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**GREYHOUND
RACING TO WIN**

VICTOR M. KNIGHT

H I G H S T A K E S

This edition published in 2003 by
High Stakes Publishing
21 Great Ormond St
London WC1N 3JB
T: 020 7430 1021
www.highstakes.co.uk

www.gamblingbooks.co.uk/publishing

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ISBN 1 84243 005 9 Greyhound Racing To Win

Printed by Cox & Wyman

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Dedication

To my Dad, long gone now but who introduced me to the dogs at Hackney Wick and Walthamstow many years ago. Even today I look for traps 1 and 4!

Acknowledgements

With grateful thanks to the thousands of greyhounds that have given me so much pleasure over the years. Also, to all the punters whose bits and pieces of conversation along the way gave me the basis for much of the advice that follows in this book.

Contents

Greyhound Racing	11
Greyhound Racing in Great Britain	12
A Brief History of British Greyhound Racing	14
How Greyhound Racing Works	15
<i>Types of Racing</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Distances</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>Times</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Trials</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Trap Draw</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Racing Managers</i>	<i>19</i>
The Racecard	22
The Best Betting Medium	24
Greyhound Racing in the USA	26
Greyhound Racing in Australia	31
Greyhound Racing in Ireland	32
The Form	33
<i>Times</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Fast Times</i>	<i>36</i>
<i>Slow Times</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Grade of Race</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Upgraded Dogs</i>	<i>39</i>
<i>Race Remarks</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Trap Draw</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Sectional Times</i>	<i>41</i>
<i>Sectional Placings</i>	<i>42</i>

Analysing the Form and Selection methods	44
<i>Recent Form</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Method 1</i>	<i>44</i>
<i>Method 2</i>	<i>52</i>
<i>Method 3</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Method 4</i>	<i>54</i>
<i>Method 5</i>	<i>55</i>
<i>Reading a Race</i>	<i>56</i>
Betting on the Dogs	62
<i>Types of Bet</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>Value and pricing up a selection</i>	<i>75</i>
Money-Management	82
<i>Method 1</i>	<i>82</i>
<i>Method 2</i>	<i>84</i>
<i>Method 3</i>	<i>85</i>
<i>Method 4</i>	<i>86</i>
<i>Method 5</i>	<i>90</i>
<i>Method 6</i>	<i>92</i>
Ten Golden Rules for Successful	
Greyhound Race Betting	94
<i>Rule 1: Never bet more than you can afford to lose</i>	<i>94</i>
<i>Rule 2: Decide on a form analysis or selection method</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>Rule 3: Study the form carefully</i>	<i>95</i>
<i>Rule 4: Make decisive selections</i>	<i>96</i>
<i>Rule 5: Do not bet on emotion</i>	<i>96</i>
<i>Rule 6: Keep a record of all your bets</i>	<i>97</i>
<i>Rule 7: Learn from your mistakes</i>	<i>97</i>
<i>Rule 8: Avoiding a loser is better than missing a winner</i>	<i>98</i>
<i>Rule 9: Set up a betting bank</i>	<i>98</i>
<i>Rule 10: Enjoy your betting</i>	<i>98</i>

Directory of Greyhound Racing Terms and Abbreviations	101
<i>Great Britain and USA</i>	<i>101</i>
<i>Terms Exclusive to USA</i>	<i>104</i>
<i>Great Britain: Common Racecard Abbreviations</i>	<i>105</i>
The Hall Of Fame	109
Track Details	111
<i>Great Britain</i>	<i>111</i>
<i>Ireland</i>	<i>164</i>
<i>United States of America</i>	<i>174</i>
Reference Sources	189
<i>Web Sites</i>	<i>189</i>
<i>Books</i>	<i>190</i>

Greyhound Racing

GREYHOUND RACING is one of the most popular spectator sports in Great Britain, Ireland, Australia and the USA, as well as many other places in the world. Every day of the week many thousands of people pay a visit to their local greyhound track.

The sport is hugely popular for two main reasons. Firstly it is very exciting to watch and makes a great night out. Secondly, it is an excellent betting medium. However, despite it being so good to bet upon, many greyhound fans still lose money. Of course, some people do win but on the whole greyhound punters lose because they fail to appreciate some of the more basic things about the sport. This is where this book will be able to help.

In this book you will learn all about betting on greyhounds. Among many other things, you will find out about the basics of the sport and how important they are to consider when trying to find winners. You will also find out why many punters lose money and what you can do to avoid joining them. Advice will be given on how to rate the form of a race and then how to read that form so you can find the most likely winner.

To win money on greyhound racing you will also need to understand the importance of betting to a plan and taking the long-term view. *Greyhound Racing To Win* aims to help you here as well.

In summary, whether you are a newcomer to betting on the sport or already very experienced, this book will help set you on the way to becoming a winning greyhound race punter.

Greyhound Racing in Great Britain

TODAY, greyhound racing is reported to be Great Britain's second most popular spectator sport (obviously, football is the first). From Monday through to Saturday tracks stage meetings all over the country. A handful race on Sundays as well. Wherever you are in the country there will be a track not too far away. For example, in Scotland there is Glasgow's Shawfield and then right around the country, down to Hove on the south coast near Brighton, tracks are dotted everywhere.

Racing takes place over a variety of distances, over hurdles, and on two types of surface. Nowadays, most tracks are all sand because this kind of surface is easier to maintain. A handful of tracks do still race on grass but all of them have sanded bends. Meetings take place throughout the year and in most weathers. In fact, many of the top tracks have undersoil heating so that even frost and snow cannot prevent racing going ahead. Greyhound race meetings can be anything from 8 to 14 races long.

As well as racing in the evenings, many tracks put on afternoon meetings. Almost all of these are primarily staged for the country's betting shops. These BAGS (Bookmakers Afternoon Greyhound Service) meetings do not attract much in the way of attendance but are seen and bet upon by thousands of betting shop punters. Indeed, some of the dogs that race at tracks where afternoon racing is regularly staged become real favourites in the shops. Many people are critical of BAGS meetings saying the quality of racing is poor, but *Greyhound Racing To Win* will show you that sometimes this criticism is not justified.

At the tracks, punters can bet either with the bookmakers or with the totalisator. At some smaller meetings, the track bookies will not be able to take big bets because the general market will be too weak. But at the large tracks, particularly the London ones, punters will be able to bet in bigger amounts. The size of the track and the number of

people attending it will also affect the amounts in the different totalisator pools.

All tracks are equipped with some form of mechanical lure. There are a number of different ones in use but all do the same job, that of enticing the greyhounds to race. Another thing all tracks have in common is that the dogs always race anti-clockwise, i.e. from left to right and all tracks have left-handed bends.

Greyhounds start racing at quite an early age, the minimum is 15 months, and can go on competing until they are around 5, or even 6, years old. That said, most greyhounds reach their peak at about three years of age. Both dogs and bitches race but bitches generally have slightly longer careers. This is because they have an enforced lay-off whenever they come into season. A breeding career will follow for any good class greyhound that has proved itself on the track.