



HISTORY OF GREYHOUND RACING IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Overview

Greyhound racing in New Hampshire began in 1972, when the Hinsdale Raceway on the Vermont border added a dog track to its existing harness-racing facility. In 1973 Seabrook Greyhound Park, located on the coast near the Massachusetts line, opened as a track devoted exclusively to dog racing. A third track, The Lodge at Belmont, opened in 1975 as Berenson's Belmont Greyhound Track.



Seabrook was the largest of the three tracks. It was a class A track, meaning it was among the tracks offering the strongest competition and highest purses. Seabrook was founded by members of the Carney family, who have been heavily involved for many years in both horse and dog racing in Florida and New England.

Hinsdale was a smaller track in the western part of the state. It began as a harness-racing facility, but in 1972 the owners installed a heated greyhound track, allowing them to stage live greyhound racing in the colder months while they continued harness racing in the summer. Harness racing ceased altogether in 1985, and year-round greyhound racing became the sole attraction.

The Lodge at Belmont (originally Berenson's Belmont Greyhound Track, later Lakes Region Greyhound Park) is located near Laconia. The most marginal of the state's three dog tracks, Berenson's was sold in 1991 to Allan Hart and two partners, who changed the name to Lakes Region. In 2005 General Manager Richard Hart and Assistant General Manager Jonathan Broome were arrested for their role in an illegal gambling business and money laundering scheme. The Hart family met and agreed to accept bids for the racetrack. The track formally closed in April 2005 and was sold to David Johnston and Christopher Gistis. In June 2005 Belmont resident Randall Noe was arrested on charges of running a drug trafficking ring and laundering the profits through gambling at Lakes Region Greyhound Park. Following the arrest, David Johnston's partners withdrew from ownership, and Johnston announced that he was transferring his rights to casino investor Marlin Torguson. In June 2006 the track reopened as The Lodge at Belmont, featuring new restaurants and amenities.

While the tracks initially prospered, they soon fell on hard times. In response, the New Hampshire Legislature repeatedly tried to prop up the racing industry. When New Hampshire approved a state lottery, it awarded the tracks a portion of the profits to subsidize special races. Permission to begin simulcast gambling (video viewing and wagering on greyhound and horse racing nationwide) was granted by the Legislature in 1990, with the condition that the tracks continue to offer live races. Also, to further help the ailing tracks, lawmakers passed laws allowing rebates on wagers (banned in 1996, reinstated in 1998), decreased the tax the tracks pay on simulcasting (1995, 1996); and gave the industry a \$2 million annual tax break (1997).

But what the industry and its allies always really wanted was more gambling at the tracks. Beginning in the mid-90s track owners asked repeatedly for video gaming machines to be added to the existing mix of simulcasting and live racing. In 2002 several bills to expand gambling, including one that would have allowed

video gaming machines at the tracks, were defeated separately in both houses. In 2003 another video gaming bill was introduced in the Senate, but it died in committee. A similar effort to legalize slot machines at the racetracks was defeated in 2009.

Despite these attempts to resuscitate the industry, the amount gambled at local tracks steadily decreased: In 1975 the four racetracks (including the thoroughbred track) yielded \$16 million in state revenue, but by 1995 the figure was down to only \$5 million and still falling. Attendance at live greyhound racing also continued to plummet, and only simulcasting kept the dog tracks alive.

Early attempts by humane advocates to bring about legislative changes were not successful. In 2000, State Senators Sheila Roberge and Katie Wheeler filed a bill to end live greyhound racing while allowing simulcasting to continue. When it became clear that the bill would not pass, the sponsors attempted to amend it to discontinue the state's practice of using nearly \$325,000 in Sweepstakes money annually to augment racetrack purses. Nevertheless, the measure was defeated.

Beginning in 2004 however, fortunes turned for humane advocates and they were able to successfully pass several legislative reforms that improved the lives of racing dogs in New Hampshire and eventually led to the end of live racing. In 2004, lawmakers passed a requirement that the state keep records on greyhound injuries, ensuring that this data become public for the first time. The new records showed that from 2005 to 2008 nearly 1,200 greyhound injuries were reported at New Hampshire racetracks.

In 2006, lawmakers finally eliminated the \$325,000 annual subsidy provided to racetracks from the Education Trust Fund. In 2007, lawmakers eliminated a similar subsidy by requiring that racetracks pay the cost of drug testing for racing animals. In 2008, the legislature passed a law that brought greyhounds back into the anti-cruelty law after being excluded for several years.

During this contentious period, the tracks continued to experience a severe economic decline. In 2007 Hinsdale announced plans to end year-round racing, conduct only seasonal racing and focus on simulcasting. In December 2008 the owners declared bankruptcy and the track closed.

Meanwhile, in 2007 lawmakers filed a bill to phase out dog racing completely. Armed with new data on problems within the industry, proponents argued that dog racing is cruel and inhumane. After a robust debate, the measure was defeated in the House by a vote of 198-138. At the same time, a competing measure narrowly failed that would not have prohibited dog racing, but instead given the racetracks the option of conducting live races.

In 2009, lawmakers again filed a measure to prohibit dog racing. The bill was referred to a committee and given a public hearing. Afterward, the committee held a tense work session in which a motion to pass the bill failed by a single vote. Unable to reach a consensus, the committee voted to retain the bill, ensuring that a full debate would not take place until early 2010. At the same time, a competing measure was filed by a lawmaker at the request of racetrack lobbyists to allow simulcast gambling without live racing, and also resurrect Hinsdale Greyhound Park. Humane advocates opposed this bill and it was overwhelmingly defeated.

While humane advocates waited for a full debate on their proposal to end dog racing, lawmakers working on the state budget were alarmed to learn that the state was now losing money on live dog racing. To address this problem, House budget writers proposed a new law that would require that racetracks cover the cost of their own regulation, and would also allow them to conduct simulcast gambling without live racing. This proposal passed the House, but stalled in the Senate. After lengthy negotiations, the final budget changed the law to allow tracks to simulcast without live racing, but did not require them to pay for the cost of their own regulation. However, the identical result was achieved in another way because the state budget did not include funding for the regulation of live dog racing in 2010.

In July 2009, shortly after the passage of this new budget, New Hampshire's remaining two greyhound tracks, Seabrook and The Lodge at Belmont, announced that they were ceasing live dog racing, and greyhound racing ended in the Granite State.



NH lawmakers in session, 2010

Humane Issues

- **August 1991**

Laconia dog handler Costas Galionis is convicted of cruelty to animals after five greyhounds confined in the cabin of his pickup truck on a blistering hot day die of heatstroke.¹

- **October 1991**

Alerted by complaints from several sources, Chuck Laurent of the New Hampshire Humane Society visits kennels at Berenson's Belmont Greyhound Track and finds at least 20 greyhounds in one kennel suffering from severe tick infestation. He informs the state veterinarian.²

The annual "October Massacre" at Berenson's Belmont, when hundreds of unwanted greyhounds are put down at the end of the racing season, takes place. Adoption groups say that more dogs have been saved this year, but no one knows how many were killed.³

- **Summer 1992**

Greyhound kennels across the nation are hit by a respiratory disease which if untreated progresses to a lethal pneumonia. New England tracks are hit first and quarantined, but dogs shipped south before the quarantine infect greyhounds in Florida. Kennels in Arizona, West Virginia, Kansas and Alabama are also infected. At Seabrook 350 dogs are ill and 3 die. Half the dogs at Lakes Region are stricken, but the track

¹ *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Martin Basch, August 16, 1991.

² *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Roger Amsden, October 10, 1991.

³ *Boston Globe*/Larry Tye, November 9, 1992.

is slow to report the problem. The state veterinarian says, "I don't know if they didn't want to call me or didn't want to tell me the truth. I don't know if anyone lied to me." A trainer reports hearing the track's racing secretary say, "We don't want the public to know."⁴

- **November 1992**

Lakes Region trainer Shawn Beauchesne is suspended for a year and fined \$200 for taping a dog's mouth shut for five hours because it was whining. The dog subsequently raced, shattered its foot and had to be euthanized. Beauchesne denies that he taped the dog: "I got stiffed," he says.⁵

- **July 1993**

Dr. Clifford W. McGinnis, state veterinarian, says he is "comfortable that the greyhounds are receiving proper care at New Hampshire's three tracks," despite having received complaints from concerned citizens and animal rights groups about substandard kennel conditions, cruel treatment, and dogs killed because they fail to win or are sick, injured or old. In a tacit admission that dogs are being killed, he says "there are simply too many greyhounds and not enough homes for them."⁶

- **August 1993**

A persistent group of demonstrators has been holding vigils outside the Hinsdale Greyhound Park all summer. On August 14 they stage a mock funeral for all the dogs that have been killed since Hinsdale opened its greyhound track. David Calef, public relations director for the track, defends the track's efforts to place adoptable dogs; but in a rare moment of candor he admits that 200 greyhounds were destroyed at Hinsdale in 1992 and that in previous years dogs have been sent to laboratories to be used for medical research.⁷

- **December 1995**

Eight greyhounds are rescued in Sainte-Sophie, Quebec by Louise Coleman of Massachusetts-based Greyhound Friends and Canadian activist Linda Miranda, with the help of the local police. Emaciated, dehydrated and shivering two-to-a-cage in an unheated shack, the dogs are former racers from the Lakes Region Greyhound Track. They have been given or sold (accounts differ) to a Canadian dog breeder, Richard Valiquette, who intended to crossbreed them with huskies to create a faster racing sled dog. He admits he has been crossbreeding greyhounds and huskies for several years, even though the majority of the puppies die. Because the trainer transferred the dogs without the consent of their owners, Coleman files a civil suit and is eventually able to obtain their release. All the greyhounds, including one crossbred puppy, are placed in adoptive homes.⁸

- **Sept. 1996**

Two town wells in Seabrook are permanently closed because of E. coli contamination. The cause is not officially known, but the resulting publicity reveals that from the early 1970s the site, adjacent to a swamp, was a burial ground for surplus greyhounds from the track. Resident Blanche Bragg says that the town pound was paid by the track to dispose of up to 1,000 dead dogs. Water Superintendent Warner

4 *Greyhound Network News*, Fall/Winter 1992; *Boston Globe*/Larry Tye, November 9, 1992.

5 *Boston Globe*/Larry Tye, November 9, 1992.

6 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Al Nettel, July 27, 1993.

7 *Greyhound Network News*, Fall 1993.

8 *Montreal Gazette*/Aaron Derfel, December 20, 1995; *Concord Monitor*/Ann marie Timmons, January 11, 1996; *Greyhound Network News*, Spring 1996.

Knowles doubts the number was that high but recalls exhuming 35 dog carcasses in the 1970s and reburying them in a drier area.⁹

- **May 1999**

Beginning in Florida and rapidly spreading, a lethal combination of kennel cough and streptococcal toxic shock sweeps through greyhound kennels nationwide. Live racing is suspended in New Hampshire and across the country. At least 13 dogs die at Seabrook.¹⁰

- **October 1999**

Following the end of seasonal racing at the Lakes Region track, a truck transporting 8 greyhounds south overturns in Georgia on October 30. The driver had fallen asleep at the wheel. The dogs, confined in cages in a trailer, were unhurt and were released to greyhound rescue organizations.¹¹

- **September 2002**

Greyhound Sav's Wilson Lee ("Willie") collapses after racing at Hinsdale and dies shortly afterwards. An autopsy performed by Dr. Jill Hopfenbeck reveals that Willie was anemic and had multiple fibrous growths, two collapsed lungs and massive internal bleeding that had been ongoing for at least seven weeks. Hopfenbeck files a complaint against the track veterinarian, Dr. Carl Nelson, for allowing Willie to race despite obvious symptoms of severe and prolonged illness.¹²

- **February 2003**

FOX News airs an investigation by TV reporter Mike Beudet into allegations that large numbers of healthy greyhounds have been killed and buried at Hinsdale Greyhound Park. GREY2K USA board member Dr. Jill Hopfenbeck is featured on the program and displays skeletal remains of greyhounds found on the site. Visibly distressed, former Hinsdale trainer Wayne Paquette describes having seen adoptable dogs being killed: "They would take these dogs out of the truck, and their tails are wagging, they're so happy because they think they're going to the races, and they just walk them right into the shed, put them right to sleep, pull their muzzles off, collars off, and just pile them in a bucket, just like trash." Hopfenbeck says she believes thousands of greyhounds may have been buried at the track over the years. The Hinsdale operations manager admits that some dogs have been killed, claiming they were "sick, injured (or) overly aggressive." He refuses to reveal records of the disposition of retired dogs. Eventually he does disclose that 68 greyhounds were killed in 2002.¹³

- **2005-2008**

Between 2005 and 2008, nearly 1,200 greyhound injuries are reported at New Hampshire dog tracks. These injuries include dogs that suffered broken legs, paralysis and head trauma.¹⁴

9 *Hampton Union/Susan Morse*, Sept 13, 1996.

10 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News*, April 30, 1999.

11 *Greyhound Network News*, Winter 1999-2000.

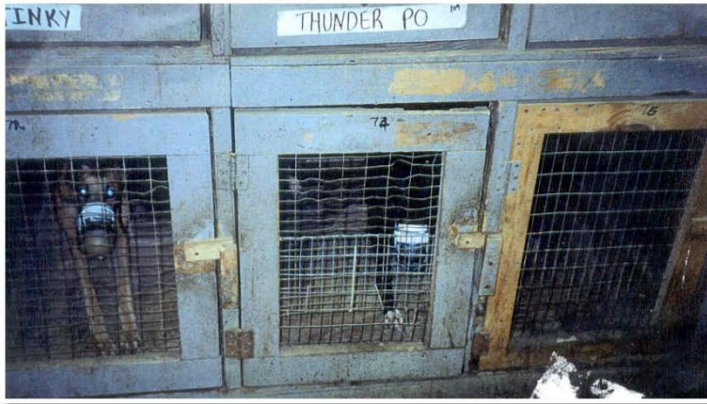
12 GREY2K USA.

13 *FOX News*, February 3, 2003.

14 New Hampshire Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission.

During a four-month span in 2007, 141 greyhounds are injured at Hinsdale. Fatally injured dogs include Sandhill Harry, euthanized after breaking a front leg so severely that the bone protruded through the skin; and Regal Time to Jump, euthanized after suffering "multiple fractures."¹⁵

Photographs taken by state regulators in 2007 and 2008 document kennel conditions at all three racetracks. The photos show dogs living in warehouse-style kennels in stacked cages. According to



Greyhounds in cages at Hinsdale, 2006

correspondence from the Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission, the average size for racetrack cages in the state is 36 inches by 36 inches by 42 inches. Also, the Commission states that so-called "turn-outs," when the dogs are allowed out of their cages as a large group to relieve themselves, last for 30-60 minutes each. According to the Seabrook Greyhound Park website, these turn-outs occur four times per day. The photographs provide documentation that at least some dogs are kept muzzled while in their cages.¹⁶

A Timeline: History of Dog Racing in New Hampshire

- **1975**

A labor dispute leads to a 10-day work stoppage at Seabrook Greyhound Park. The dispute apparently started when Seabrook management refused to recognize the New England Greyhound Association, which represented kennel owners.¹⁷

- **1990**

The Legislature grants permission for the three greyhound tracks and one horse track to begin offering simulcasting (video viewing and betting on races nationwide), provided the tracks continue to offer live racing. Simulcasting begins at all 4 tracks in 1991.

- **November 1991**

L. Stanley Berenson, owner of Berenson's Belmont Greyhound Track, sells the track to former general manager Allan Hart and two partners. The name is changed to Lakes Region Greyhound Track.¹⁸

- **April 1993**

The New Hampshire Pari-Mutuel Commission reports that state revenue from greyhound racing amounted to \$4.1 million (mostly from simulcasting) in 1992, having fallen from a high of \$8.8 million in 1977.¹⁹

¹⁵ Carey Theil, editorial response, *Foster's Daily Democrat*, July 28, 2007; New Hampshire Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission.

¹⁶ New Hampshire Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission, correspondence on file; <http://www.seabrookgreyhoundpark.com/content/adoption/adoption.shtml>.

¹⁷ *Nashua Telegraph*/Merrill Lockhard, March 28, 1975.

¹⁸ *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Roger Amsden, November 23, 1991.

¹⁹ *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Donn Tibbetts, April 27, 1993.

- **January 1995**

State revenue from Lakes Region increased slightly in 1994, but revenues from Seabrook and Hinsdale fell \$669,000 and \$40,000 respectively. Simulcasting now brings in more money than live racing. The deputy director of the Pari-mutuel Commission warns that the racing industry is in "guarded shape." The industry pleads for permission to begin video gambling at the tracks.²⁰

- **August 1995**

Simulcasting keeps the Lakes Region Greyhound Park going, but live racing is in big trouble. Wagering on live races has plunged 45 percent in the past year. Manager Richard Hart says the decline is "staggering." A clause in the law allowing simulcasting obliges the track to run at least 100 live races a year despite the negative business impact. In response to Hart's complaints the Legislature lowers the tax Lakes Region must pay on its simulcasting. Both the Legislature and the Governor remain opposed to video gambling.²¹

- **October 1995**

The state's live-racing tracks would be "DOA" without simulcasting, according to the director of the state's Pari-Mutuel Commission. Supporters of racing in the Legislature reiterate that only simulcasting is keeping the tracks alive. Track owners continue to pressure the Legislature to allow them to add video gambling machines to the mix.²²

- **May 1996**

Revisiting the simulcasting-tax break granted to Lakes Region in 1995, the Legislature grants a reduction of the tax to all three dog tracks. In practical terms, this means the Lakes Region's tax will increase while Seabrook and Hinsdale pay less. "This puts everyone at the same level," says a senator from the Hinsdale district, but it is a blow to the always-struggling Lakes Region track.²³

- **Spring 1997**

The Legislature approves a \$2 million dollar tax break for the racing industry (including the horse track).²⁴

- **August 1997-January 1998**

In August 1996 the Pari-Mutuel Commission banned rebates -- the practice of adding a bonus to the money won by big bettors on condition they spend it on more wagers. Lakes Region is the only New Hampshire track that offered rebates, and owner Al Hart complains that the ban has cost the track and the state \$250,000 each in revenue. In response, the Commission temporarily reinstates rebating in August 1997, with a cap of up to five percent. In January 1998 they make the reinstatement permanent.²⁵

20 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Donn Tibbetts, Jan. 13, 1995; *Greyhound Network News*, Spring 1995.

21 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Roger Talbot, August 27, 1995; *Greyhound Network News*, Fall 1995.

22 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Donn Tibbetts, October 11, 1995.

23 *Greyhound Network News*, Summer 1996.

24 *Greyhound Network News*, Fall 1997.

25 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Roger Amsden, December 19, 1997; January 23, 1998.

- **December 1997**

The New Hampshire Pari-Mutuel Commission reports that state revenue from horse and dog racing is down 16 percent from the previous year. Following a now-established pattern, most of the racing revenue has come from simulcasting rather than live racing: Of the \$4 million in state revenue from the four racetracks, only 24 percent was generated by live racing.²⁶

- **May 1999**

The House defeats a proposal to legalize gambling machines at the tracks and imposes an "indefinite postponement," meaning the issue cannot be resurrected in this session or the next.²⁷

- **February-March 2000**

A Senate bill is introduced, co-sponsored by Sen. Katie Wheeler of Durham and Sen. Sheila Roberge of Bedford, that would end live greyhound racing while allowing simulcasting to continue at the state's tracks. When it is clear that the bill has no chance of passing, sponsors try to amend it to prohibit the Sweepstakes Commission from using nearly \$325,000 annually in Sweepstakes revenue to augment racetrack purses. The bill is defeated.²⁸

- **February 2002**

Several bills to expand gambling, including one that would permit video gambling machines at the tracks, are defeated separately in the House and the Senate.²⁹

- **February 2003**

At the request of advocacy group GREY2K USA, State Representative Paul LaFlamme introduces HB 520, a bill to require tracks to keep records of greyhound injuries and the disposition of all retired dogs, and to make those records available to the public. Vigorously opposed by the industry and its allies, the bill is "retained" in committee, to be debated the next year.³⁰

- **May 2003**

Senate Bill 117, which would allow 900 gambling machines at the three dog tracks, is recommitted in the Senate. That means it can be brought back for reconsideration in the current session or the next. In an effort to win more senators to their side, the bill's sponsors add a pharmacy benefit for seniors and other sweeteners to the language; nevertheless it dies in committee.³¹

- **January-June 2004**

In January the New Hampshire House debates House Bill 520, a bill to require tracks to keep records of greyhound injuries and the disposition of all retired dogs, and to make those records available to the public. Representative Paul LaFlamme is able to defeat a motion to kill HB 520 by the narrowest of margins, 168 to 166. The House then approves the bill and sends it to the Senate. In March, the Senate Ways and Means Committee recommends that HB 520 be killed. When this recommendation is debated,

²⁶ *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Donn Tibbetts, December 31, 1997.

²⁷ *Keene Sentinel*, May 14, 1999.

²⁸ *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Warren Hastings, March 16, 2000; *Concord Monitor*/ Hilary Krieger, March 2000.

²⁹ *Greyhound Network News*, Spring 2002.

³⁰ GREY2K USA.

³¹ *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News* /Joe Cox, May 15, 2003; GREY2K USA.

Senator Sheila Roberge and others are able to revive the bill on a vote of 14-9. However, after being resurrected twice and passing both chambers, the measure is vetoed by Governor Craig Benson.³²

Overriding Governor Craig Benson's veto, the House passes House Bill 520 by a vote of 290-52. Violating this law more than once would be a misdemeanor, punishable by a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine. When originally vetoing the bill, Benson stated that "it would cost too much money and that the dog racing industry is regulated enough." Now he announces plans for a task force to look at abuse of animals, including racing greyhounds. Representative Paul LaFlamme, a prime sponsor of HB520, says "this bill sends a strong message to dog owners throughout the country that New Hampshire will no longer be a place to destroy greyhounds."³³

- **March 2005**

General Manager Richard Hart and Assistant General Manager Jonathan Broome of Lakes Region Greyhound Park are terminated from their positions following charges of an illegal gambling conspiracy. They were among 17 people indicted in the conspiracy, which prosecutors say involved people with connections to the Gambino organized crime family. Rick Newman, the track's spokesman, denies that the two men were laid off because of the charges, claiming that the layoffs were caused by a decline in wagering. The handle (total amount wagered) dropped from \$12.9 million in the first two months of 2004 to \$9.3 million in the first two months of 2005.³⁴

Attorney General Kelly Ayotte calls for revoking the license of Lakes Region Greyhound Park, on the grounds that the owners employed people convicted of illegal gambling, that two top officials had been charged with running an illegal gambling conspiracy, and that one owner was refusing to cooperate with the investigation. Allan Hart, the lead owner of the track and the uncle of one of the men indicted, defends both men and says their indictments do not involve the track.³⁵

- **April 2005**

Hotel operator Christopher Gistis and developer David Johnston have combined to submit the highest of six bids to buy the Lakes Region Greyhound Park. If the deal is finalized, they promise to continue greyhound racing while also physically upgrading the facility. Gistis says their primary interest is "to improve the physical asset itself, and then promote it in a way that will improve the business to the point that it is profitable and create more jobs." The track's general partner, Allan Hart, will submit the bid to a Superior Court judge for approval. If the bid is approved, Gistis and Johnson will apply to the state Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission for a greyhound racing and pari-mutuel wagering license.³⁶

- **July 2005**

After 32 years of live racing, the owner of Seabrook announces that the racetrack will only operate seasonally in 2006. Live racing will end at the end of October and resume in April of 2006. The Hinsdale

32 GREY2K USA; http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/bill_docket.aspx?sr=399&sy=2004&sortoption=&txtsessionyear=2004&txtbillnumber=hb520.

33 *Associated Press*, June 17, 2004; *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News*/Garry Rayno & Tom Fahey, June 18, 2004.

34 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News*, John DiStaso, March 23, 2005.

35 *WMUR TV News*, March 8, 2005.

36 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News*/John DiStaso, April 20, 2005.

track also has cut back on its racing days, from 310 in 2004 to 140 this year. Edward Keelan, president of Yankee Greyhound Racing, which operates Seabrook, says that live racing has been declining for several years due to expanded gambling in other states.³⁷

- **August 2005**

Developer David Johnston, who along with Christopher Gistis entered the winning bid to buy the Lakes Region track, announces that he has plans to transfer his rights to Marlin Torguson, a major player in the casino industry. Johnston's partners withdrew from the deal in June after news surfaced of a drug trafficking and money laundering ring run out of the track. Under this new plan, Torguson would acquire the track on August 18. Torguson plans on reopening the racetrack with wagering on both live greyhound racing and simulcasting.³⁸

- **December 2005**

Three Belmont residents involved in a drug trafficking and money laundering operation have been convicted and sentenced to up to twenty years in prison. Randall Noe, accused of being in the center of the drug ring, made many of the drug transactions at the former Lakes Region Greyhound Park and also used the VIP phones to return calls to his associates. Noe also admitted to the DEA that he claimed losses on his income taxes in order to cover any winnings he made while gambling at that track. A total of 23 others, including Noe's mother, were arrested in the preceding June for their involvement in the operation, which included buying oxycodone in Florida and distributing it throughout New England.³⁹

- **January-June 2006**

In consultation with GREY2K USA, State Representative Steve Vaillancourt from Manchester files HB 1612, a proposal to repeal the \$325,000 annual subsidy dog tracks receive from the Education Trust Fund. The measure is referred to the House Ways and Means Committee, which recommends the measure be killed by the full House. However, when the bill is debated Representative Vaillancourt is able to overturn this recommendation on the House floor by a vote of 151-129. The measure then moves to the Senate, where the Senate Ways and Means committee recommends it be killed. After a fierce lobbying fight, this negative recommendation fails in the Senate on a tie vote. The measure then passes the Senate by a vote of 18-5. In early June, HB 1612 is signed by Governor John Lynch and becomes law.⁴⁰

- **June 2006**

The former Lakes Region Greyhound Park reopens as The Lodge at Belmont. It will sport a new look and a new emphasis on dining and entertainment. Jeana Tribble, vice president of Torguson Gaming Group, the new owner, says the goal is "to get customers into the building who might never place a bet, but who will enjoy the food and entertainment."⁴¹

37 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News*/John Distaso, August 2, 2005; SignOnSanDeigo.com, August 3, 2005; *Animal People*, November 2005.

38 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News*, August 15, 2005.

39 *Laconia Citizen*/Melanie Nelson, December 1, 2005.

40 GREY2K USA; http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/bill_docket.aspx?sr=2833&sy=2006&sortoption=&txtsessionyear=2006&txbillnumber=hb1612.

41 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News*/Roger Amsden, June 9, 2006.

- **March 2007**

The New Hampshire House of Representatives defeats a bill to phase out greyhound racing. The measure, which was filed by Representative Steve Vaillancourt in alliance with GREY2K USA, is defeated in the House on a vote of 198 to 138. If passed, House Bill 923 would have made New Hampshire the 35th state where dog racing is illegal, effective July 1, 2009.⁴²

- **May 2007**

The federal government has seized more than \$3 million in proceeds from the 2005 sale of the Lakes Region Greyhound Park (now The Lodge at Belmont) from its former owners. The government cites the drug money laundering operation that was run at the track in 2003 and 2004. The Justice Department is also conducting a criminal investigation and has interviewed some of the former owners and former employees.⁴³

- **July 2007**

At the request of GREY2K USA, a bill is filed by State Senator Sheila Roberge from Bedford to eliminate a state subsidy for drug testing of racing animals, which is currently being paid for by taxpayers. The bill receives a public hearing and is retained in committee. Advocates are frustrated by this delay, but are confident they have the votes to pass the measure the following year. Meanwhile, racetrack lobbyists insert language into the state budget that effectively does the same thing. Specifically, the budget passed by the Legislature in June contains a provision that will close the New Hampshire Racing and Charitable Gaming Commission's drug-testing laboratory, requiring racetracks to use outside laboratories and an open bidding process. Also, the tracks will be required to pay the full cost of these drug tests.⁴⁴

Hinsdale Greyhound Park announces plans to end year-round, live racing on September 3. After running 228 races the previous year, the track will now move to seasonal racing, running the required minimum of 50 annual racing days, and will offer only simulcast racing for the rest of the year. Wagering on live racing has dropped from 35 percent of the total handle in 2000 to 10.8 percent in 2006. All three New Hampshire tracks are now seasonal. After September 3 the track will work on finding homes for the approximately 300 dogs in its kennels. Hinsdale spokesman David Calef promises to "keep our kennels open and work with our kennel operators as long as necessary to make sure none of our greyhounds get euthanized."⁴⁵

- **December 2007-July 2008**

Greyhound advocates in the legislature, working closely with GREY2K USA, file House Bill 1430, a measure restoring to greyhounds and racehorses the protection of the state animal-cruelty laws. Previously racing animals had been exempt from animal-cruelty laws, and the racing industry had fought hard against protection. The measure swiftly passes the House, but then faces stiff opposition in the Senate. The bill is given a negative committee recommendation and then "laid on the table" by the full Senate, requiring a majority vote to take it off the table and revive it. After weeks of intense lobbying by both sides, the

42 *Boston Globe*, Tom Long, April 8, 2007.

43 *Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News*/John DiStaso, May 4, 2007.

44 *Brattleboro Reformer*, July 27, 2007.

45 *Associated Press*, July 23, 2007; *Boston Globe*, July 23, 2007; *Laconia Citizen*, July 24, 2007; GREY2K USA.

Senate narrowly votes to take HB 1430 off the table by a vote of 13-10. The measure then passes the Senate and is signed by Governor John Lynch.⁴⁶

- **November 2008**

In consultation with GREY2K USA, a bill is filed by State Representative Mary Cooney to phase out live greyhound racing by 2010. At the same time, the owners of New Hampshire's tracks are working on their own bill, which would release them from the requirement to hold 50 days of live racing per year in order to offer simulcast wagering. Rick Newman, a lobbyist for the Belmont track, predicts that the measure to phase out dog racing will fail.⁴⁷

- **December 2008**

Hinsdale Greyhound Park closes December 15, and its owners file for bankruptcy and surrender their pari-mutuel license to state regulators. The amount wagered on live dog racing has declined steadily in the past decade, and the track has survived largely on simulcast betting. The amount bet on live races this year is slightly over \$700,000 out of a total handle of \$29.5 million.⁴⁸

- **June 2009**

Greyhound racing ends in New Hampshire. On July 1, a state budget bill goes into effect that allows tracks to cease live racing and continue simulcast wagering. The budget amendment was drafted by GREY2K USA, and passed after a lengthy lobbying fight between animal protection advocates and racetrack lobbyists. As a result of this new law, the Lodge at Belmont and Seabrook Greyhound Park announce that they will longer conduct live racing. Rick Newman, who represents the Belmont track, claims the decision is a financial one, stating "It costs a lot more money to run live racing than we get from it."⁴⁹

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⁴⁶ DogChannel.com, July 10, 2008; GREY2K USA; http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/bill_status/bill_docket.aspx?lsr=2151&tsy=2008&sortoption=&txtsessionyear=2008&txbillnumber=hb1430.

⁴⁷ Foster's Daily Democrat/Geoff Cunningham Jr., November 30, 2008; GREY2K USA.

⁴⁸ Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News, December 16, 2008; Concord Monitor, December 16, 2008; New Hampshire Business Review, December 16, 2008; GREY2K USA.

⁴⁹ Union Leader and New Hampshire Sunday News/Tom Fahey, June 29, 2009; GREY2K USA.

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