strong regional structures because the HSA is now too large and too active for a 12 person committee to deal with. How active and how large the regional structures are is obviously up to local sabs, but the HSA will basically be looking for three or four people in each region who can be regional versions of some of the committee posts. For instance, from my point of view as Legal Officer, I try to keep track of all the legal business that is happening across the country. That now means being in regular touch with 120 groups - which I'm currently failing to do. If it meant being in touch with 15 regional Legal Officers, it would be a lot easier. (It would also be a lot cheaper for the HSA.) The same reasoning applies to the Press Officer.

Some of this probably sounds very much like "regionalisation" - but it has nothing to do with how the HSA committee is elected. What it will do (we hope) is create the strong regions that might one day enable the HSA to elect its representatives on a regional basis. 'Nuff said.

Thirdly, we have abolished the job of Contacts Officer, and are replacing it with three new posts (an indication of how much the job had grown!), namely Group Liaison Officer, Sabbing Skills Days Officer, and New Groups Officer. Of those three, the first corresponds most closely to the job of Contacts Officer. The SSD Officer will be responsible for organising, running, and improving SSD's, and the New Groups Officer will be responsible for helping new groups, identifying where new groups can be set up, and... gulp... setting them up. (These new posts won't actually increase the size of the committee beyond twelve, as it is currently under strength.)

So - what do you think? If you're a hunt saboteur these proposals will affect you. Are they the most stupid thing since foxhunting? Or are they good? Either way we want to hear your opinion. Even more, we need more people to help - people to be regional Legal Officers and Press Officers, people to take part in organising and running SSD's, and lots more too! If you'd like to help (regardless of where your talents lie, or what you think you can do!) please get in touch with myself or Cameron via the office. The main qualification is enthusiasm!

LETTERS CONT..

Anglers out of order

Dear HOWL

Friends of Highfields/Campsall Lakes, who are strongly anti-bloodsports, appeal to any sabs etc. to offer details as to how to go about a successful legal process to deny anglers the opportunity to continue injuring animal species at the two lakes.

Angling is not permitted at the lakes, and as the fish species become larger, the anglers 'home in' on these lakes to 'get off' on their perversions.

The Friends have asked the HSA and CAA for legal help, but this is not forthcoming, and as the anglers start in early summer, we need the expertise from past legal actions to effect prevention via civil prosecutions.

Doncaster Met. Borough council /S.Yorks. police will not do their work as owners, law enforcement to end this unlawful activity. To catch, attempt to catch these fish species is theft.

We appeal for legal details to effect this.

D.Rich
Conisbro

(The HSA will forward any mail, send to usual address)

Questionnaires

Thanks for all the returned questionnaires, we hope to present some of the results in the next HOWL

ANIMAL RIGHTS PRISONERS

Ronnie Lee	VO2682, LB2 Clyde, HMP Channings Wood, Denbury Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 6DW
Michael Shanahan	HD2664, HMP Stocken, Stocken Hall Rd., Stretton, nr Oakham, Leics. LE15 7RD
Barry Horne	HD2665, HMP Millers Park, Doddington Rd, Wellingboro', Northants, NH8 2NH
Mark Power	HP0606, HMP, Winson Green Rd., B'ham, B18 4AS
Hassen Sadelli	Prison St. Paul, 33 Ers Suchet, 69272, LYON, France (Letters in French)
Dave Nelson	A8030, HMP, The Maze, Lisburn, Co.Antrim, N.Ireland BT27 5RF
Alistair Mullen	A8028, address as above.
Graeme Campbell	A8029, HMP, Heydbank Wood, Hospital Rd., Belfast, BT8 8NA

Remand prisoners

Keith Mann	NE0316, HMP, Hornby Rd., Walton, Liverpool, L9 3DF
Vivien Smith	TT2743, HMP, Parkhurst Rd., Holloway, London, N7 0NU

Please write to these prisoners - they need our support. Remember, all mail is opened and censored

LEGAL NEWS

Most HOWL readers will be familiar with the horrendous violence regularly dished out to sabs by hunt followers. Every so often they attack the "wrong" person, however. One such unlucky character was Anglia TV reporter Graham Donaldson. Donaldson, weighing in at 11 stone, was attacked at a West Norfolk cubbing meet by farmer Mark Fuller, a trim 25 stone. Aside from assaulting Donaldson, Fuller also broke two video cameras and a van window. He has been convicted of Affray (section 3, Public Order Act) and three counts of Criminal Damage, and was ordered to pay £1050 (fines), £1463 (compensation), and £150 (costs) - a total of £2663.

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Readers with a long memory may recall the joint hit on the Surrey Union 18 months ago, which resulted in ten section 2 charges against various local sabs. The case was obviously an attempt to frame local sabs (one well known sab was positively identified and named by supporters despite not having been on the hunt at all!) since just about all other attempts at getting rid of them had failed, but sabs were determined to fight the case. With no sign of the defence crumbling, all charges were dropped with only a few weeks left to go before trial.

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Fans of the Old Surrey and Burstow are undoubtedly familiar with a jovial fellow called Nigel Trevithick-Wood. This genial chap always has a kind word or two to say to sabs. Most usually it's "scum" (through permanently clenched teeth) though he does have a slightly wider vocabulary, mostly of words which cannot be printed in a family magazine like HOWL. Aside from swearing at sabs, however, Nigel has recently been convicted of ABH and Affray. Joining him in the dock were Keith Banks (OS & B supporter) and Mark Bycroft, OS & B whipper-in. Banks and Trevithick-Wood received fines and suspended sentences and Bycroft was ordered to do community service.

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Remember HOWL cover-girl Steven Clifton? Ex-Isle of Wight huntsman? And his pal James Butcher, terrierman for the Essex and Suffolk FH? And their convictions for digging and attempting to take a badger? Do you also remember how they were going to "fight to clear their names" (i.e. appeal)? Maybe they weren't guilty after all. Maybe they only killed foxes. Well, they're not appealing. They're guilty. (That's all.)

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The New Forest FH has never enjoyed a particularly good reputation among sabs, but nevertheless it was surprising to hear about a hunt member attempting to hit a sab with a saw. Even more surprising was that the sab in question was then charged with ABH and Criminal Damage. Needless to say, the police did nothing about the man who started it, and who was in possession of an offensive weapon. Southampton Crown Court, however, took a rather more sensible view, and acquitted the sab on both counts.

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January the 11th saw southern sabs massed for a joint hit on the unruly New Forest FH. The day passed off successfully, and without any violence (since hunt folk only start fights when they're confident of winning). Unfortunately as the hunt ended there were sporadic outbreaks of scuffling, in which a terrierman managed to hit another terrierman (by accident) around the head with a chain. Extraordinarily, this was blamed on sabs, and one sab has been charged with GBH and section 2. At the nearby New Forest Beagles a sab was arrested for ABH and section 4, but charges were dropped.

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As usual the Northumberland Beagling Festival yielded a small harvest of section 5 cases. Perhaps the most ridiculous of these featured a Tyneside sab calling Newcastle and District Beagles secretary Ian "Sumo" Weir "a prat". Incredibly, this case actually made it to court. Less incredibly, the sab was acquitted. As the next day's Daily Mirror put it: "Official: this man is a prat". So now we know. (We already did, Ed.)

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The closing meet of the Croome and West Warwickshire FH saw the hunt living up to its violent reputation, and the police living up to the best traditions of British justice (Guildford Four, Birmingham Six, Judith Ward, and Tottenham Three), by arresting 35 (yes, 35) sabs for assault, Criminal Damage, and section 3 (Affray) - a total of 105 charges. Every single one has been dropped.

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The first day of the Shires Week last year saw a minor scuffle caused by supporter Gary Whelbrand. He stole and broke a sab's horn and then attacked a sab who picked up the mouthpiece. On that occasion he came off worse, when a hunt rider attempted to join in, but only succeeded in riding down Whelbrand. Undaunted, he attacked a Wolves sab at the Albrighton in October, fracturing his jaw and perforating his eardrum. HOWL is glad to report that justice has caught up with this violent thug: he was convicted of ABH and ordered to pay fines, compensation and costs. At the nearby Atherstone FH a supporter was also convicted and ordered to pay a £200 fine, £138 costs, and £60 compensation.

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Four members of the Portman hunt face various charges following an incident there in February. MFH Edward Lycett-Green, Patricia Harris, and Patrick Kelton Langdon have all been charged with section 3 and Criminal Damage. David Winder has been charged with section 3 and ABH. Local sabs say that this incident is merely the latest in a string of attacks by members of the Portman over the season.

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Vale of the White Horse FH whipper-in Matthew Calcott has joined the long list of hunt staff and officials who have been convicted in recent months. Wootton Bassett magistrates heard how Calcott smashed the windscreen of Oxford HSA's van at a cubhunt last October. Bill Reid, MFH, said that Calcott had been "provoked" - presumably by Oxford sabs skill in saving the lives of foxcubs. The magistrates took a dim view of Calcott's behaviour, and he was ordered to pay £130 in compensation and was bound over for a year in the sum of £100.

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A Norfolk sab lost his appeal against for Disorderly Conduct in January. Kings Lynn Crown Court heard that he had told the West Norfolk FH whipper-in that he "hoped he would have nightmares" after hounds allegedly killed a cat. Judge Peter Langham told the sab: "We are convinced you were abusive, and were quite aware that you were abusive. Even if hounds had killed the cat we are not prepared to see it as a reasonable response to use the highly abusive language which you did use." No action has been taken over the cat.

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South and West Wilts kennelman Jason Powell was sacked after being convicted of section 4 of the Public Order Act - in this case rocking a sab's car. Astonishingly the court gave him an absolute discharge. At the same hearing Powell also pleaded guilty to a charge of drink driving, for which he was fined £250 and banned from driving for a year. Now that he is on the dole perhaps he will join the HSA... Meanwhile, three more South and West Wilts supporters, Austin Gray, Andrew Whitlock, and Andrew Prater, are also facing section 4 charges.

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Yorkshire sabs have been pioneering anti-shoot tactics this season, saving more animals in a day than most groups do in a season. Unfortunately Yorkshire police seem to have only a rudimentary knowledge of the Public Order Act and the laws of trespass, and in consequence about 30 arrests have been made, in exceptionally dubious circumstances. Needless to say, no charges have been brought.

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The grass is always greener on the other side of the Irish Sea - if you're in Ireland, that is! English, Scottish and Welsh sabs have a fairly hard time of it with the cops, although things have been getting better - but Irish sabs have got problems completely outside of our league. [See article page 7] For a start, the police over there have got guns, and special emergency powers to stop and search. Then there's the fact that mostly they seem to be drinking pals of the terriermen. Anyone fancy a holiday?

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The Doddleston trial is finally starting just as HOWL goes to press. The 35 (approx) section 1 charges have now diminished to 14 section 2 charges. Seven other people have pleaded guilty to section 2, and two to section 4. HOWL still finds it absolutely disgraceful that the events surrounding the death of Mike Hill have resulted only in charges against animal rights activists. This is the last item in the Legal News column because we feel it sums the enormous gap between the British legal system and JUSTICE.

Jamie Hepbern

Convicted gamekeeper admits lying to police

On June 2nd 1992, gamekeeper Clifford Arthur Larter, 46, was found guilty of assaulting Oliver Bolam, a 21 year old Nottingham sab, causing actual bodily harm. During a two day hearing, Grantham magistrates heard a somewhat shoddy defence. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary, Larter maintained that it was his friend Dennis Jarman, a hunt supporter, who had actually struck the blow which broke Oliver's nose.

The incident occurred in August 1991 in fields near Court Leys Farm, Grantham. Sabs were out at 6.30 am looking for the Belvoir FH, when they were confronted by Larter and Jarman, who chased them in a pick-up truck. Fearing for their safety, the sabs scrambled through a hedge to get away. Before he could escape, Oliver was attacked by Larter who punched him in the face, knocking him to the ground. Only the intervention of two other sabs stopped Larter from throwing his weight around some more. The injury was treated at hospital.

The court heard how Larter, of Brownlow Cottage, Brandon Road, Stubton, Lincs., at first admitted the offence to a local policeman, boasting that he had punched Oliver and that there had been "blood all over the place". This was confirmed by eight witnesses who identified Larter as the assailant. However, after being arrested, Larter changed his story and implicated Jarman, of 2B Russell Ave., Balderton, Newark. Jarman appeared as a defence witness and claimed that Oliver had sustained his "scratch" when he climbed through a gap in the hedge, making it the first hedgerow in history to break someone's nose! The defence case was made more ludicrous when Jarman insisted that Oliver had wielded a five foot stick in a threatening manner. But according to Larter, there was no stick. In addition, hunt enthusiast Anthony Barker, of 37 East Street, Harworth, Notts., said that the weapon had in fact been a "lump of clay !"

Prosecuting, Ken Stanger accused Jarman and Barker of "making it all up" in order to protect Larter. The court agreed and Larter was fined £200 with £75 costs. Larter, who admitted lying to police, may also lose his firearms licence, and at the time of writing, Oliver is hoping to sue him for damages in the county court.

Surrey Union.case acquittal

The last week in May, saw Brixton sab, Jim Crow, found not guilty of common assault against our old friend Pru' Goodchild of the Surrey Union FH.

Originally Jim had been arrested and charged with ABH, but perhaps due to the contradictory evidence presented by prosecution and police witnesses, this was reduced to the lesser charge.

Reports have it that 'our' Pru' was at her most monstrously magnificent, hobbling in and out of court with her husband who unfortunately broke his leg at the Boxing day meet. All thanks also to a singularly stupid display by witnesses from the local constabulary who managed to. relate two different accounts of the days events.

Dorking magistrates managed to see through the hotch-potch of a case - Ruling; Not Guilty.

PUPPY WALKING

Well it's summertime again, with nothing to do but try and find those angling matches and elusive minkhunts. The thought of foxes are long away, banished to the back of the mind.



A Mansfield sab enjoying the art of dancing with Trollope of the Cottesmore in a hale storm.

Eastbourne Hunt Ball Defence Fund

Whilst hunts continue to be able to flout the law with impunity (witness the actions of Allan Summersgill), it is hunt sabs who face the full force of the law.

On Friday 31st December 1991, the East Sussex and Romney Marsh Hunt Ball took place in Eastbourne. What was a noisy but peaceful demo was turned by police heavy-handedness into a tense and frightening situation during which the police threatened and assaulted various individuals.

Four hunt sabs from Brighton were arrested, and held for 19 hours. They were then charged with various Public Order offences, including one who was charged with "assaulting a police officer" even though she received a broken nose and a black eye.

In court, the police admitted to compiling their statements together and denied incidents happened even though photos were produced which proved the opposite. In the face of this, it was no surprise that the three were found guilty and given fines and costs to pay. They have appealed against this, but need financial help to do so.

It is important that we don't let the police get away with criminalising our lawful activities and protests. Please support this Defence Fund.

Send donations/messages of support to:
EASTBOURNE HUNT BALL DEFENCE FUND c/o PO BOX 307, Brighton or

Brighton Hunt Sabs c/o Brighton Unemployed Centre, Tilbury Place, Brighton.

Those early mornings. Well, there is a way of helping to ease the pain of cubhunting, and that's to catch your favourite packs out puppy-walking. I firmly believe that we should improve our tactics with regard to this very important stage of hound training, and concentrate a lot of our time catching hunts puppy-walking. Sabbing them at this early stage will leave hunts vulnerable for the rest of the season. Using voice and horn calls on young and untrained hounds will confuse them greatly and break the bond between hounds and huntsman.....try it out this summer.

Love and happy sabbing,

Wayne
Nottingham

TACTICS

This will mean getting up early because the hounds will be walked early morning or late afternoon. The huntsman will be with his whip-in on push bikes to start with until June/July then they will be on horse. They usually take them out around the kennels, but if the area is bad around them then they box them up and take them to another area where there is less traffic.

You only need a car full of sabs to do this because there is usually only two or three of them. Follow them around the roads or tracks blowing the horn and using voice calls. As usual make sure it's safe ie. no moving traffic. By doing this you are breaking down the first start of their training.**Remember** they do this every day. Cameron [Tactics

LEGAL SURVEY

As those of you who are group contacts know, the HSA now runs a yearly Legal Survey. This survey charts how many arrests a group has had, what the arrests have been for, how many charges have been brought against group members, and what court cases (if any) the group has been involved in. Aside from the information it provides for the HSA (useful for HOWL, Sabbing Skills Days, etc) it also gives us unbelievably useful material from a media point of view. Never before had the HSA been able to provide large scale proof that sabs are the victims of repressive policing. And this year we are now able to compare this year's figures with last year's... once all the questionnaires have been returned: have you filled in yours? If not, get cracking!

As indicated above, this year's results have not yet been fully compiled. However, as HOWL goes to press, approximately 50 questionnaires have been sent in to the P.O. Box, and with these it is possible to see the thrust of this year's legal events.

The most striking change is the way many police forces have given up on section 5 and returned to that old chestnut Action Likely to Cause a Breach of the Peace. Last year's results showed the beginnings of this trend: out of 193 reported arrests, 46 were for Action Likely and 78 were for section 5, whereas in the years immediately following the introduction of the Public Order Act many forces went section 5-crazy, and abandoned BOP altogether. Now the situation is being reversed. Most areas have seen the majority of section 5 cases thrown out, and police forces in those areas are belatedly responding. This year's figures (so far) show that out of 185 arrests reported, 99 were for BOP while only 31 were for section 5.

The second obvious trend is the regional arrest tallies. Last year southern and south eastern England accounted for the vast majority of the arrests, with the four top-scoring groups all operating in the Sussex/Hampshire area: Brighton, Winchester, West London and Portsmouth. The last 12 months has seen Hampshire police in particular calm down considerably (although still top of the arrest league so far) while Yorkshire and Leicestershire constabularies have gone into overdrive. The high-scoring groups this year reflect this change: Nottingham 25, West London 18, Leeds, Oxford, and Birmingham 12 each.The next issue of HOWL will carry a more complete breakdown of the full results - meanwhile a big thanks to everyone who filled theirs in!

JAMIE HEPBURN



Hunt saboteurs too slow for the police Photo: A. Parker

DEALING WITH THE POLICE

The HSA's Legal Officer, Jamie Hepburn, has two main functions. The first is to keep track of all the court cases (sabs-v-hunt/ sabs-v-police/police-v-sabs/police-v-hunt) which are going on. He can only do this with your help! Please keep him informed via the P.O. Box of all of your legal business. The second is to provide sabs with solicitors and/or legal advice. Specific requests for information can be sent in to the P.O. Box - but here's something to be getting along with:

It's very rare these days for sabs to attend a hunt without seeing the police: you often spend as much time dealing with the police (or trying not to!) as you do sabotaging the hunt.

How not to deal with the police

The most important point is probably when you first meet them, because that will set the tone for the rest of the day. If they sense that you are easily bossed about, you can expect to be bossed about from that point on. At the other extreme, if they think that you are "bolshy" or are "giving them cheek" (favourite phrases with some of our local constabulary) then you can likewise expect heavy-duty policing. What works best in my experience is to be firm, but polite - and also to spend as little time as possible talking to them. If you feel that the "friendly chat" is being unnecessarily extended, to keep you from sabbing, then say goodbye and walk away. You cannot be detained against your will unless they arrest you. The officer in question may not be best pleased, but he knows your rights perfectly well, regardless of what he may say!

Section Five

Section 5 is still popular with police forces around the country, although they tend to be using it more as a threat than for actually arresting people. Section 5 is a complicated subject, and readers are referred to two articles in HOWL 42 and 44 (copies available from the office). There are a few things I would like to add to these articles, however.

First of all, you must have been warned about your conduct, and have continued despite the warning, in order to be arrested for section 5. Thus if the police say to you before the hunt starts (i.e. at the meet) 'we're warning you not to do such-and-such" that does not constitute such a warning, because you haven't yet done whatever it is they're warning you about. So the longer you avoid being warned after you start sabbing, the better. (Which is not to say that while sabbing you will necessarily be acting contrary to section 5, but it'll save you trouble.) However, they can send you a summons without having warned you - if they know your name and address.

As the current Legal Survey seems to show (see elsewhere in this issue for details) the police are gradually abandoning section 5 in favour of Breach of the Peace, and work is currently underway on a detailed study of BOP. In the meantime, if you are arrested for any of the versions of Breach of the Peace (or indeed anything else) please get in touch with the HSA, because there is a lot that we can do to help with your case.

Searches

This is a common tactic with one of our local forces, and crops up sooner or later almost everywhere else. In order to search a person or a vehicle, the police must have "reasonable suspicion" that you have drugs, offensive weapons, or stolen property. If they ever ask to search you (or a vehicle), ask them what they want to search for. Then ask them what grounds they have for their "reasonable suspi-

cion". With the above items, this question usually elicits a gruff "I've got my reasons" - because they don't have reasonable suspicion at all, they're just wasting your time. At this point you should tell them so, firmly and politely, by saying something like "you quite clearly do not have reasonable grounds, so you cannot lawfully search me". They may threaten to arrest you for refusing to be searched, but if they do arrest you, it is unlawful, and you can sue them for it. Generally, though, that is a bluff. (Incidentally, you are not "refusing to be searched", as they may suggest: you are quite prepared to be searched once they have provided justification.)

The other alternative is that they will tell you that they want to search you for hunting horns, sprays, etc. Tell them that such items are not "prohibited articles" under the terms of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act, and that therefore they cannot search you for them without your consent. They may then say something like "you used them to commit an offence". Ask them why they aren't arresting you for that offence: it's another bluff, because if they really believed that you had committed an offence they wouldn't be messing around arguing with you, they'd have nicked you for it.

Details (name and address)

The police can only take your details against your will in three circumstances. One, if you are the driver of a motor vehicle (but not if you're a passenger); two, if they've arrested you; three, if they have "reasonable suspicion" that you have committed a criminal offence - which does not include trespass. As with searches, ask them on what this "reasonable suspicion" is based. If it's nonsense, you do not have to give your details. Use your judgement!

RIGHTS ON ARREST

In practice, you have to tell the police your name, address, and date of birth. They may ask you all sorts of other things, including place of birth, age, height, weight, marital status, previous convictions, etc: you do not have to tell them.

You have the right to refuse to have your photograph taken. You also have the right to refuse to be fingerprinted, but they have the right to use force if you are going to be, or have been, charged with (or reported for) a criminal offence. From personal experience: I have refused twice, and once they let it pass, and once they used force. The latter is unlikely to be a pleasant experience.

You have the right to speak to a solicitor of your choice, and to have him or her present at any interview, unless the solicitor is based a ridiculously long way away. You should always exercise this right.

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest. If there's no one else you want to inform, inform the HSA's Press Officer.

Finally, and very importantly, you have the right to remain silent. You absolutely should exercise this right, and it is a lot easier to resist the temptation not to answer questions if you've got a solicitor sitting next to you. There are a number of tricks which the police use to get you to answer questions. A few of the more common ones are:

1. "If you've got nothing to hide, why don't you answer?"

2. "The sooner you co-operate, the sooner we'll let you go."

3. "We're just trying to sort out what happened."

4. The nice cop/nasty cop routine. One is angry and menacing, while the other one is all sympathetic. ("My daughter's a vegetarian"/"I quite agree with your aims"/etc.)

5. "Why aren't you answering questions?"

The simple answer to all these suggestions is "No comment": it will save you a lot of trouble in the long run. The police do not interview you to establish what happened. If they've arrested you, they're pretty sure about what happened. They do it to gather evidence, and that is all. It's no good thinking "I didn't do anything wrong, so it doesn't matter". Police interviews are designed to show you in the worst possible light. Remaining silent is the best defence.

NOTE. Legal talks and workshops are available at Sabbing Skills Days - has your region had one recently?



Gamekeeper surrenders at Throstle Nest Farm, Pocklington, January 1992. (Or he is making a futile attempt to keep back the rising tide of anti-bloodsport feeling...) Photo: A.Parker

GROUP NEWS

WALES

Vale and Valleys HSA have had a good season, mostly they've been joined by **Cardiff University** and **Newport** sabs. Hunts they sabbed include the Llangibby FH, Monmouthshire FH, Caerphilly & District FH, but most of the season has been spent with the Tredegar Farmers' FH. On Valentines day, a demo. was held outside the home of it's master and huntsman - Howard Jones. With the anti-hunt protesters outnumbering the hunt 3-1, the hunt cancelled apparently due to "foggy conditions". Strangely, no neighbouring packs were affected by these freak weather conditions, so sabs were able to move onto the Caerphilly and District who went home as soon as they arrived.

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Bangor meanwhile have been hoofing over to Cheshire most weeks to join North West sabs in their Cheshire campaign. If any sabs in North Wales would like a lift, Bangor would be more than happy to oblige, so get in touch. Back on their own turf, Bangor were joined by sabs from **Liverpool** and **Chester** in taking the Eryri. This pack's idea of hunting seems to be to let the hounds hurtle off from the meet whilst everyone else tries to keep up as best they can. Sabs managed this considerably better than hunt supporters who saw little or nothing of their hounds all day.

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West Wales based **Wild Animal Protection** have spent most of the season with the Towy and Cothi FH. In the company of Lampeter HSA, WAP have also sabbed the Goggerdann FH, Llanybri FH and St. Clears FH and have joined **Vale and Valleys** to sab the Llangibby FH and Tredegar Farmers FH.

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Aberystwyth have overcome transport difficulties to get out with various packs including the Llanunnen & District FH, The Vale of Clettur FH and a joint meet of the Curt-y-Cadno Farmers FH and Sennybridge Farmers FH which they stumbled across whilst looking for a beagle pack. not wishing to be accused of being picky, they tagged along with this lot but didn't have to do much as the hunt proved more adept at losing themselves than finding foxes. On the down side, 3 Aberystwyth sabs were beaten up (one sab was thrown over a fence) at the Vale of Clettur FH in February, and their vehicle chased for over an hour by disgruntled hunt supporters. The master, speaking to the local paper, denied all knowledge of any violence, but complained that "spectators with a different opinion our"(what?!) had run off with half the pack. Well really.

WEST MIDLANDS

Whilst Worcester have spent much of the season sabbing with **Cotswold(SW)**,

Wolverhampton, **Birmingham** and **Coventry**, concentrating on the Albrighton FH and adding to their already formidable troubles. In addition to public hostility and financial worries, the hunt have had to contend with a new huntsman who's said to be a little to fond of a wee drop, with predictable effects on his competence. West Mids. sabs have done their best to ferment these internal problems with tight-knit groups of sabs. The hunt have been unsure how to react. Running off is, as ever, a favourite, but disarray is also a frequent response. The huntsman took to attacking sabs even before the meet, trying to drag drivers out of vehicles following the hounds van. Still it must be difficult to keep your rag at that time of the morning with a splitting hangover. It's not just sabs who've been on the receiving end of his bleary eyed fury however, as the (now ex-) kennel man has spent most of the season wandering around Wolverhampton Job Centre!

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By the way of light relief, **Birmingham HSA** visited the somewhat less hectic North Warwickshire Beagles in November. After some initial attempts at intimidation by the huntsman, sabs found the hunt as chatty as they were incompetent. This was particularly true of the master who apparently gave up shooting for the privilege of seeing sabs continually taking his hounds.The season ended on something of a mixed note with the infamous Croome and West Warwickshire FH.

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Sabs from **Cotswold, Worcester, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Manchester** and **Liverpool** launched a joint hit called in response to increased hunt violence. Although sabs wrecked the days hunting and prevented any kills, they could not prevent hunt heavies going berserk. They laid into a large group of sabs with whatever came to hand. The police response was as even handed as ever, arresting 35 sabs (charges now dropped - see legal section), but taking no action against the hunt supporters who started it all.

EAST MIDLANDS

Lincoln sabs concentrated mainly on the Blankney FH and Burton FH this season with occasional forays to the Southwold FH. At the Blankney's opening meet, the hunt had an abysmal day, but unfortunately things were little better for sabs. After a chaotic police blockade, one sab was arrested just across the road from a wedding. Lincoln could be the first group to have an arrest feature on someone's wedding video.

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The Southwold FH's Boxing Day meet was attended by **Lincoln, Scunthorpe, Louth** and **Grimsby.** After a successful demo, sabs moved onto the hunt proper and stopped hounds on the only fox seen all day. The hunt were not terribly happy and packed up soon after. Van problems plagued the group in the latter half of the season, including a break-in and an uninsured, untaxed Blankney FH supporter broadsiding the van, writing it off.

Following the end of the season, there are now 2 groups in the area - Lincoln sabs and Lincs. Anti-Bloodsports Society, so next season should see even more hunts hit more often.

Meanwhile in the Shire counties, **Nottingham, Derby** and **Mansfield** sabs have been keeping the pressure on the country's elite pack. The Quorn hunt, already reeling from the LACS expose, were hammered by sabs on a regular basis. Sabs report seeing no kills all season, except for one at an invitation meet with the Belvoir FH. Old favourites the Cottesmore FH have not been neglected, with perhaps the most successful sab when they were invited to hunt the Quorn's Friday country. A joint meet of two of the country's top packs, TV cameras there to record this prestigious occasion and what happens? Hounds prefer to spend most of the day with the "bloody antis"! Not neglecting hare hunting, beagle packs including the North Warwickshire Beagles (see W.Midlands previous column) and the Oakley Foot, also suffered and several shoots were found and stopped. Nottingham and Mansfield rounded off the season with a visit to Fell week returning midweek for the regional hit on The Cottesmore FH.

This meet was to be joint master and huntsman Captain Brian Fanshawe's final days hunting and sabs from all over the E. Midlands plus several who came down from Fell week, teamed up to make it a day Brian wouldn't forget (however hard he tries). Sabs ran the hunt ragged and Capt. "fed-up" Fanshawe packed up before 3PM with no kills and in a fine old strop. Unfortunately, the hunt were very violent all day, one sab had his leg broken, and another suffered torn ligaments in his leg. Violence was not confined to the hunt, during an over-zealous arrest by Lincs. police, one of 4 sabs arrested, had his wrist broken.

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Huntingdon, Peterborough and **Melton Mowbray** sabs have spent most of the season together, visiting the Cottesmore, Quorn, Ledbury and North Cotswold FHs, Cambridgeshire Harriers, a few fishing matches and a shoot. However most effort has been concentrated on the Fitzwilliam FH, their boxing day meet at Peterborough showground saw a highly successful demo and sab. Two days later this hapless hunt discovered their "secret" meet wasn't as secret as they'd hoped, Sabs from Huntingdon, Peterborough and Northampton turned up to ensure a bloodless day. After all this and another good demo/sab on New Year's day, the hunt tried going underground, but to no avail, sabs still hit most of their midweek meets. Even off the field there was no rest, as it's master/huntsman James Barclay came off worse in a live radio debate with Huntingdon sabs on Valentines Day.

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Northampton HSA have spent much of the season going out with other groups in the region, but have had several successful expeditions of their own, mainly at the expense of local hunts (Grafton, Pytchley and Oakley FHs]. Perhaps their most notable success was the first ever joint meet of the Grafton and Pytchley. A very prestigious day with about 200 riders and over 70 vehicles in attendance. Unfortunately for the hunt, one of those vehicles contained sabs from **Northampton** and **Oxford**. sabs were joined for the day by a

German TV crew who may not have seen fox-hunting at its' best, but were certainly treated to some finer displays of sabbing. As the day wore on, sabs got more control, taking hounds, splitting the pack etc. with the hunt even abandoning coverts when sabs arrived.The final draw of the day was perhaps the best for sabs as persistent horn calls drew the entire pack out of covert. An enraged Pytchley whip could only bleat "You're not making any difference with all that racket you know." as he watched the entire pack being taken for a jog up the 2nd fairway of a nearby golf course.



A Yorkshire hunt sab retraining the pack. Photo A. Parker

YORKSHIRE

Sabs in Yorkshire region have been as active as ever making life thoroughly miserable for fox and hare hunts as per usual, and also stepping up activity against shoots on a regular basis.

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Sheffield HSA, despite the transport problems familiar to so many groups, have been out regularly not only on regional and national hits, but also against the more local packs including the High Peak Harriers, Burton, Blankney, Grove and Rufford and particularly the Badsworth FH. Over 10 years of constant sabotage has paid off on the Badsworth- no kills have been recorded and the hunt generally seem to be dismal.

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Huddersfield HSA have visited a whole host of packs in the area, including the Badsworth , Wensleydale, Middleton, Holderness, Bramham Moor, Grove and Rufford, York and Ainsty South FHs, DNS Beagles, Colne Valley Beagles, High Peak Harriers, Holcombe Harriers and regional hits to boot!

Leeds have managed to get at least 2 vans out every week taking in most local packs as well as sabbing in Cheshire, Cumbria and the North West later in the season. After one early season sab a police sergeant from Tadcaster explained his philosophy of unbiased policing as "We are here to serve the public in general, but not in particular." Puzzled sabs think this translates as "You're nicked", but possibly existentialism is being offered as part of Yorks. police night classes. Leeds managed to distinguish themselves on one of the regional shooting hits in January by driving up that muddy track everyone told them they'd get stuck on. Leeds however knew better and shortly after found themselves in the embarrassing position of paying a farmer £20 to tow them out, and it was his shoot they'd been sabbing that morning. They had the last laugh though as while they were floundering in the mud, 15 other sabs were busy getting arrested.

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Hull HSA have been busy keeping the Holderness FH busy all season, with the hunt changing their opening meet from Saturday to Friday. Unfortunately the price paid for effective sabotage was increased hunt violence, the new terrierman apparently gives fine displays of spade swinging and several attempts have been made at riding sabs down.

In late December, the hunt chased a fox across Humberside County Council land from which they were banned. They not only lost the fox when sabs split the pack, but the council are now considering legal action against the hunt. More grief on the horizon for the Holderness as the local police authority are said to have balked at an estimated hunt policing cost of c. £40 000 per annum. As in other areas of the country the police authority is considering making hunts pay the cost of their own policing much as football clubs have to. The difference being that whereas football is by and large popular enough for clubs to sustain the cost, many hunts could be put out business by such a bill for the Bill.

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York HSA saw the hard work put into the Middleton FH pay off with only 3 kills witnessed all season, 2 foxes from digs sabs couldn't stop due to lack of numbers and one cat when hounds rioted at Westow. The group have also been active with the York and Ainstey South FH. At one December meet, the hunt met had a drink and went home!. How's that for a group with a fearsome reputation? Unfortunately, one sab paid the price for the hunt's frustration on New Year's day when he was hospitalised after being hit round the head with a hammer. As a result, the next week sabs were out in force and the hunt heading home by 2.30. Over Xmas, the Radley College Beagles (an Oxon. school pack) were visiting during their hols. York HSA duly ensured "sport" was in short supply, despite unfestive hassle from local heavies (including one known apparently as 'Stormin' Norman"). The future Lord Middleton was so frustrated that he kicked mud at sabs! Well that should put them in their place.

3 consecutive weeks in January/February saw the Yorkshire "Shooting Days" with sabs from the region taking part in concerted action against shoots in the area. All 3 days were a great success with sabs closing down one shoot after another. 23 Yorkshire sabs were arrested, but they reckon it's a small price to pay for the hundreds of animals saved.

The final regional hit was in March. 60 sabs turned out against the Sinnington FH in response to the hunt's use of "hunt stewards" - 20 odd heavies empowered to throw sabs off the land using whatever means they see fit. This tactic was of little use to the hunt on this day however, as sabs took hounds in the early afternoon, and kept them until 6PM.

CUMBRIA

Cumbrian HSA, comprising groups from the **Workington, Carlisle, Lancaster** and **Barrow/Furness** areas have had a busy season with their local packs, often helped out by neighbouring groups.

Sabs opened the season in a flurry of press coverage with the Cumberland Farmers' FH who were to receive much attention throughout the season. A few weeks later after sabs had called and and run hounds at the Cumberland FH, supporters drove at them, forcing them them to take refuge in the van. Undeterred, the assembled Neanderthals tried running the van off the road. Fortunately the sabs escaped and reported the hit-and-run attempts to the police.

In late November, Cumbrian HSA joined sabs from **Tyneside** and the **Borders** to put a speedy end to two rough shoots and a pheasant shoot in the Hexham area.

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A busy day in mid-December with sabs from **Manchester, Preston, Liverpool** and **Tyneside HSA**. Starting off with the Cumberland FH sabs found the hunt at the third draw and promptly ran off with the pack. The hunt saw sense and called it a day. This left sabs free to move onto the Cumberland Farmers FH who must have been delighted as sabs found them trying to dig out and occupied the earth. After an afternoon of fruitless negotiation between sabs and police, darkness fell and everyone packed up with no kills.

In late December Cumbrian HSA split in two to take on two beagle packs. Whilst **Worthington** were keeping the black Combe Beagles busy, **Carlisle** were at the inept Cumbria Beagles. On the first sniff of a hare, the pack instantly split, and whilst a whip tried to regain one half of the pack, the huntsman



Sabs bring Colne Valley Beagles to standstill. Goatland hunting festival 1992.

tried to hunt with the other half. Tragically, he lost them again and his attempts to regain them were frustrated by the far more convincing sabs' calls. In mid-afternoon, huntsman and whip finally managed to reunite the pack and presumably not daring to find another hare, spent the rest of the day boring support and sabs alike.

In late February it was back to the Cumberland FH with sabs from all over the **North West**, plus a contingent from **Leeds**. The dozen or so members of the hunt were not in the least put out by this influx, and the only reason they packed up was because of the weather. (Oh yes!)

A good season for Cumbrian sabs and wildlife alike was topped off nicely with a successful fell week (see separate report).

TYNESIDE

Tyneside sabs have continued working closely with other groups in the region, concentrating on the Tynedale FH and gradually grinding them down. The Tynedale are now exhibiting many signs of a hunt in decline due to the persistent pressure of sabbing: huntsman Patrick Langrish spends most of his time searching for secluded spots where he can attempt to put his hounds to work. Sab free zones have been few and far between though. His only cause for celebration recently was the decision by the CPS not to bring charges against him for cropping Steve Purvis causing a wound needing five stitches.

Tyneside sabs have also been active in other fields, taking part in watches on badger setts when baiters have been rumoured to be around, and travelling to national events, including sabbing the Cheshire hunts on the anniversary of Mike Hill's death and Fell Week.

Saboteurs in the region are enjoying increasing support from the general public in the wake of the Quorn saga and the McNamara bill. This has been consolidated by the blundering of the regions hunts. The Border FH made regional headlines in March when their hounds tore up a fox on the doorstep of a house in the village of Noble Street. Local residents were up in arms, almost literally, one of them jumped in his car and confronted the Border's master and huntsman, Michael Hedley, and threatened to shoot any hunter that came onto his property. Hedley told local reporters that the hunt, "had lost interest in the fox and were trying to dig a hound out (trapped in a drain) when the fox bolted right in front of the hounds,and they unfortunately gave chase." So it seems,in Border country at least, that the pursuit of foxes by hounds is a result of misfortune, rather than deliberate intention. Tyneside will, of course, continue in its disruption of similar rural accidents occurring when groups of horse enthusiasts happen to be accompanied (coincidentally) by a pack of foxhounds.

NORTH WEST

North Western groups have been giving the Cheshire packs a very hard time of it this season and have had an excellent season, with virtually no arrests, but unfortunately quite a lot of hunt violence. Obviously, the infamous Cheshire Beagles have received a lot of attention, from **Liverpool** and **Manchester** sabs in particular. This pack have only managed half of their usual number of meets, reducing their tally considerably before sabs even started. When they do venture out, the mere presence of sabs has often been enough to send them scuttling back to the meet.[see article elsewhwere]. The Cheshire FH, one of our future monarchs favourite packs, have also been sabbed regularly for the first time in 7 seasons. Sabs have had some excellent days with this pack, much to the displeasure of their new huntsman who has apparently been a seething mass of frustration all season. The hunt have responded with the traditional cessation of advertising. The only noticeable effect of this has been to halve the size of the mounted field and considerably reduce the number of supporters. A round of applause to the genius who came up with this one as a method of fooling the anti's.

The Cheshire Forest FH haven't had the brightest of seasons either. After a dismal time cubbing they began meeting on alternate Fridays /Saturdays and even changed the time of the opening meet after a press release saying sabs would be there. Apart from such cunning ploys, their main tactic has been running away as fast as possible. This makes little difference to sabs who they can't shake off but it hasn't really improved the hunts chances of finding foxes. All in all, a bad season for the Cheshire bloodsports fraternity both on and off the field. Sabs have got excellent coverage in the local press including a phone poll in the Cheshire Chronicle in which several thousand voted against hunting and only a couple of hundred for.

However, this spate of activity in Cheshire doesn't mean that old North West favourites have been neglected. The Holcombe Harriers (described variously by local sabs as "basically crap " and "almost not worth the effort") have seen Preston, Bury and Darwin HSA out with them most weeks. Despite a few initial scuffles the hunt now seem resigned to not killing - after one incident, the hunt secretary handed over £100 to pay for a sab's glasses. The Royal Rock Beagles have been reduced to a state of nervous paranoia by Liverpool and High Peak Harriers being led by a sab

Manchester sabs with normally just one car-load enough to stop them.

North West sabs have also done their fair share of travelling, with **Preston** ending the season in Yorkshire, **Manchester** travelling to the High Peak Harriers and Fell Week, and **Liverpool** going to just about everything under the sun including Shire Week, Northumbrian Beagling Festival, Goathland Hunt Week, Alston Hare Week and Fell Week !

SOUTH EAST

As usual, South Eastern hunts have had a thoroughly miserable time of it this season, with the Surrey Union FH particularly hard hit. Poor old Pru and co. have had the dubious pleasure of visits from (amongst others) **North Downs HSA, Lewisham, Brixton, Brighton, West London, Chichester, Eastbourne** and the newly formed **South Downs**. Faced with this onslaught the hunt have developed "agents of



Sab leading High Peak harriers from their killing ground.

the landowner" tactics (ie. heavies with bits of paper) to work alongside the more traditional riding sabs down and running huge distances in an attempt to lose sabs. So keen are they to avoid sabs the opening meet was moved to a Friday - the only effect being that sabs could turn up to the Old Surrey & Burstow FH's opening meet also on Saturday! We can only speculate how pleased they were about the Surrey Union's "clever" trick. It certainly did the Union no good as sabs still turned out in force and ran rings around the hunt. This really set the scene for the rest of the season as sabs pulled hounds off fox after fox, ran off with the pack and occupied earths.

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That other traditional South East fave, the Chiddingfold,Leconfield and Cowdray FH would be in with a good chance in any future conversion to long-distance-riding-off-at-speed-in-a-desperate-attempt-to-lose-the-antis competitions. Keeping themselves fit with them have primarily been **West Sussex Wildlife Protection** (formerly Bognor & Chichester sabs) and the newly formed **South Down Hunt Sabs** who deny they are KGB funded but openly admit to being sponsored by instant tea manufacturers (well, obviously).However, the Chiddingfold have also seen sabs from **North Downs, Brighton, Farnham, Petersfield, West London, Eastbourne, Portsmouth and Brixton**. Sabs report the hunt now spend more time trying to deal with them than with foxes, which suits sabs fine, although keeping up with the hunt is exhausting them. Aside from the usual rent-a-heavy tactics to intimidate sabs, hunt master Jeremy Whaley has been straining his grey matter to come up with some new ideas. These include hunt supporters scrambling CB channels (mainly police/emergency channel unfortunately) and "confiscating" sprays etc. then complaining to the police when sabs try to retrieve them. However, Jem's piece de resistance was buying the junior Whaleys video cameras for Xmas, apparently the hunt now have several hours of excellent footage of sabs running off with their pack (and much good may it do them). This tactic became slightly less popular when sabs found out that Mrs Whaley had flown the family nest for another member of the hunt. They then greeted any appearance of the camera crew with police enquiries as to the whereabouts of their mother must have looked great on the video at home. The police seemed to have calmed down slightly and are no longer arresting everybody in sight, but sabs have still suffered from ludicrous arrests for hornblowing and even voice calls!

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Similar tales of woe can be heard from the Old Surrey and Burstow FH., another regular target of **North Downs, Brixton** and **Brighton** sabs. As mentioned earlier the Surrey Union generously held their opening meet a day early to allow sabs to attend the OSB's opener on the Saturday. Not content with entirely wrecking the days hunting sabs also put paid to a pheasant shoot they stumbled across during the day. Waiting for sabs to give the hounds back became a regular feature for the OSB during November and life did not improve as a result of 1st whip Mark Bycroft's absences throughout the season - sabs suspect he was busy doing his community service after being in court earlier in the season.

West London sabs have been as frenetic as ever, turning up just about everywhere and sabbing most forms of bloodsports, foxhunts, harehunts, deerhunts, shoots, etc. They also managed to attend virtually every week of action of any form up and down the country (Alston Hare Week, Northumbrian Beagling Festival, etc.). Early on in the season West London were frequent visitors to Hampshire FH. (HH.], a strong bond developed between the two sides with the discovery that both sabs and hunt had a token Welshman called Taff (mutual sympathy presumably). Later the Garth and South Berks FH. were frequent recipients of the group's attentions. Although perhaps not as amiable to sabs as the HH., the group still had plenty of good days with the Garth despite continual police harassment. The group were also active with the New Forest hunts, both foxhounds and buckhounds, as well as the regular South Eastern hunts. Further afield, visits were made to the Vale of Aylesbury FH., the Shrivenham Beagles and the Puckeridge & Thurlow FH. towards the end of the season in the company of **Milton Keynes** sabs when the hunt were split and spread far and wide. All in all, a stunning season for West London, particularly for the two members of the group who were knocked unconscious at various stages of the season.

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Meanwhile down in the wilds of **Kent, Herne Bay, Folkestone and Deal** sabs have had their best season in recent years with most attention focussed on the East Kent FH. and West Street & Tickham FH. Both hunts suffered heavily, in particular the East Kent who were wrecked week after week and deteriorated noticeably. In mid January the reaction came in the form of eight heavies armed with lumps of wood and all sporting balaclavas (obtained from their local animal rights surplus shop). Several sabs were badly injured and after a similar experience the following week at the West Street and Tickham, fed up Kent Sabs called a regional hit on the East Kent FH. Over fifty sabs from Kent, Surrey and various London groups turned up. After a difficult half an hour with several foxes afoot in a kale field (none of which the hunt could get due to some excellent sabbing) the hunt tried its best to outrun sabs. Fortunately sabs kept up well and a fantastic day was had at the hunt's expense. The heavies were not seen again. After a skills day in February the East Kent FH. were taken apart for the next six weeks, so the day really paid off.

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Further along the S.E coast **Hastings** and **Bexhill** HSA have been keeping up major pressure on the East Sussex and Romney Marsh FH. (they've been sabbed 189 times in the past three seasons!). Early on in the season a fox with hounds only fifty yards behind ran straight past sabs. They immediately obliterated about thirty yards of scent, stopped the hounds on the line, and then using voice and horn calls took the hounds and sent them straight back where



Clinkard beagles packing up early after being sabbed. Late January, 1992 Photo: Simon Wild



Yet another beagle pack stopped by hunt saboteurs

they came from. The huntsman meanwhile had come out of the wood to where his hounds had first gone only to find they'd been sent back. An hour or so later he'd got them back but the fox was long gone. Similarly in January a fox with hounds sometimes literally inches from its brush managed to get to earth and was saved by sabs taking the hounds well away. The hunt never even knew they'd marked to ground! Many other similar days of determined sabbing have meant a dismal season for the hunt, with loads of foxes saved.

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North Sussex HSA have been concentrating on the Crawley & Horsham FH. On Boxing Day a banner demo drew over a hundred people but unfortunately only three sabs went from the meet to the hunt proper. Nonetheless voice and horn calls were effectively employed at the first draw, with most of the pack coming scampering out. Unfortunately so hypnotic are N. Sussex calls they also managed to draw out a large group of heavies equipped with a variety of agricultural implements. Sabs were escorted back to the road with the words "We're just going for a little walk, there might be some fun later." This "fun" seemed to consist mainly of smashing a sab camera, but sabs still reckon that the day was an overall success.

SCOTLAND

Ayrshire HSA have spent most of the season keeping the Eglinton FH. busy, although at times the hunt seems to do a good enough job of sabbing itself. A fine example of their foot-shooting antics came at the end of December when the hunt rampaged through Eglinton Country Park. Families and walkers were forced to abandon the public path as thirty-six riders galloped along it. A fox found as the hunt left the park was saved by swift sab intervention as they called the hounds off. To add insult to injury a massive storm broke out over the hunt's invasion of the park with headlines in the local press and park owners demanding an inquiry which resulted in the hunt being banned from the park altogether. A Labour parliamentary candidate even went so far as to say "I am concerned that these people are able to run free in a public park all power to the hunt saboteurs."

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Clydeside sabs have been out with the Lanarkshire & Renfrewshire every Saturday since October and apart from two chops early on have seen no kills all season. Proving their taste for high drama, Clydeside managed to literally snatch a fox from the jaws of death after he had hidden amongst the hay bales in a barn. As sabs arrived the huntsman was whopping his hounds into a frenzy to seek the fox out and "rip 'im up". Whilst some sabs sat on the bales and pulled the hounds away, others went to get the van. The fox was found and taken in a rucksack to Hessilhead Wildlife Rescue Centre where it was treated for bite wounds. After a chance to recuperate the fox was returned to its home territory, to the delight of the farmer whose barn the fox had initially sought refuge in. He had demanded the hunt leave the fox alone but, ever sensitive to the wishes of the country folk and landowner, the hunt had ignored him.

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Borders HSA was only set up last September but has already made a flying start. They have targeted the Duke of Buccleuch's FH., previously only sabbed a few times in the past three to four years, now the victims of continual sabbing. In this Borders have been joined by **Edinburgh** who after the closure of the L & S have been able to turn their attentions elsewhere. The hunt, ever original, initially tried not advertising and then turned to running away in an attempt to loose the sabs. Neither tactic made much difference to sabs but lost the hunt supporter who wants to pay to watch a hunt disappear into the distance trying to dodge sabs? The intensive targeting of the Buccleuch is already making a tangible difference, sabs know of no kills above or below ground apart from one on Boxing Day. Edinburgh and Borders have also been out with the Jedforest FH., taking the hounds for hours at one meet when the hunt were out on foot due to bad weather. This was after packing up a pheasant shoot in the morning. A visit was also made to the Cumberland FH. with **Newcastle and Cumbria** sabs, where a semi-evolved supporter threatened an Edinburgh sab with an axe. Unfortunately for him she was a reporter from a local paper and the ensuing publicity, including photos of the balaclava'd loony in question, wasn't really the greatest PR coup ever for the hunt.

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Stirling, another group left looking for another hunt after the demise of the L & S, chose to turn their attention to the Fife FH. In November, after the whole pack had rioted through back gardens, the best the hunt secretary could manage by way of an apology to outraged householders was: "Sorry, forgot to let you know we'd be round here. I've been busy lately." Late in the month one fox hid behind a kale plant as the entire hunt passed a few feet away, while another stood behind a sab while he sprayed scent duller! On Boxing Day a fox that mysteriously "popped out" from amongst a group of supporters and terriermen quickly went to earth. Sabs took the hounds off then left two sabs to guard the earth which was enough to dissuade the terriermen who turned up shortly after from digging the fox out. Continuing their run of bad luck with dig outs sabs fetched police to a badger sett where hounds were still digging into sett entrances and the hunt were charged under the new Badger Act.

SOUTH WEST

Cornwall HSA have had a very busy season attending the Bolventor Harriers, the Cury FH., the South Cornwall FH., North Cornwall FH.,and the Four Burrow FH. All of these hunts had their opening meets sabbed and most suffered throughout the season, particularly the Four Burrow. The South Cornwall managed to improve enough from the start of the season when they were just plain dull, spending most of the day retrieving hounds from blank coverts, to be worth sabbing in January. Not that it did them much good as they now had to spend most of the day retrieving hounds sabs had taken instead of ones they'd lost themselves. Still, a change is good as a rest, eh chaps? Their neighbours in North Cornwall were just as amusing, providing sabs with a hilarious day out at the start of the season. First the Huntsman split his pack on a fox, taking 2 hours to get them back. After the virtuoso display he moved to the second covert, put his hounds in whereupon they promptly vanished. The only time they were seen by anyone for the next 3/4 hours was when sabs spotted them leaving a covert hotly pursued by a fox! Obviously these hounds haven't quite got the hang of things yet. When sabs eventually left at 5pm (they couldn't take any more) the huntsman and his whip were both calling hounds from a mile apart. Not surprisingly this was not overly successful leaving the huntsman with 2 hounds and the whip with one. The Four Burrow FH, although slightly more competent on their own account, have spent much of the season reduced to disarray by sab horn calls taking and running hounds. Although some of the support have started bringing iron bars out

they haven't yet worked out how to use them, so sabs should be safe for some time yet!

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Meanwhile just along the road in Devon **Plymouth, Exeter and Torquay** sabs have mainly been sabbing together this season and have targeted the South Devon FH, Spooners and West Dartmoor FH, Mid Devon FH, East Devon FH and the Eggesford FH. Sabs standing their ground paid off on the Eggesford FH when 2 terriermen plus a dozen or so assorted hangers on reluctantly abandoned a dig.

A successful Boxing Day hit on the Dart Vale and South Pool Harriers was somewhat marred by over enthusiastic policing as 11 sabs were arrested. However civil actions have been launched against the police so at least they've all got a holiday to look forward to.

Perhaps one of the more bizarre moments of the season came when half the Spooners and West Dartmoor FH pack rioted across an a road and were saved by some nifty sab horn calls. Nothing too unusual in that sabs often have to overt disaster in this way. The weird bit came in Master, Charles Doughey's comments to local press who said "The saboteurs blew their horns beautifully to get them (the hounds) away from danger... They (the sabs this time, not the hounds) were most helpful... and have a very good knowledge of the countryside... They use sensitive methods and exercise their God-given right to make a nuisance of themselves."



Oxford sabs escort dejected Four Shires bassets back to meet (once they've found all their hounds). 29th. February 1992

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North Dorset HSA have been incredibly busy this season making life a misery for local packs, primarily the Portman FH, for whom, by their own admission, Saturdays have been a "disaster". Mid-week hasn't been too hot either with sabs present at the bulk of their meets wrecking the hunt both on and off the field. In the latter category sabs have worked well with landowners to deny the hunt access to vital land, gained evidence of violated badgers setts(prosecutions are now pending), and vilified the hunt in the press.

The hunt haven't exactly helped themselves in this context with persistent attacks on sabs culminating in a vicious assault on both sabs and their vehicle in February. As a result five hunt members, including the master, have been arrested and charged (see legal section).

The South and West Wales FH played host to a regional hit in November and were reduced to a total shambles. Unfortunately this notoriously violent hunt, although prevented from killing, cropped a Bristol sab in the face and attacked 2 sab cars. One terrierman pleaded guilty to violent disorder and was sacked! - four others are awaiting trail.

Other foxhunts sabbed include the Blackmore and Sparkford Vale (frequently), the South Dorset, the Wilton, the New Forest, Beaufort, Avon Vale, Old Berks, Bicester and Vale of Aylesbury.

Beagle packs have also suffered - including one memorable day with the South Somerset who pleaded with 4 sabs to let them get their pack back so they could go home. The Pimpernel Beagles were sabbed several times towards the end of the season, with sabs from **Bath, Bristol and Bournmouth** joining **N.Dorset,** to ensure their final meet consisted of walking round 2 fields then going home. North Dorset have also been active against the Chilmark Beagles, Clifton Foot, Wiltshire Infantry and highly effective in regular sabotage of the New Forest Buck hounds.

Meanwhile the Beaufort FH were under pressure from **Bath, Bristol and Cotswold** sabs at the start of the season and consistent pressure was maintained on them all season, primarily by Bath but with Bristol frequently in attendance. One fine November Wednesday saw hounds taken off the only fox of the day and hounds scattered in all directions. In December the Duke's hounds spent more time with sabs than with the hunt and a dig, the hunt's best chance of killing, was brought to a swift end by sab intervention. Things did not improve for the Beaufort in January when sabs caught them illegally blocking badger setts. In March the Beaufort were at Bath HSA's "home" meets in Landsdown and thorough pre-meeting plus effective sabbing provided the group with good days. Even Capt Farquhar (master/huntsman) was sufficiently impressed to comment "well done lads!"

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Bristol were kept busy neighbouring Berkeley FH where some good days were notched up despite the hunt's over enthusiasm for riding sabs down . Bristol also had days out in the New Forest sabbing both foxhounds and buckhounds - in fact they made it to the buckhounds most weeks through out January and February. In February the group hit the headlines when a female sab was cropped in the face at the Beaufort after Prince Charles had opted for an early bath due to sabs presence.

Both **Bath and Bristol** kept local Beagle packs under pressure, particularly the long suffering Wick and District, although the Clifton Foot rated a close second. Near the end of the season a joint meet of the two hunts saw sabs from **Bath, Bristol, Cotswold and Oxford** in attendance packing up the Clifton Foot after only an hour in the morning and the joint meet proper in the afternoon fared little better. The Wick even changed their traditional boxing Day meet but to no avail as sabs from **Bath, Bristol and Cotswold** found them in the press.

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Cotswold HSA concentrated on the North Ledbury FH for most of the season, combining with Worcester sabs for some highly successful days - on one occasion hounds were split for 1 1/2 hours before the hunt had even left the meet! The Cotswold FH were hit at their opening meet and spent most of the day running not even pausing to talk to the assembled persons bearing witness to their humiliation. The Mendip Farmers FH failed to live up to their reputation - running 4 miles at their opening meet to escape sabs form Cotswold, Bath and Bristol. Following this line of revisiting supposedly psychotic hunts Cotswold Vale Farmers' FH joint meet with the South Hereford FH. The North Hereford FH spent 2 hours waiting for police and landowners to arrive but found this useless in the face of effective sabbing from Cotswold and Worcester.

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Wiltshire sabs have continued their tradition of sticking mainly to the hare hunts and sabbing in small groups, usually 4 or so sabs to a hunt. The Marlborough College Beagles remain firm faves, the boys now only hunt on a Saturday when they've got a joint meet. A little silly really as this only means they get humiliated in front of visitors instead of being embarrassed in private. The Shrivenham (RMCS) Beagles have gone from bad to worse - Wiltshire sabs major problem with this pack is collecting their hounds for them, although they're apparently a fairly affable bunch. The Wiltshire and Infantry advertised 4 meets but after sabs turned up and trashed the first one failed to turn up to the other three.

Mounted packs have not been neglected however with the Tedworth FH hit as regularly as ever. **Wiltshire** sabs have also poked their noses in on the Avon Vale FH and Old Berks FH, but perhaps their best day (certainly their easiest) came when the Royal Artillery FH turned up for a traditional Hunt Breakfast meets to find sabs already tucking in and bloodsports not welcome. Somewhat miffed the hunt promptly cancelled the day's hunting.

SABS REGION (SOUTH)

As ever the New Forest packs have come under considerable pressure this season. The Foxhounds have been sabbed mainly by sabs from the **New Forest HSA, Winchester,**

Southampton and Weymouth although other visitors include **Portsmouth, Portsmouth Anti-Bloodsports, Bournemouth, Reading** and at one stage or another most of the country on one or other of the large hits. There were several called throughout the season as a response to increasing violence from the hunt and more and more "boys" being drafted in. Although this has made sabbing inevitably more hairy, New Forest sabs are not intimidated and have kept chipping away week after week to detriment of the hunt's tally. The



Isle of Wight hunt terrierman waits patiently for sabs to be removed from fox earth. Photo: Glen Dawkins

Beagles also saw sabs on occasion, at one meet in December they packed up muttering about "inclement weather conditions" upon the arrival of Forest and Winchester sabs.

This season has also seen the first major concentration on the West Forest Buckhounds. Despite the obvious difficulties of sabbing this ludicrously fast hunt on foot many deer have been saved and now the Buckhounds have been "opened up" they will remain a regular feature of sabbing in the area. Thanks are due particularly to the **New Forest Animal Protection Group** who have enabled sabs on foot to keep track of the hunt, and also to sabs from South West region who have helped out throughout the season. The hunts opening meet was delayed considerably by a blockade and there were red faces a plenty as the hounds and staff turned up hours late.

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Farnham and Basingstoke HSA have had a good season with the Hampshire Hunt, taking hounds more or less at will. Hampshire police seemed to have calmed down a little, not surprisingly bearing in mind their attempt at a Guiness Book of Records entry for most civil actions for wrongful arrest, although they're still a little too fond of the magic "breech of the peace". Farnham also visited the Chiddingfold about half a dozen times with some good days with local sabs.

Basingstoke joined sabs from **Reading** to sab Clinkard Beagles and hunting on was used to good effect on several occasions. Reading were also out with the Surrey Union and other South Eastern hunts, as well as some closer to home.

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Portsmouth sabs' tally this season includes the Hampshire, Chiddingfold, New Forest FH, Meon Valley Beagles and Clinkard Beagles. However their main target has been the Hursley Hambledon FH which has stopped advertising and resorted to smuggling the hounds out of the kennels in an unmarked van. Portsmouth boast a "hard core" of a dozen sabs often using false trails in highly orchestrated sabs on the increasingly fed up Hursley. The hunt claim sabs are "totally ineffective" but were somewhat stumped to explain why, in that case, they'd stopped advertising.

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A new group, **Portsmouth Anti-Bloodsports Society**, has also started up in the areas which hasn't made life any easier for local bloodsports enthusiasts. So far the group has mainly sabbed the New Forest FH but excursions have also been made to the IOW FH, the Chiddingfold and the Meon Valley Beagles.

Meanwhile across the water **Isle of Wight** sabs have been going out regularly with the Isle of Wight FH of badger-digging huntsman fame.Despite the perennial transport difficulties faced by most sabs and substantial numbers of unpleasant terriermen (is there any other type?) Isle of Wight sabs report a good season of effective sabbing. Horn blowing within the group has improved with a consequent rise in the number of lives saved. Sabs have also been active in stopping dig-outs, a memorable example being at Gatcomb when despite police and terriermen attempting to pull sabs away, two foxes which gone to earth in a badger sett were saved. The group has also made good use of video cameras to expose the hunt in their true colours. Thus although sabs were unable to prevent a kill at Vernon Downs footage shown 2 hours later on TV generated considerable horror at the true nature of foxhunting. The body was examined by a local vet who revealed the fox had died of multiple injuries to the stomach not the "clean nip to the back of the neck" so beloved in foxhunt fantasy.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Island sabs had an easy start to the season when the North Down Harriers cancelled their opening meet at the last minute due to a "death in the family".

The Sunnyland Beagles (sounds like a Butlins pack) kept sabs busy throughout most of October. The hunts ingenious brainwave of running in one direction whilst various members of the local constabulary chased sabs in the other failed to prevent them losing hounds to sabs time and time again.In fact this tactic was so unsuccessful that by the end of the season the hunt had to sell some of their hounds as they were "so confused" (we think this refers to the hounds not the hunt).

In November attention switched to the Iveagh Harriers, much to the hunt's annoyance. Once again the heroic thin blue line were called in following a day at Shane Cracken when sabs removed hounds for most of the day. The following week the sabs' vehicle was blocked in by no less than five police cars and everyone was body searched and had horns confiscated.

On Boxing Day most packs in the region switched to drag hunting but the Mid Antrum Harriers stuck with their fine tradition of chasing foxes, hares and anything else that came to and. Even with 200 or so neanderthal supporters sabs wrecked the hunt, completely splitting the pack several times.

In February it was back to the Iveagh were sabs split the hounds so effectively the hunt had to give up chasing wildlife altogether, spending the afternoon instead on collecting their scattered hounds. At one of the Iveagh's final meets BBC Radio Ulster came out for some in-depth interviews, when the huntsman realised sabs were about he wisely decided to take no chances on losing his hounds. He did manage to keep them but was forced to keep hounds so close to him that he was unable to draw. Towards the end of what was in effect a prolonged walkies the hunt made the calamitous mistake of asking sabs for directions after getting lost in an orchard.

THAMES VALLEY

Milton Keynes HSA have had one of their best seasons for years with the group now on a secure footing thanks to an influx of regularly active sabs. The early part of the season was spent primarily with the Grafton FH who responded in typically imaginative fashion with heavies and, when that failed, running off to try and lose sabs.

After Xmas the group moved on the move to the Bicester and Whaddon Chase FH, the LACS Boxing Day demo at Winstow marked the culmination of their successful campaign to stop the local Trusthouse Forte hotel taking guests to the hunt. Local press came out with sabs on the Bicester shortly before the Bucks County Council debate and saw sabs from **Milton Keynes and Oxford** take the pack completely off the only seriously hunted fox of the day.

At the Bicester's final meet from Stratton Audley sabs, unable to wait for minkhunting to start, waded down a river to pile in on a dig-out. The hunt waited in vain for sabs to leave but eventually gave up and went home when it got dark. The following week, in the company of **West London** sabs were out with the Puckeridge and Thurlow FH. As a fox ran past the Milton Keynes van with hounds 40 yards behind, some timely voice calls split the pack far and wide. It's arguable who was more astonished the hunt or the sabs.

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Oxford HSA have had a good season visiting most of their local foxhounds regularly, particularly the Old Berks FH, and occasional forays

to beagle packs. In October **Oxford** and **West London** joined for a "we've just got £12,000" hit on the Old Berkely Beagles. Despite a large amount of hunt violence and totally over the top policing including the ubiquitous helicopter, sabs had a brilliant day.The season proper saw Oxford a little late at the Vale of Aylesbury FH's opening meet due to stopping to sab a duck/pheasant shoot. However sabs more than made up for this rudeness by running off with the pack every time the hunt chased anything. The Old Berks fared little better at their opening meet the next week, spending most of the time shuttling between 2 groups of sabs who had much fun sending hounds to and from each other. Another highly successful New Years Day demo in Thames against the Vale of Aylesbury FH saw around 200 local people out, relegating the hunt to meeting behind a shed as there was no room in the square. A successful sab followed, not only were all hunted foxes saved but sabs from Oxford and Milton Keynes caught a ferreter with 7 rabbits. He was sent scuttling home and the bunnies scampered off to safety. The Old Berks FH proved their capacity for shooting themselves in the foot in January when having had 2 hounds killed on the railway line they attacked sabs, riding one down, punching another to the ground and threatening the indomitable "sabbing reverend" with a shotgun. Another hunt undeterred by a dog collar are the Bicester and Whaddon Chase FH. At one of their meets in March a rider dismounted and flew at Britain's' only ordained saboteur, Rev Bert Jones, punching him several times before other sabs intervened. Bert was not put off though and plans to carry on helping save wildlife no matter what the intimidation.

`Oxford University's Beagles, the Christ Church and Farley Hill, have proved strangely coy, either staying in the pub or heading for home as soon as sabs turn up. The Four Shires Bassets have been altogether more sporting, providing sabs with good days at the start and end of the season, the latter seeing local sabs helped out by the "Wiltshire Wheelchairs".

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A welcome new addition to the scene are **Chiltern HSA.** Formed towards the end of the season the group has already notched up some notable successes, mainly with the Vale of Aylesbury FH. In early March sabs out with the hunt at Coleshill saved all foxes hunted but could do nothing to save a muntjac that hounds ripped apart on a common, an unofficial wildlife sanctuary. The death was not in vain however as the hunt have, after a petition from outraged local residents and much adverse publicity, agreed not to hunt the common again. Later in the month sabs split into a foot and mobile group for the difficult country of Tarville meet. This proved highly effective - only two foxes were seen all day and both were saved at by saboteurs intervention. The mere presence of sabs at the the hunt's final meet was enough to dissuade the hunt from digging out - an excellent end to the season for a new group! All in all the future looks bleak for the Vale of Aylesbury FH but bright for wildlife as Chiltern HSA promise to be around for years to come.

EAST ANGLIA

Colchester, Halstead and Sudbury sabs have concentrated their efforts on the East Essex FH this season to great effect but have not neglected the Essex FH or the Essex Farmers and Union FH. A good day was also had at the expense of the Essex & Suffolk FH with the hunt abandoning a dig just because of the sab presence. Persistent sabotage of the East.Essex FH has definitely paid off with the hunt resorting more and more to dodging sabs or calling in their tame mounted copper. Sabs have also found some unlikely allies resorting to methods not usually recommended in the tactics book - on Xmas Eve a farmer who was less than happy about the hunt stomping across his field fired his shotgun in the air, splitting the pack most effectively. At this point the hunt retreated in disarray (not to mention object panic) and abandoned the cover they'd planned on staying in all day. After Xmas Essex sabs switched around more as the East Essex FH were getting to the point where it wasn't really worth sabbing them. This meant more grief for the Essex FH and the Essex Farmers & Union FH. This latter proved to be highly violent with a continual undercurrent of threats finally culminating in a vicious attack on sabs by both terrier thugs and mounted field. One sab was knocked unconscious and others received some nasty injuries - police are now investigating.

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Meanwhile on the borders of the county **Herts & Essex HSA** overcame severe transport difficulties to get out with the Puckeridge & Thurlow FH at the start of the season and the Essex FH after Xmas. At one Puckeridge & Thurlow meet a successful pre-meet meant the hunt did not even bother with one well foxed cover. Later in the day hounds were stopped on the only two foxes of the day, then as the hunt entered the next cover from one side, sabs and hounds were leaving from the other end !

The Puckeridge & Thurlow have also had visits from the neighbouring **North Herts HSA**. They report the hunt seems to be sliding steadily downhill. However their hospitality is as good as ever - at one February meet sabs were included in the dishing out of the stirrup cup.

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Norwich HSA have had their busiest season to date, taking in the Dunston, North Norfolk and Waveney Harriers, Norfolk Beagles, Essex Farmers & Union FH, East Essex FH, West Norfolk FH and several shoots large and small. This surge in activity was reflected in increased media coverage which has itself paid off - over 100 members of the public joined sabs on Boxing Day at demos against both the North Norfolk Harriers and the Waveney Harriers. The West Norfolk FH, target of the most intensive pressure, have more or less given up on digging out when sabs are present. Many memorable days have been had at their expense including the day when the fox broke right past sabs - half followed covering its scent, whilst the remaining sabs stopped hounds and sent them straight back to the huntsman. He then obligingly cast his hounds in entirely the wrong direction, ensuring the fox was free and away. The West Norfolk proved equally adept at sabotaging their public image. Sabs gained much positive publicity from the press coverage of the trial of hunt supporter Mark Fuller, a timid little 6' 6, 25 stoner. Mr Fuller, who according to his father can lift a 12 cwt cow under one arm, attacked a TV reporter and smashed his camera before smashing a sab's video camera, ripping van wing mirrors off and smashing a window. In his defence he said "I did not want to be on film so I took the camera and broke it in half." In court Mr Fuller was described variously as "like a rabid Rottweiler" and "a gentle giant". Sabs with experience of large, enraged hunt supporters can take their pick.



Another hunt stopped by the North Downs HSA. Photo: Cowslip

Cambridge HSA meanwhile have been piling the pressure on the Cambridge FH, sabbing more or less every meet this season, apart from a joint meet with the Oakley FH which was covered by a map colouring contingent from

NOTICEBOARD

Bank of Scotland

Spring saw the launch of the new BASC MasterCard issued by the Bank of Scotland. The full benefits of which will only be reaped by the BASC when members use their card for everyday purchases. This providing a long term income that they intend to spend on Youth, Schools and Training programmes.

The Bank of scotland for their part have 'generously' decided to make a donation to the BASC every time a card is issued and first used. Whilst this will probably not make a great deal to the overall total generated it is a clear indication from the Bank of Scotland that they support the killing of animals for entertainment and are willing to make financial contributions to fund such activities.

Wild For Life

Contrary to what was printed in the last HOWL work has now been completed on the Mike Hill benefit album. Due to financial problems concerned with the production of the benefit I have decided to produce it only on cassette for the moment and I will look at the financial situation again later on in the year with a view to production on vinyl.

Bands included on the benefit include :- Citizen fish, Mass, Dr and the Crippens, Foreheads in a Fishtank.

(See advertisement in HOWL for full details)

Badger Baiting /Dog Fighting

We are currently renewing our campaign against illegal bloodsports. Anyone who any information on badger baiters/diggers, local badger groups [as to whether they are pro or anti-hunt], dog fighters, cockfighters, quail-fighting or press cuttings etc. Please send to our P.O. Box.

Vegan Festival

The sixth International Vegan Festival. This event will be a combination of conference and holiday, and will include lectures, workshops, videos, games, yoga, folk-singing and dancing, visits to places of interest and more! it will take place at a vegetarian yoga centre 1/2 hours train journey north of London.

All participants including day-visitors must book in advance. The cost will be between £140-£225 for the full week. Places are limited, especially residential ones. For further details send SAE to :

SIVF 1992 (Ref. HSA)
29 Hill View Road
CHELMSFORD
Essex CM1 5RS

Hounds off our Wildlife!

Enclosed in this HOWL is a petition organised by Hertfordshire Animal Rights Campaign. This petition is to the Forestry Commission calling on them to ban hunting on their land (2.9 million acres including the New Forest). Such a ban would force a number of hunts to close down immediately.

Any sab group collecting signatures is welcome to keep any money collected for their own use.

There is also a national demo in support of the campaign, on 17th October in Bedford. Meet at Russells Park, 12-12.30 pm, and then march to a rally at St. Peter's Square at around 1.45pm.

For further details write to H.A.R.C. at
P.O. Box 66
Broxbourne
Herts

Or leave a message on their 24 hour answerphone : 0426 911785

HUNTSMANBALLS

'When one of Mr Bailey's pack reaches retirement age, usually about five years old, he shoots it and feeds it to the others. This practice, according to a hunt aficionado, is apparently to "give the hound one last run". In the stomachs of his chums'.

Jim White on the VWH, Independent 14/2/92

'We coarse anglers have no desire to kill the fish we catch. We like fish. We enjoy the time in pursuit, we thrill to the bite and the playing of the fish, we hold it in wonder for a few fleeting seconds and then put it back, pleased to see it swim away none the worse for its experience'.

Andrew Young, angler, Weekend Telegraph 15/2/92

'Most of the residents came out to see us off'.

Ray Longster, master, Holcombe Harriers, after villagers organised a petition to get rid of his hunt. Rossendale Free Press 15/12/91

'If hunting were banned, what would happen to all those highly charged women who follow the hounds just to gawp at men in tight trousers? We already have quite enough trouble with wife swapping parties around here. Things could get quite nasty.'

Andrew Johnstone, hotelier, Daily Telegraph 9/1/92.

'The Tory Party really came into its own today. At last we saw the gentlemen of England in full cry, and really splendid they looked'.

John Stokes MP (Con. Halesowen) after failure of McNamara Bill, Independent 15/2/92

'Because there is beagling in Cheshire, we are fortunate in having a healthy hare population. Stopping beagling could lead to a rapid decline in the hare population'.

Charles Hardy, joint master, Cheshire Beagles, Chester Chronicle 15/11/91.

'The (council) Leader pointed out that without hunting the New Forest would not exist'.

Report on hunting ban debate, Romsey Advertiser 10/1/91.

'Who are the thirteen moral cowards who sat on the fence and ignored the will of the people? They should stand up and declare which side they are really on, the civilised majority or the uncivilised minority'.

Rev. David Penney, after 13 councillors in Salisbury abstained in a vote to ban the Wilton FH from the city centre, Avon Advertiser 15/1/92

'Your typical sab *is* a left wing vegan who hates rich people. But forget any notion that he or she is violent. Most of them would need to do weight training to open a crisp packet'.

Jules Stenson, Swindon Evening Advertiser 6/2/92.

'There was a couple of sheep there and I think they just popped over the edge. I can't dispute it but I can't back it up. They could have been down there grazing'.

Gerald Dawe, secretary, Ledbury FH, after his hounds chased two sheep over the edge of a quarry onto a narrow ledge and they had to be rescued by the fireservice., Worcester Evening News 18/2/92

'In reality, the activities of the animal rights activists have no more to do with the genuine welfare of animals than the welfare of the workers had to do with Soviet Communism'.

Sir Stephen Hastings, The Field, April 1992

'I am not racist. I just don't like being told what to do by those bloody blacks'.

Rose Whitcombe, joint master, Ytene Mink Hunt.

'That's the trouble with you constipationists, you want everything your own way'.

Rose Whitcombe (again)

'I'm quite probably impotent.'

Paul Davis, Oxford HSA, whilst addressing a public meeting.

CLUB DRAW PRIZES

The following were all lucky winners in our Club Draw. Why not join them? It's an excellent way of helping the HSA and winning some cash.

Dec.	Jan.
(1) S.Davis	(1)M.Coward
(2)A.Kelly	(2)L.Breeze
(3)D.Wilson	(3)M.Maas
Feb.	**Mar.**
(1)C.King	(1)K.Pritchard
(2)B.McEwan	(2)K.Gillard
(3)F.Marshall	(3)C.King

April
(1)V.Preddle
(2)C.King
(3)A.Hampton

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