

Pelaw Grange

A greyhound track situated north of Chester-le-Street was constructed and named after Pelaw Grange a nearby country house and farm directly to the east. It was reportedly built in 1944 by a man called George Towers and served the local population in the area with independent racing. The entire area was of course a hot bed of greyhound racing with links to the mining communities that lived in the county of Durham. In fact it is believed that there was a larger greyhound stadium just to the north in Birtley.

The Pelaw Grange track is situated south of Drum Road and directly next to the railway with the back straight running parallel to the east side of the railway (1° 34' 43.344"W 54° 52' 37.603"N). The stadium was taken over by Joe and Joyce McKenna in January 1965 and in 1968 raced every Thursday and Saturday. The racing consisted of level and handicap races over distances of 241, 410 & 570 yards with an inside hare.

The McKenna's son Jeff eventually became the track promoter and he continued to offer independent racing almost running the track as a one man show as General and Racing Manager combined. Facilities slowly improved over the years with the 360y circumference track becoming all sand in the eighties. Competitions were introduced called the Newcastle Rose Bowl & Whitfield Oaks. There was computerised tote, car parking for 200 vehicles, three bars and two glass fronted stands.

Jeff McKenna and his wife Theresa finally decided in 2005 that it was time to race under rules after sixty years as an independent track. The application to the NGRC was passed and the switchover took place on Monday August 22nd with the first racing on the Thursday 25th.

After a few teething problems the track installed Graeme Henigan as Racing Manager and there was also success from local trainers in National competitions including a National Sprint title for Clounlaheen trained by Mick Hurst and three notable event wins by Larkhill Bird trained by Michael Walsh.

The track today runs every Friday, Saturday and Sunday lunchtime with the current Racing Manager being David Gray. The track celebrated fifty years under the McKenna's in August 2015 by hosting a SKY fixture for the first time featuring a meeting sponsored by Pin Point Recruitment.

Selected Track Records

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes
245m	Craan Fleece	14.78	24.03.2008	
	Mill Pearl	14.57	08.09.2008	
	Lampard	14.51	28.05.2011	
	Forest Vic	14.30	26.10.2014	
260m	Stouke Society	15.52	04.02.2006	
435m	Family Title	25.46	23.09.2006	
	Maglass Legend	25.35	10.09.2007	
	Blue Genesis	25.13	26.12.2007	
590m	Travelyans Corn	36.48	24.03.2008	
	Malden Flight	36.05	25.08.2008	
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	Droopys Freda	35.75	15.09.2008	
	605m	Zigzag Kit	36.84	26.12.2005
Beren		37.51	26.12.2005	
Amolee Classic		37.28	24.07.2006	
Joyous Leader		37.20	28.08.2006	
Blue Tom Cat		36.98	30.10.2006	
Stretching Out		36.96	27.08.2007	
Droopys Freda		36.81	26.12.2007	
780m		Schofield Bertie	48.46	05.05.2008
	Calzaghe Lisa	47.88	11.08.2015	