

## GREYHOUND RACING LOSING TRACTION IN MACAU, REVENUE DECLINES IN 2013

KIRBY GARLITOS

JANUARY 16, 2014



The ever expanding growth in gambling in Macau hasn't come without any collateral damage and with more and more gamblers flocking the increasing number of casinos in the gambling destination, greyhound racing has seen a precipitous fall in revenue.

According to official data released in Macau, gross annual revenue from bets taken on pooch racing fell by 13.2 percent to just MOP178 million, or about \$22.3 million based on current exchange rates. The decline is in sharp contrast to the revenues being generated by casinos, which in 2013 amounted to a record \$45 billion.

Obviously, comparing casino revenue in Macau to something like greyhound racing is by no means fair to the latter, but it does go to show that even with the minuscule interest compared to slot machines and gambling tables, the decline in revenue suggests that fewer and fewer people are paying more attention to it than in the past.

Using a more realistic comparison, horse racing saw a small 2.5-percent increase in revenue to MOP365 million. Same with sports betting, specifically in basketball where revenue in 2013 reportedly reached MOP150 million, a staggering increase of 35.1 percent from the previous year's numbers.

It hasn't helped that increased volumes of animal rights advocates have put greyhound racing in the spotlight. Calling for an end to the sport in Macau entirely, these campaigners have, in some ways, succeeded in highlighting all the potentially negative repercussions using dogs as pawns in the theater of gambling has on their lives.

Whether these calls to end greyhound racing in Macau ends up successful or not, interest in the sport appears to be waning to the point that those animal rights advocates will have their way sooner than later. That or maybe greyhound racing just had a bad year and a rebound in 2014 is in the cards.

Either way, the decline in revenue does point to what could potentially be a trend moving forward. As more gamblers flock to Macau to enjoy its casinos, less and less attention is being paid to greyhound racing. And with 2013's decline in revenue serving now in the books, there's reason to fret that interest could, in fact, be waning.