

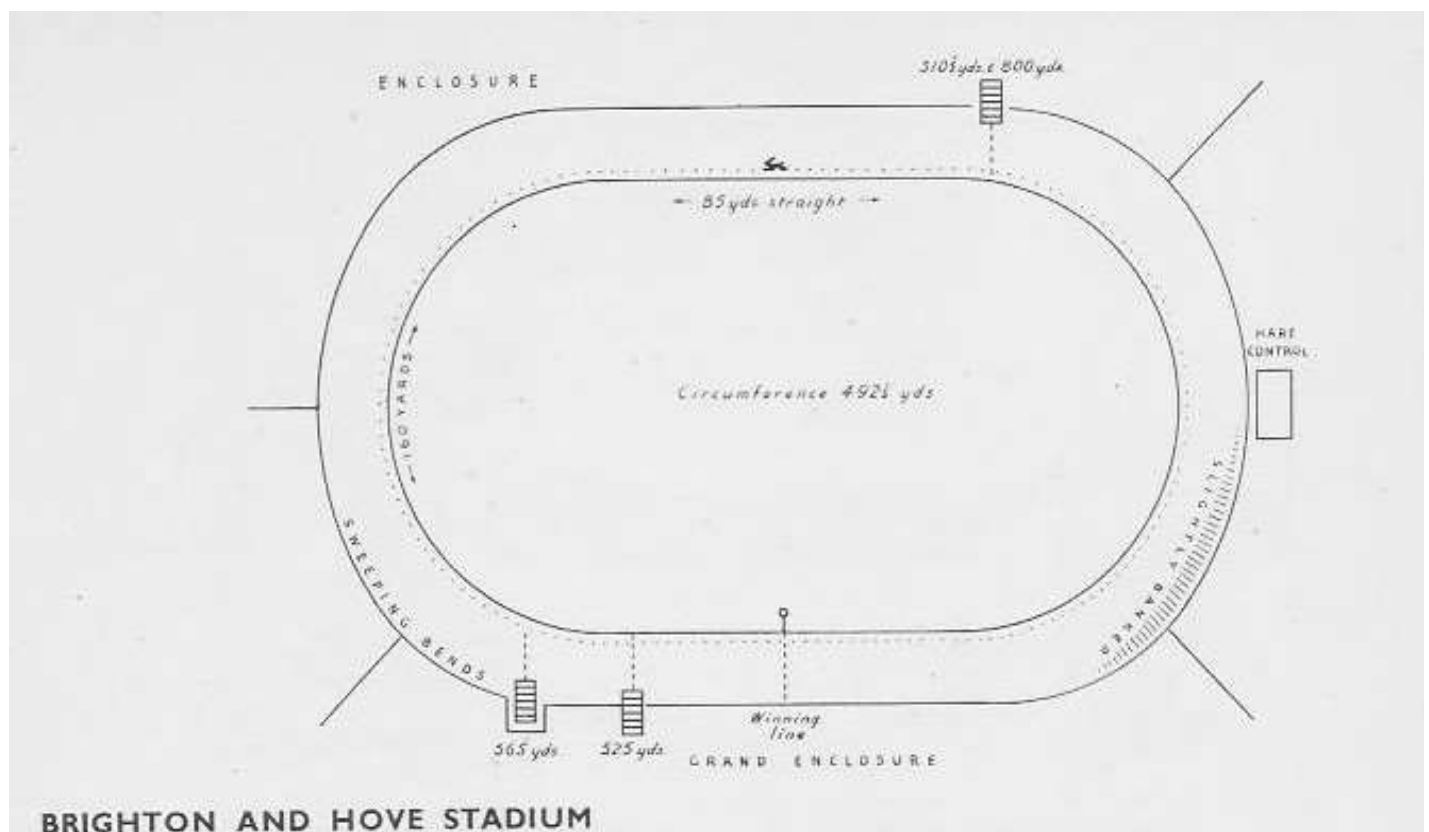
Brighton & Hove

The first race to be held at the track known as the Hove Sports Stadium was the Hove Stakes and took place on 2nd June 1928. Costs the 7-4f won the 525 yards race for trainer Toone and won £16 for his owner W.G.Hooper who was a solicitor in the city.

The plans for the site on Nevill Road and adjoining Hove Park had been unanimously passed by the Brighton Corporation in January 1928. Charles Wakeling, Freddie Arnold and Major Carlos Campbell instigated the construction but the GRA had a considerable amount of shares resulting in the company calling themselves the Greyhound Racing Association (Brighton) Ltd. Originally the construction was just a primitive track where the hare was wound round by hand and it was to take ten years to get electric lighting installed. Four years later in 1932 they installed their hand operated tote but suffered from the government ban on tote betting the same year. Luckily the 1934 Betting Act which reversed the ban saved the track from going under.

In 1940 the decision was made to move the resident kennels to Morley Lodge, Albourne, Henfield, West Sussex. This purpose built kennel facility for over 200 hounds offered a modern brick facility and each range had its own grass paddock. A breeding kennels was also set up on a farm in Sussex and from there they were switched to a rearing kennels in nearby Cumberland before being transferred to the Albourne kennels. The specifications of the circuit were easy swinging turns of 160 yards and short straights of 85 yards, distances were 310, 525, 565 and 800 yards and the hounds raced behind an inside MacWhirter trackless hare. Amenities included a club in both enclosures (the Nevill Road Club and the Orchard Road Club) and there were dining facilities in the Grand enclosure.

After the war the company was called Brighton & Hove Stadium Ltd and in 1948 the stadium introduced a new event called the Regency initially for British Bred Greyhounds. The Regency carried excellent prize money and attracted 161 British Bred litters in that first year and over 200 litters in 1949. The Managing Director Charles Wakeling who was also the chairman of Brighton & Hove Albion FC passed away leaving the stadium in the hands of Major Carlos Campbell.



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Some years later in 1958 Campbell died leaving the controlling interest of the shares in the hands of the GRA. They brought in Gerard Kealey as General Manager and Peter Shotton as Racing Manager and the pair went about building a fine reputation for the seaside track.

The best achievement to date came in 1961 when Gunner (Charles George) Smith steered Luxury Liner through to the Greyhound Derby Final. Smith had been a trainer at the track since 1930 and Luxury Liner had won the Scurry Gold Cup the previous year.

As the sixties continued racing was held on Wednesday and Saturday evenings, the restaurant had gained a great reputation and there were 3 buffet bars and 7 licenced bars. The circumference had changed to 491 yards with distances of 550, 725 and 880 yards with an 'Inside Sumner' hare. The track trainers consisted of Fred Lugg, Arthur Hancock, Birch & Gunner Smith

Brighton open races were very popular and the track became the first in the country to introduce travelling payments for open race trainers to encourage entries to travel south. In 1967 Spectre II won the 880yds BBC TV Trophy at Brighton in a record time of 50.09sec. One year later in 1968 Brighton recruited a new trainer in the experienced George Curtis formerly of Portsmouth and Park Royal. Curtis quickly established himself as one of the best trainers in the country and represented Brighton in two consecutive Greyhound Derby finals with Hard Held in 1969 and Sirius in 1970. Also in 1970 Brighton lost to White City, London in the grand final of the Duke of Edinburgh Cup.

The Sussex Cup was inaugurated in 1972 and one year later a new world record for 525 yards was broken at Brighton by Easy Investment who recorded 28.17. The seventies was an era when Brighton did extremely well with fine successes around the country. In 1975 Fred Lugg retired and the position of trainer at Brighton went to Doreen Walsh, head kennelhand to George Curtis. A third major event was brought to the track in 1975 when the Brighton Belle for bitches took place for the first time.

A significant deal was struck in 1976 with Coral Leisure purchasing Brighton and Romford. Heavy investment into both tracks helped Brighton become a major provincial in a year that they also won the National Intertrack competition.

Peter Shotton left to become head of racing at Wembley and Des Nicholls was brought in as Racing Manager and in 1978 trainer Gordon Hodson returned from Australia to take up a trainer position at Brighton.

Arthur Hancock retired as a trainer at Hove and was replaced by GRA trainer Derek Knight who had been at Shawfield. A fourth major race was introduced in 1979, but this time it was a race that had previously been ran at other tracks. The former Wandsworth and Charlton event called the Olympic arrived. The Brighton trainers were renowned by now as being some of the best in the country and it was Derek Knight who handled Amazing Man the next greyhound Derby finalist in 1983. Just one year later Curtis had another finalist, this time it was 'The Jolly Norman' and Brighton also had a new Racing Manager called Jim Layton who had left Oxford to take over the grading reigns from his boss Des Nicholls.

The Stewards Cup had been a regular competition over 695 metres since 1981 and George Curtis won the Oaks with Spiral Super in 1985 and became a three times trainer of the year winning the title in 1983, 1984 and 1986. The evergreen Gunner Smith had a Greyhound Derby finalist in 1985 in the form of House Hunter.

All of the success being experienced by the track was of course about to overshadowed by the Ballyregan Bob years from 1985 until 1987 that are listed throughout the site so are not covered here.

In 1987 Brighton & Hove Greyhound Stadium became the last course to remove the turf as the 455m circumference was switched to sand to follow in the footsteps of every other track. Lone Wolf and Life Policy won two consecutive St Legers for Curtis and Bob Young respectively in 1985 & 1986. Peter Shotton had returned to Brighton from Wembley as the Operations Director to experience these glory days and George Curtis retired in 1986, his kennels were taken over by Bill Masters.

Tapwatcher very nearly won the Derby for the track for the first time in 1987 but was pipped by a short head in a devastating defeat for trainer Bob Young. Sadly Gerard Kealey passed away in 1989 resulting in Shotton covering the General Manager role as well.

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Brighton pictured in 1982.
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In 1991 Coral announced that their tracks would be sold to fund the purchase of 73 bingo halls from Granada Theatre Ltd but despite the deal being struck and subsequent birth of Gala Bingo the tracks remained under the ownership of Coral. However Coral did lose a court case around the same time to the Alliance and Leicester forcing them to relinquish land where the Orchard Road enclosure stood.

A new generation of trainers arrived at Hove, Brian Clemenson was to become a three times champion trainer and win an incredible number of events. His assistant Alan (Claude) Gardiner replaced Bill Masters when he retired. Another ex-Oxford and Wembley man Peter Miller replaced Jim Layton as Racing Manager in 1994.

After three more Derby final appearances for Hove dogs the track finally achieved the Derby win in 2002 that it had been after since 1928. Claude Gardiner's Allen Gift took the prize at a shock 16-1, a final that contained three Hove hounds. In 2012 John Gammon retired after 15 years at the track as a trainer.

Today the track remains one of the premier venues in the country and attracts some of the best trainers in the country as shown by the recent acquisitions of Seamus Cahill, Norah McEllistram and Dean Childs.

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Pre-Metric Track Records

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes
310y	Four-Mile Bridge	17.14	09.06.1937	
525y	Jesmond Cutlet	29.36	10.07.1938	
	Good Worker	29.31	1948+	
	Kings Signature	29.24	1949+	
	Kans	28.71	14.09.1963	
	Easy Investment	28.17	30.06.1973	World and National record
550y	Woodvilles Fury	30.09	20.09.1965	
	Noble Pride	??	21.04.1966	
	Hard Held	29.77	1970+	
565y	Bella	31.82	04.1934	
	Roving Spring	31.61	14.09.1936	
	Raths Record	31.50	1949+	
725y	Ballyhandy Cedar	40.48	15.09.1965	
	Deneholme Flash	40.20	12.07.1969	
800y	Grosvenor Edwin	46.35	15.08.1938	
880y	Joyful C	50.70	12.04.1961	
	Spectre II	50.09	25.04.1967	Sportsview Television Trophy
1041y	Hi There Snow	60.19	1970+	
310yH	Nakomis II	18.11	23.10.1937	
500yH	Conna Chief	30.99	1970+	
525yH	Wooteys Kingmaker	30.39	12.08.1938	
	Athea Lad	30.34	21.07.1948	
550yH	Blue Sprite	31.14	25.08.1965	
565yH	Sammys Adventure	32.61	29.08.1931	

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

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Post-Metric Track Records

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes
285m	Fell Swoop	16.55	1987+	grass
	Ard Boxer	16.48	1988+	sand
	I Will Whisper	16.38	1989+	
	Ravage Again	16.35	30.08.1990	Etherington Sprint heats
	Ravage Again	16.27	04.09.1990	Etherington Sprint final
	Escort Captain	16.11	11.07.2000	
	Smoking Jonesey	16.29	2002+	
	Setemup Joe	16.20	22.03.2003	
	Tims Crow	16.05	22.05.2003	
	Jimmy Lollie	16.02	13.08.2009	
	Jimmy Lollie	15.94	17.07.2010	
	Jimmy Lollie	15.89	07.10.2010	
	475m	Droopys Candice	27.67	24.07.2001
Swift Star		27.47	01.08.2002	
Cash the Deal		27.47	26.07.2003	
500m	Linacre	28.99	1976+	National record
	Balliniska Band	28.99	1977+	
	Mondays Bran	28.96	1979+	Sussex Cup final & world record
515m	Glen Miner	29.62	04.05.1982	Grass & Olympic Final
	John Doe	30.14	1988+	sand
	Hit The Lid	29.73	30.07.1988	
	Iceman Joey	29.46	19.07.2002	
	Buy the Mystery	29.41	21.08.2003	
	Ballybrazil Hero	29.27	20.07.2004	Sussex Cup Heats
	Barnfield On Air	29.20	31.07.2007	Sussex Cup Final
670m	Westmead Champ	39.78	1976+	Regency Final
680m	Fair Reward	40.30	1980+	
	Glin Bridge	39.94	1976+	
695m	Ballyregan Bob	41.13	02.11.1985	grass
	Ballyregan Bob	42.04	09.12.1986	sand
	Waltham Abbey	41.21	31.08.1989	
	Killeacle Phoebe	41.10	21.04.2001	
	Form of Magic	40.82	26.03.2002	Trainers Championship
	Centour Corker	40.74	08.05.2003	
	Caloona Striker	40.73	21.06.2005	
725m	Glin Fane		1978+	
	Princess Glin	43.22	1979+	
740m	Sundridge Bet	44.42	08.07.1982	
	Apache Warrior	44.15	1987+	grass
	Ballyregan Bob	44.62	1988+	sand
	Life Policy	44.35	1988+	
	Sail On Valerie	44.29	05.05.1990	
	Mobile Magic	44.24	1992+	
	Lady Flyaway	44.20	21.08.1997	
	Form of Magic	43.59	30.03.2002	
930m	Kegans Gold	56.88	24.07.2001	
	Centour Corker	56.29	03.06.2003	
	Greenacre Lin	56.20	08.06.2004	
	Roxholme Magic	56.18	30.07.2015	
955m	Langford Dacoit	58.46	1978+	
970m	Sandy Lane	59.66	20.08.1983	
	Huntsmans Nippy	59.59	1987+	grass
	Comeragh Larch	61.20	1988+	sand
	Saquita	59.99	27.07.1989	
	Marys Gem	59.56	14.09.1997	

500mH	Wotch It Buster	29.71	1978+	
515mH	Sir Winston	30.47	1987+	grass
	Ozarks Warrior	30.89	1988+	sand
	Lord Westlands	30.49	05.11.1988	
	Group Tycoon	30.78	24.07.2001	
	Group Tycoon	30.39	15.09.2001	
	Greenacre George	30.08	01.08.2002	
	Junior Mac	29.83	27.07.2010	
680mH	Across The Miles	41.43	1979+	
695mH	August Monday	42.86	1987+	grass
	Mixer Mick	44.06	1988+	sand
	Mixer Mick	43.13	1988+	
	Razmac Dancer	42.95	1989+	

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