

1966 Review of the Year

The government struck a major blow to racing yet again after the on course betting tax was extended to all greyhound tracks. The industry decided to put up a fight and pump extra funds into prize money. Catford significantly increased the prize money for the Gold Collar and Wembley followed suit with the St Leger. Many other competitions had money added to their prize funds.

Although there was more prize money to be had the planning was dismal, the Welsh Derby, Oaks and Scurry Gold Cup all clashed in July and the Scottish Derby and St Leger crossed paths in September. The main event at Hove was the Regency and it changed status from a produce race for British Bred greyhounds only to an open competition for all-comers.

The spring events signaled the start of the campaigns for many greyhounds, the Grand National was followed by the May events, the Gold Collar and Grand Prix returning after a two year absence. The Derby had a major distraction this year and that of course was the football World Cup. Although the football would not start until July 11 the nation had been gripped by the fact that England was hosting.

A famous moment in greyhound history was made when Wembley's owner's refused to cancel regular greyhound racing meaning the match between Uruguay and France in the 1966 FIFA World Cup was played at White City.

The Greyhound Express received a phone call from an Irishman asking if the reward for missing Juvenile winner Hi Joe was still on offer. His trainer Noreen Collin contacted owner Victor Chandler and he said that it had been reduced from £2,000 to £1,000. The Irishman however called again and arranged a meeting in the Three Greyhounds pub in Soho. The meeting ended with an agreement that the reward money would be paid through a lawyer but the police were already closing in. Detective Peter Jarrott tracked the case to a wooden garage in Dunstable and Hi Joe was found with some pups. The garage belonged to Bartholomew Casey and he had raced Hi Joe on the Bletchley flap under the name of Super Black.

The culprit was caught and sent to court, they got off due to a ridiculous ancient law stating that if a stolen dog goes missing for more than six months you cannot be charged with theft. However Casey was charged with stealing the dog's coat.

Charlton re-opened, it had closed in 1962 and it took possession of the Olympic and Cloth of Gold from Wandsworth. Slough was purchased by the GRA. There were however closures and the North of England lost both Horsley Hill in South Shields and Gateshead.

Clapton shareholders contemplate a bid from GRA which includes two training sites with 180 acres and an interest in the West Ham site. The deal goes ahead later in the year.

Wisbech owner Herbert Barrett bought Kings Lynn speedway stadium and introduced greyhound racing.

Wandsworth in London closed on the 4th June; it could not compete with big local tracks, West Ham, Walthamstow, Wembley and White City and was replaced by the Arndale shopping centre.

The 1966 Greyhound Derby

Sir Thomas Houstoun-Boswell purchased Irish flyer 'Maryville Hi' for the sum of £3,000 determined to have a Derby winner. The Derby prize money had been boosted to a spectacular £7,728 first prize, a rather bizarre amount but nevertheless huge and the Irish hound trained by Tony Murphy crossed the water as one of the leading fancies. Prince of Roses found himself the top of the ante-post list, his Jim Irving must have wished different bearing in mind what usually happened to them.

The first round resulted in the inevitable as Prince of Roses crashed out, Maryville Hi only just squeezed through finishing third after trouble. McElvey Cup winner Dillies Pigalle showed blistering pace as he recorded 28.50sec in a first round victory, just one length outside the track record of his father Pigalle Wonder.

Heat four in round two drew five of the big names remaining in the competition and clearly something had to give. Maryville Hi ran on to catch Kilbeg Kuda as they filled the top two spaces and Tell Nobody was third meaning Dillies Pigalle trained by Ronnie Chandler was eliminated. Dillies Pigalle went on to win the Derby consolation.

When the semi-finals arrived, the NGRC rules allowed Maryville Hi to be trained by Paddy Coughlan, Houstoun-Boswell had always planned for his trainer Coughlan to take up the reigns as soon as the rules allowed. Maryville Hi did not let his new trainer down winning in a smart 28.63. Kilbeg Kuda successfully wrapped up the second in 28.89 a superb feat bearing in mind that Rugby based vet Paddy Sweeney had saved his life after an accident in March.

In the final outsider Faithful Hope surprised many when from an awkward trap 3 draw he broke first and stayed in contention with the early pace of Dusty Trail. Faithful Hope has started slowly in all the previous rounds and was a strong finisher and finding himself in a prominent position so early meant that he gained the lead by the second bend and ran out an easy winner. The time was a remarkable 28.52sec and was too fast for his rivals. Maryville Hi under performed and finished a disappointing fifth.

Three Derby finalists Greenane Flash, Im Quickest and Dusty Trail all made the Welsh Derby final a week later with the Randy Singleton trained Im Quickest winning the £500 prize. At the same time a second successive Irish entry had won the Oaks, this time it was Merry Emblem emulating Marjones feat the previous year.

Dusty Trail failed again in the Laurels final despite odds of 11-10 favourite but then made amends by travelling to Scotland and taking their top event. Im Quickest also made that Scottish Derby final but it was Dusty Trail who gained some revenge.

The 1966 Irish Derby

Honours in the first round of the Irish Derby went to the joint ante post favourites the McAlinden cup winner Newrath Wonder and the Gay McKenna trained Always Proud, they won in 29.48 and 29.49 respectively followed closely by 1965 finalist Vals Prince in 29.60.

In the second round Vals Prince scorched to a blistering 29.10 win and Always Proud recorded 29.19 but in a major shock Newrath Wonder crashed out. Vals Prince lost his semi-final to Newrath Dancer the litter brother to Newrath Wonder but still qualified for the final. The remaining two semi-finals went to Tiger Chief from Cairnville Chief and Always Proud from Can Trap. It was interesting to note that Gay McKennas Monalee Champion went out at this stage. Monalee Champion would become a major breeding star.

Always Proud the 5-4 favourite duly obliged in the final to seal a second successive victory for Gay McKenna. The brindle dog had been knocked out of the 1965 Irish Derby in the third round and then his English Owner Albert Lucas put him with Gay McKenna. Failure a year later in the English Derby second round was put down to him being off colour before he returned to Ireland. A brilliant three way battle ended with Always Proud beating Tiger Chief and Vals Prince.

Vals Prince gained revenge on Always Proud later in the year when winning the Guinness 600 by three lengths from his rival.



Laurels winner Super Fame – trainer Nora Gleeson far right.

Greyhound Derby Final (25th June - White City 525y, £7,728)

| Pos | Greyhound | Trap | Trainer | SP | Time |
|-----|----------------|------|------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Faithful Hope | 3 | Paddy Keane (Clapton) | 8-1 | 28.52 |
| 2 | Greenane Flash | 6 | Jimmy Quinn (Perry Barr) | 4-1 | 4 ¼ |
| 3 | Dusty Trail | 5 | Paddy Milligan (Private) | 6-1 | 1 |
| 4 | Im Quickest | 1 | Randy Singleton (White City) | 5-2 | 4 ¾ |
| 5 | Maryville Hi | 4 | Paddy Coughlan (Private) | 13-8f | 1 ¾ |
| 6 | Kilbeg Kuda | 2 | John Bassett (Private) | 4-1 | 4 ¾ |

Grand National (White City 525yH – Apr 23 £500)

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------|-------|---|
| 1 | Halfpenny King (John Shevlin) | 7-2 | 30.28 | 5 |
| 2 | Husky Breeze (John Bassett) | 6-4f | 30.38 | 1 |
| 3 | Lough Chief (J.Ramsden) | 4-1 | 30.44 | 2 |
| 4 | Feakles Wish (G.Carrigill) | 12-1 | 30.45 | 3 |
| 5 | Greenane Star | 12-1 | 30.65 | 4 |
| 6 | Westpark Beech (Phil Rees Sr.) | 4-1 | 30.75 | 6 |

Gold Collar (Catford 570y – May 14 £1,500)

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1 | Dark Symphony (Peter Collett) | 100-8 | 33.21 | 1 |
| 2 | Scaragh Brae (John Bassett) | 15-8f | 33.33 | 6 |
| 3 | Major Triumph II (Adam Jackson) | 16-1 | 33.65 | 5 |
| 4 | Wonder Settler (John Bassett) | 3-1 | 34.13 | 4 |
| 5 | Shake the Key (Reg Webb) | 2-1 | 34.53 | 2 |
| 6 | Mimi II (I.Regan) | 12-1 | 34.65 | 3 |

Grand Prix (Walthamstow 600y – May 31 £500)

| | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1 | Westpark Bison (Barney O'Connor) | 8-11f | 40.14 | 5 |
| 2 | Bousy (Jim Singleton) | 13-7 | 40.26 | 2 |
| 3 | Park Nightingale | 5-1 | 40.29 | 1 |
| 4 | Miss Taft (Bob Burls) | 12-1 | 40.69 | 6 |
| 5 | Kenler Dandy (Barney O'Connor) | 25-1 | 40.75 | 4 |
| 6 | Misery Me (Adam Jackson) | 6-1 | 40.91 | 3 |

Welsh Derby (Arms Park, Cardiff 525y – July 2 £500)

| | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|------|-------|---|
| 1 | Im Quickest (Randy Singleton) | 3-1 | 29.59 | 1 |
| 2 | Dusty Trail (Paddy Milligan) | 4-1 | 29.87 | 3 |
| 3 | Double Rock (Paddy Milligan) | 12-1 | 30.47 | 5 |
| 4 | Harmony (Jim Irving) | 20-1 | 30.63 | 6 |
| 5 | Handsome Teddy (John Perrin) | 10-1 | 30.71 | 2 |
| 6 | Greenane Flash (Jimmy Quinn) | 1-1f | 31.27 | 4 |

Oaks (Harringay 525y – July 4 £1,000)

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1 | Merry Emblem (Matt Bruton) | 7-4 | 29.58 | 6 |
| 2 | Lucky Dawn (Nora Gleeson) | 11-2 | 29.61 | 5 |
| 3 | Greek Lady (Jimmy Quinn) | 13-8f | 29.64 | 2 |
| 4 | Marjone (Mick O'Toole) | 20-1 | 29.67 | 3 |
| 5 | Office Problem (Bill Kelly) | 10-1 | 29.77 | 1 |
| 6 | Rebeccas Pet (Eric Adkins) | 14-1 | 29.78 | 4 |

Scurry Gold Cup (Clapton 400y – July 9 £1,000)

| | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1 | Geddys Blaze (Stan Gudgin) | 9-2 | 22.79 | 4 |
| 2 | Near The Fire (Clare Orton) | 4-1 | 22.93 | 6 |
| 3 | Gaultier King (Randy Singleton) | 7-1 | 23.13 | 5 |
| 4 | Beech Walk Rover (Adam Jackson) | 10-1 | 23.16 | 3 |
| 5 | Fallen Rock (John Coleman) | 9-2 | 23.26 | 2 |
| 6 | Stately Val (Brian Jay) | 13-8f | 23.34 | 1 |

Laurels (Wimbledon 500y – Aug 12 £1,500)

| | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|--------|-------|---|
| 1 | Super Fame (Nora Gleeson) | 9-2 | 28.05 | 5 |
| 2 | Handsome Teddy (John Perrin) | 7-1 | 28.07 | 2 |
| 3 | Geddys Blaze (Stan Gudgin) | 8-1 | 28.29 | 3 |
| 4 | Dusty Trail (Paddy Milligan) | 11-10f | 28.30 | 1 |
| 5 | Mr Model (Tom Reilly) | 10-1 | 28.48 | 6 |
| 6 | Alley Rose | 40-1 | 28.50 | 4 |

Scottish Derby (Carntyne 525y – Sep 3 £1,000)

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|------|-------|---|
| 1 | Dusty Trail (Paddy Milligan) | 4-5f | 28.59 | 1 |
| 2 | Corville Gallant (Jimmy Quinn) | 3-1 | 28.87 | 3 |
| 3 | Heckler (Bessie Lewis) | 8-1 | 29.43 | 4 |
| 4 | Im Quickest (Randy Singleton) | 6-1 | 29.67 | 5 |
| 5 | Bawn Heather (Harry Ward) | 12-1 | 29.68 | 2 |
| 6 | Lax Law (J.Doyle) | 8-1 | 30.08 | 6 |

St Leger (Wembley 700y – Sep 5 £1,500)

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1 | Summer Guest (Wilf France) | 11-8f | 40.03 | 1 |
| 2 | Peculiar Way (George Curtis) | 12-1 | 40.13 | 6 |
| 3 | Bousy (Jim Singleton) | 10-1 | 40.25 | 2 |
| 4 | Breachs Blizzard (J.Pattinson) | 7-2 | 40.39 | 3 |
| 5 | Handsome Teddy (John Perrin) | 9-4 | 40.47 | 4 |
| 6 | Rainbow Trout (John Brown) | 12-1 | 40.55 | 5 |

Cesarewitch (West Ham 600y – Oct 7 £1,500)

| | | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1 | Rostown Victor (Tom Johnston Jr) | 66-1 | 34.06 | 6 |
| 2 | Corville Gallant (Jimmy Quinn) | 8-13f | 34.10 | 4 |
| 3 | Petes Regent (Bob Burls) | 11-4 | 34.16 | 1 |
| 4 | Bimco (P.O'Neill) | 25-1 | 34.56 | 5 |
| 5 | Greenane Squire | 10-1 | 34.92 | 3 |
| 6 | Fast Buffalo | 14-1 | 34.93 | 2 |

Irish Derby (Shelbourne Park 525y Aug 6, £2,000)

| | | | | |
|---|-----------------------------|-------|-------|---|
| 1 | Always Proud (Gay McKenna) | 11-8f | 29.44 | 1 |
| 2 | Tiger Chief (Gay McKenna) | 9-2 | 29.56 | 5 |
| 3 | Vals Prince (Paddy Tubridy) | 7-4 | 29.59 | 6 |
| 4 | Cairnville Chief | 100-8 | | 3 |
| 5 | Newrath Dancer | 100-7 | | 2 |
| 6 | Can Trap | 50-1 | | 4 |