

Norton Canes

East of the village of Norton Canes on the west side of the Brownhills Road was the greyhound track of Norton Canes. This small track was dwarfed by the large Chasewater reservoir on its eastern side but due to some of the trainers that frequented the track it would hold its place in greyhound history forever.

The stadium was built by Charles Southall in 1974 and it did not take long before the track joined the NGRC permit scheme in 1975. With a circumference of 352 metres the track was a small enterprise with facilities including a licensed club house. There was a car park for 400 vehicles, kennels for 75 greyhounds and a glass fronted covered stand.

The management introduced the Norton Canes Derby and the Champion Bitch Stakes to provide patrons with some interesting competitions. Norton Canes soon had a taste of open race success when Suffer On picked up the Scottish St Leger for Rita Hayward in 1975.



*Norton Canes joined the NGRC set up in 1975 (Photo 1987)
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Stephen Rea took over the lease at around the same time that a rival track came to fruition in 1980; the track was the Chasewater Raceway, a trotting track that also held greyhound racing and experimented with speedway and stock cars. Nevertheless Norton Canes continued to trade and in 1984 Stephen Rea sold the lease to John Preece a businessman with an engineering firm in Stourbridge. In 1985 Go Eddie Flat Cap won the Golden Crest for P Stanley.

Attendances increased helped by the closure of the previously mentioned Chasewater and then the great Geoff DeMulder joined the track for a spell. DeMulder would ensure that the Norton Canes name would be seen on past winners lists. Fearless Ace won the Pall Mall in 1988, Labana Mathew and Handsome Dan also secured decent event victories. The winning feeling was catching and it was in 1992 that Glideaway Silver produced a moment of history for the little track when winning the Scottish Derby. The white and fawn dog trained by Michael Compton won the event as shock outsider. Only the English Derby would have surpassed that achievement and Norton Canes had nearly done so in 1989 and 1990. DeMulder trained Cooladine Style to fifth place in the 89 final and one year later Fair Hill Boy and Galtymore Lad finished third and fifth.

The track continued to gain major trophies as trainers Norman Johnson, Sylvia Houlker, Melvin Baker, Russ Kinsey, Maurice Buckland and George Lightfoot all scored big wins. These were topped by Harrys Dodds who's Appleby Lisa became Gold Collar champion in 1991.

Derek Pugh brought the Irish sales to Norton Canes for a short spell in the early nineties after selling Cradley but Norton Canes came to an abrupt end on 31 July 1995 when Preece finally pulled out after struggling for a few years to keep the track profitable.

Site today – (1° 57' 37.811"W 52° 39' 55.887"N).

Selected Track Records

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes
265m	Adam	15.01	07.06.1986	
440m	Oakfield Colin	26.91	18.11.1983	
	Larryandy	26.88	24.06.1991	
	Mandies Supreme	=26.88	21.10.1991	
	Moral Start	26.77	22.11.1991	
570m	Townview Snowy	35.79	1987+	
	Lucky Lagamore	35.63	02.12.1991	
617m	Slaneyside Point	39.61	12.09.1983	
	Murlens Panther	39.30	01.11.1989	
	Lucky Lagamore	39.28	11.11.1991	
792m	High July	53.03	1980+	
	Shropshire Lass	52.91	1991+	
969	Shropshire Lass	65.53	24.11.1989	
440mH	Moreen Flamingoe	28.27	1987+	

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