

## Doncaster - Stainforth

Stainforth opened as a speedway dirt track in 1929 following extensive work on an area of marsh land west of Station Road that was turned from marsh to cinder. The track consisted of sand, three inches of concrete and finished off with nine inches of cinder but despite a promising start the Stainforth speedway company went into liquidation in 1930.

In 1933 the Stainforth Amateur Athletic Club bought the stadium before the war brought the Athletics to a halt. However in 1941 a greyhound and whippet track became the latest venture at the stadium, the first meeting was on Saturday March 22<sup>nd</sup> and plans were drawn up for racing every Saturday at 5.30pm. Races were held over 300 yards and 465 yards and the track tried hard to get permission for a tote in 1945 without success.

The track remained a flapping track for thirty five years; boxing events and trotting was also seen at the stadium that was owned by Benjamin Lovatt at the time. Distances changed to 350 and 600 yards and meetings took place on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

The track was reportedly sold in 1976 but plans to upgrade the track only ended with the stadium closing in 1978 and the site remained derelict for a further 13 years.

Businessman and greyhound enthusiast Chick Hicken and his partner June Hicken submitted plans for a new stadium to Doncaster council. They were passed and on March 1993 the newly built track costing £1.5 million opened. The track wanted to become part of the NGRC so opted for racing staff with respectable backgrounds. Former Derby winning trainer Barbara Tompkins was brought in as General Manager; Racing Managers were Andrew Walker and Richard Bentley.

A three tier grandstand was constructed with a restaurant, cocktail bar, public bar and other facilities all being available for the customers.

Known as Meadow Court Stadium, the distances were over 275, 480, 661 and 709 metres on a track circumference of 430 metres. Tompkins retired in 2004 and the stadium rebranded from Stainforth to Doncaster in 2006. Former Belle Vue Racing Manager Stephen Gray and Richard Munton had spells as Racing Managers there from 2006-2008 and 2008-2010 respectively before former Wembley man Mick Smith arrived.

The track has grown in reputation and held the TV Trophy in 2008 & the Trainers Championship in 2010. The Yorkshire St Leger was inaugurated in 2004 and became the biggest event held at the track annually.

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### Selected Track Records

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes
278m	Slippery Jaydee	16.44	01.12.1994	
	Fosse Way	16.17	28.03.1999	
	Musical Chair	16.84	30.10.2001	
	Glendon Jack	16.63	16.11.2004	
460m	Super Bridge	27.46	02.07.1994	
480m	Silver Steel	28.92	2002+	
	Ravenshill Lad	29.22	02.08.2003	
	Farloe Joe	28.95	10.09.2004	
	Farloe Verdict	28.94	10.09.2004	
483m	Farloe Joel	29.55	27.03.2005	
	Cocks Hero	29.52	03.04.2005	
	Distant Mist	29.46	01.05.2005	
	Glen Abbey St	29.39	01.05.2005	
485m	Jordans Spark	29.25	01.05.2005	
	Yorkshire	29.07	29.07.2005	
	Jubilee Rocco	29.73	24.06.1993	
	Maireads Bob	29.71	20.09.1998	
661m	Frisby Figo	41.00	01.09.2004	
	Black Pear	41.00	04.09.2004	
666m	Westwood Surprise	40.95	10.09.1993	
709m	Almost On Fire	43.86	28.06.1998	
	Soviet Valley	44.66	11.03.2003	
	Gaynors Jet	44.55	07.03.2004	
	Hesley Gale	44.42	10.09.2004	
910m	Frisby Figo	43.93?	01.05.2004	
	Gabba Gabba Hey	44.40	17.11.2009	
	Flying Winner	55.87	17.06.2008	
890m	Slow Fuse	58.43	23.03.2001	
910m	Let Us Know	58.43	03.03.2002	
	Ericas Equity	58.08	10.09.2004	
925m	Souda Bay	59.56	09.02.1998	

+ Date when record was held, not necessarily the year it was set.

### Selected Tote Returns

Year	Turnover £
1948	1,320