

Newcastle (Brough Park)

Brough Park lost the battle to be the first greyhound stadium in Newcastle because Tyneside Sports Stadium Ltd had just opened a track in the south of Scotswood Bridge called the White City just 28 days previous. Despite losing the race and the fact that the GRA had a financial interest in the rival track it did not take long before Brough Park established itself as the leading venue in Newcastle. Gosforth and Gateshead would follow a few years later but none would match Brough Park.

The stadium was constructed just south of the Fossway, east of Tunstall Avenue and west of the large garden allotments that ran alongside Roman Way (1° 33' 54.009"W 54° 58' 40.090"N). The resident kennels were constructed right next to the Fossway and actually sat directly on the route of Hadrians Wall; the kennels were very large accommodating greyhounds that would supply Brough Park and Gosforth in later years. On the south side of these kennels was the tracks third and fourth bends. The stadium had a main stand on the home straight with licenced club facilities and a smaller later stand on the back straight, also with licenced club facilities. In addition to the stands there were several tote buildings located on the home straight and between bends three and four next to the tote indicator and coffee bar.

The site chosen was in 1928 a fast growing area near Walker that was undergoing extensive change; the stadium plot had previously contained garden allotments and the north section of a football ground. The south section made way for the extensions of Grace Street and Scarborough Road.

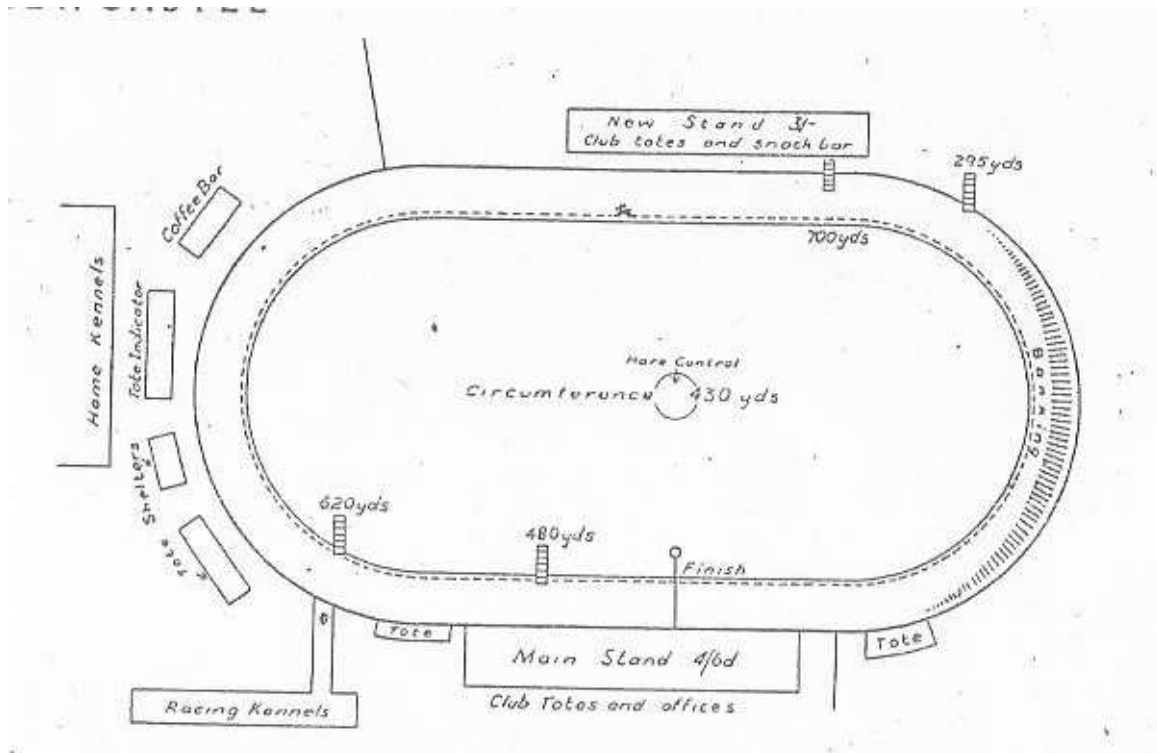
The opening night was on 23rd June 1928 with the first ever race being won by a greyhound called Marvin at odds of 3-1. Brough Park remained a prominent Northern track during the thirties but because it was not part of the GRA there was little success in the way of open races, the location of Brough Park clearly contributed to this fact also.

So it was that in 1938 the management decided to introduce an event called the All England Cup and the prize money was set so that it would tempt many of the top connections to travel to the track. As with many tracks the war soon interrupted regular racing but once it was over the greyhounds took centre stage once again. The surface was described as a good grass track, 430 yards in circumference with distances of 295, 500 & 520 yards with an inside Sledge-Trackless hare. The 500 yard distance had recently replaced 480 yards and the rarely seen centre green hare controller was in operation (the vast majority of tracks drove the hare from a home straight position). Two more competitions called the Northumberland Stakes and Northumberland Cup were introduced.

In 1946 Brough Park experienced a race that will never be seen again, it was the 1946 running of the All England Cup featuring four national Derby champions. The legendary English Derby champion Mondays News, Ireland's Derby winner Lilac Luck, Scotland's Derby winner Lattin Pearl and Welsh Derby champion Negro's Lad all lined up for the event. The hope that all four would progress to the final failed to materialise but Mondays News and Lattin Pearl did finish first and second in the final.

During the fifties the Racing Manager was JD Greeves and he was lucky enough to see great greyhounds such as Endless Gossip and Just Fame claim victory in the All England Cup within this period. As the sixties arrived the track underwent considerable changes including new ownership and management. In 1964 the Totalisator Holdings Group became owners of stadium followed by a new General Manager in Dan McCormick and the Racing manager was R Slater. The hare was switched to an outside Navan type with racing held on Thursday and Saturday evenings. Distances were 525, 650, 700, 750 and 880 yards including hurdles over 525 yards.

.....continued



Layout of the stadium in the 1940's

Brough Park was about to undergo a superb spell in terms of success for some of its trainers, Norman Oliver had joined the track in the early sixties and his hard work paid off when he secured the 1967 Scottish Derby with Hi Ho Silver. This started a great run of form for the kennels as Shady Begonia reached the Derby final one year later as well as securing the Television trophy title. In 1969 Shady Begonia was still going strong clinching the Regency. Oliver began to stamp his authority on the open race circuit and another brilliant greyhound had come his way by 1972 called Ramdeen Stuart. This brindle dog lifted the classics in the St Leger crown and Gold Collar; other successes were the Stewards Cup, ben Truman Stakes and Scottish St Leger. Oliver was voted trainer of the year in 1973 but Patricia's Hope stopped Ramdeen Stuart from taking greyhound of the year.

The success was catching, Bill Raggatt steered Cute Caddie to a Stow Marathon victory in 1973 and two All England Cups stayed at home in 1973 & 1975 whilst another trainer Jimmy Smith scooped up smaller events. The stadium underwent improvements with a new restaurant

After this golden period there was a lull but not in terms of changes. 1974 brought about new owners as the Totalisators and Greyhound Holdings Group was taken over by Ladbrokes. New joint Racing Managers were Tony Smith and Paul Richardson and the new Director of Racing for Ladbrokes was Arthur Aldridge who left the GRA. The year was indeed a pivotal year and the icing on the cake was Westpark Mustard continuing her record attempt and winning race number 13 in a new track record time over 725 metres.

In 1977 a new competition was inaugurated and was called the Trainers Championship, this involved a series of races with greyhounds from the top six trainers in the country. Brough Park was chosen as the very first venue that saw a tie between Natalie Savva and Geoff De Mulder. In 1980 the track changed from grass to sand and Bill Hughes became Racing Manager.

The future became uncertain when Ladbrokes decided to sell the track in 1983 to Glassedin Greyhounds Ltd; the company was headed by James Glass father of trainer Jane Glass. The kennels were sold for redevelopment into the Brough Park trading estate. Just two years later Kevin Wilde headed a management team that leased the track.

.....continued

Another period of success arrived after Scurlogue Champs 1986 Television Trophy triumph at Brough Park, contract trainers Harry Williams and Dawn Milligan gobbled up trophies with the likes of Pond Hurricane, Intelligent Lad and Kingsmeadow King. Several years later Jubilee Rebecca won the Television Trophy for Gordon Rooks during a period when Brough Park disappeared from the open race winners lists.

All was very quiet until a major milestone and turning point for the track arrived in 2003. William Hill bookmakers purchased the track which then underwent major investment similar to that of Sunderland whom William Hill had acquired the year before. The track slowly built up its reputation and began to draw in a better class of greyhound. A rebranding took place in 2007 because the track was the only one left in Newcastle the decision was made to rename the stadium from Brough Park to Newcastle.

The investment in the new facilities and track was rewarded with selection as the host of the Television Trophy in 2009 and new trainer Jimmy Wright began to light up the open race scene with the likes of Crown Rover and Hurleys Hero. In addition Target Classic picked up a princely sum for winning the William Hill Classic in 2010 and England Expects lifted the Grand Prix on same evening. Racing Manager Ian Walton arguably had one of the strongest strengths in the country with a conveyor belt seemingly coming in the future. Elwick Chris trained by Michael Walsh scored big when winning the Laurels in 2010, Droopys Hester won the Champion Stakes a year later and in 2012 Harry Williams joined from sister track Sunderland.

Newcastle won the BAGS championship in 2012 and Mags Gamble (Harry Williams) won the All England Cup and Ladbrokes Gold Cup. Craig Dawson was the latest trainer to win a competition for Newcastle in 2014 when Farloe Nutter became the Ladbrokes Puppy Derby champion and Ian Walton took up the role of Operations Manager with Paul Twinn becoming Racing Manager.

Harry Williams retired in 2015.

Selected Track Records (pre-Metric)

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes
300y	Kenn Flyer	17.31	1950+	
520y	Ballydancer	29.45	1950+	
525y	Cranog Bet	28.83	18.09.1964	
525yhc	Shady Fragrance	28.96	1970+	
550y	Witches Smoke	30.11	1970+	
550yhc	Shady Begonia	29.92	1970+	
650y	Attorney General	39.02	1950+	
	Wallys Choice	37.56	16.11.1963	
700y	Barr Na Scounch	39.90	15.09.1962	
	Whiff	39.61	1970+	
700yhc	Whiff	39.65	1970+	
725y	Pretty Oregon	41.32	1970+	
	Westpark Mustard	40.94	27.04.1974	
750y	Coologue Champion	43.28	28.09.1965	
	Canner	42.73	1970+	
880y	Chieftains Envoy	51.16	28.09.1965	
1000y	Old Irish	59.61	1970+	
520yH	Farloe's Pride	31.24	1950+	
525yH	Harmless	29.87	1970+	

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

.....continued

Selected Track Records (post-Metric)

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes
277m	Cooga Hall	16.92	23.11.1979	
290m	Meadowbank Snooker	17.38	06.10.1983	
	Hows Yer Man	17.22	02.03.1993	
	Hollinwood Chief	16.86	12.09.2002	
	Gateman	16.84	22.11.2003	
	Final Trek	16.83	14.07.2007	
	Target Brett	16.78	09.10.2010	
	Walshes Hill	16.75	23.05.2015	
460m	Templemartin Una	28.00	11.10.1986	
	New Level	27.81	12.05.1992	
480m	Hack Up Georgie	29.59	29.06.1968	
	Lisroe Mike	29.59	10.09.1976	
	Just Right Melody	28.72	26.07.1994	
	Barney the Bold	28.63	18.09.2001	All England Cup Final
	Droopys Shearer	28.35	12.07.2003	
	Internet Jo	28.31	09.08.2003	
	Droopys Shearer	27.90	01.07.2004	
500m	Moneypoint Coal	30.08	12.10.1985	
	Kilgrogan Tex	29.78	10.08.2002	
	Tally Ho Shimmer	29.52	27.05.2004	
614m	Shady Wonder	39.13	12.07.1968	
640m	Stouke Tania	39.16	19.04.1994	
	Calzaghe Frisby	38.61	19.09.2006	
670m	Ballyregan Bob	41.15	08.05.1986	
	Bellpac Tomas	40.83	06.09.2005	
	Ballyheaphy Lass	40.74	20.09.2005	Northumberland Plate Final
	Witton Maggie	40.74	20.09.2005	
	Riverview Toby	40.69	19.09.2005	Northumberland Plate Final
	Hurleys Hero	40.60	09.10.2010	
	Banfid Rizzoli	40.49	20.09.2014	
680m	Cahermore Ruby	43.24	1980+	
825m	Scurlogue Champ	52.62	11.06.1985	
	Scurlogue Champ	52.26	23.04.1986	
	Newry Town	52.02	10.05.1994	
	Let Us Know	51.55	12.04.2001	
	Greenacre Lin	50.44	13.07.2004	
864m	Seven Wells	58.40	03.06.1968	
895m	Give Her Time	56.67	23.06.1998	
	Flying Winner	55.93	12.11.2008	
	Aayamzabella	55.81	08.10.2013	
480mH	Ballyhane Rio	30.20	14.11.2000	
	Ballyhane Rio	30.18	09.12.2000	
	Ballyhane Rio	30.10	18.09.2001	
500mH	Face The Mutt	31.43	01.07.1982	
	Jenks Challenger	31.33	07.09.1991	
	Kildare Slippy	31.06	1992+	

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