

Towcester

Towcester opened on the 6th December 2014 becoming the first track in Britain to open since the 1995 openings of Harlow and Sittingbourne. The idea of a track inside the horse racing course was dreamed up by Lord Hesketh the racecourse owner and Chief Executive Kevin Ackerman who brought in a first rate team that included former Walthamstow Racing Manager Chris Page, Deputy RM Andy Lisemore and Steve Cale.

At a cost of £1.5 million the 420 metres circumference circuit was created by laying down an incredible 60,000 tonnes of soil so that the greyhound racing surface met the horse racing home straight at a level setting, resulting in an astonishing six metre rise. The bends were arguably the widest ever seen in greyhound racing with the shape resembling a sweeping oval that gave the impression of minimal straights and incredibly easy bends. This was borne out by the fact that on opening night the two eight dog races held (the first in the country for years) were completed without a hint of bend crowding.

The kennels were constructed inside some of the unused horse stables and in October the new trainers list was announced and included five times champion trainer Mark Wallis, 2011 champion trainer Chris Allsopp, Kevin Hutton, Matt Dartnall and many more respected trainers. The venture was hailed by many as a wonderful chance for the industry to move forward and the track deservedly received a BAGS contract when BAGS announced the new fixture list for 2015, it included a bumper 53 meetings.

The distances on the first night were 260, 480, 655, 686 and 906 and the first race was won by 4-1 shot Fairest Royal trained by Wallis. A big screen situated on the home straight was a new experiment and went down superbly adding to a vibrant atmosphere.



The Towcester stewards on opening night.
L to R – Chris Page, Steve Cale, Andy Lisemore

With a strong group of trainers at Towcester it was not surprising that success was inevitably going to come quickly. It was provided by Kevin Hutton in March 2015; the former Swindon handler from Oxford scored a remarkable comeback to be crowned champion trainer. The TV Trophy and Lowther Stakes (worth £10,000 to the winner) marked the first two serious competitions held at the track. Irish raider Ballymac Bonnie won the TV Trophy and Forest Twilight won the latter race breaking the track record twice in the process.

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In December 2015 Towcester were crowned BAGS/SIS Track Champions after winning the final at Perry Barr. They outscored Newcastle by 67 points to 57 with Hall Green (51) finishing third. Belle Vue (37), Romford (37) and Monmore (31) were well beaten. Towcester's departing team manager Andy Lisimore left for the Peterborough hot seat on a high; Lisimore replaced Paul Miller as Racing Manager.



View of the Towcester track taken from the terracing in 2015.

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Selected Track Records

Distance	Name	Time	Date	Notes	
260m	Razldazl Banjo	15.63	06.12.2014		
	Opus Star	15.54	13.12.2014		
	Mays Teejay	15.47	20.12.2014		
	Club Notes	15.46	27.12.2014		
	Leaveittome	15.30	03.01.2015		
	Mays Teejay	15.07	22.01.2015		
	Cloudbursting	15.00	01.02.2015		
	480m	Fairest Royal	28.55	06.12.2014	
King Dec		28.46	06.12.2014		
Killglen Chief		28.44	06.12.2014		
Priests Place		28.41	12.12.2014		
Ballymac Brogan		28.30	13.12.2014		
King Dec		28.20	13.12.2014		
Ballymac Mossjoe		28.09	22.01.2015		
Blue Moment		27.91	22.01.2015		
Domino Storm		27.84	02.01.2015		
Forest Twilight		27.72	15.08.2015	Lowther Stakes heats	
Forest Twilight		27.59	22.08.2015	Lowther Stakes final	
480m*8		Stanton Buster	28.97	06.12.2014	
		Flemish Idea	28.92	12.12.2014	
	Jet Stream Jack	28.49	06.12.2014		
	Mash Mad Blackie	28.36	17.01.2015		
655m	Billys Bullet	39.69	06.12.2014		
	Holdem Hawk	39.42	13.12.2014		
	Billys Bullet	38.90	08.02.2015		
686m	Touch Tackle	41.91	06.12.2014		
	Vanrooney	41.55	13.12.2014		
	Black Francis	41.45	22.01.2015		
	Vanrooney	40.97	08.02.2015		
906m	Supreme Rossie	57.09	06.12.2014		
	Supreme Rossie	56.75	06.12.2014		
	Ribble Atom	55.46	25.07.2015	TV Trophy Trial Stakes	
	Ballymac Bonnie	55.29	08.08.2015	TV Trophy heats	
	Droopys Cottage	55.17	08.08.2015	TV Trophy heats	
485mH	Razldazlnewstalk	28.41	18.08.2015		