

Erin News

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Welcome to the 17th edition of Erin News- find out what has been going on behind the scenes as we head towards homing our 900th hound.

Flexor Tendinotomy to treat corns

Greyhounds are prone to corns which can cause persistent lameness despite the use of cream, boots and local removal, so we would like to share experiences of a new treatment:

I adopted Harvey from Erin Hounds in February 2021 (was Lucas). I had never had a greyhound before, but had done my research and was aware that they can be prone to corns. In May 2021, Harvey started limping on his back left paw and holding it up off the ground when he was standing still. He was obviously in pain and I was really worried. I had a really close look at his pads on that paw and couldn't see anything at all, even after soaking his foot and putting moisturizer on it. I took him to our local vet who examined him and also said she couldn't see anything wrong. She suggested it was a soft tissue injury and prescribed anti-inflammatories and rest. After a week or so of resting him, his limp seemed a little better, but as soon as we went back to having walkies, his limp started back again, but there was still nothing visible on his pad.

I did more research and found the 'Greyhounds with corns' group on Facebook. I found out that corns can still cause pain and limping even before they are visible. Through that group, I found out about flexor tendinotomy (FT) surgery. I looked at all of the options for dealing with corns and discovered that the other options like hulling, colloidal silver etc don't deal with the root of the problem and that corns can often come back. This made sense to me. I'm a runner and I had a corn on my foot for years. I tried lots of different things to

deal with it but it always came back. My corn only went away for good once I got orthotics that changed my gait and therefore dealt with the root cause. It seemed like this surgery could do the same for Harvey. He's only just 4 and I didn't want him to have to deal with constant messing with his feet, limping and the corn coming back. Through the group on Facebook, I found veterinary surgeon, Mike Guilliard (www.mikeguilliard.co.uk).

Mike pioneered the FT surgery and I did lots of reading on this before contacting him. I sent Mike some photographs and he agreed that it was a corn and that Harvey would be suitable for the surgery. Mike is also currently doing a trial to gather data about the success of the surgery. I was wary, putting Harvey through anaesthetic to deal with a corn seemed quite drastic, but seeing him limping and not his usual bouncy self was breaking my heart. I had a good chat with Mike and his team and we agreed to proceed. I didn't consult with my own vet and went straight to Mike. I wanted Harvey to have the best possible care, and surely the person who invented the surgery would be the best person to do it!

After filling in some paperwork about how the corn was affecting him, we took Harvey to see Mike. He had us run around the front of the vets while he took some videos (which was no easy task, given there was a small furry there, Harvey loves nothing more than chasing small furries!). Harvey was only in with Mike for about 45 minutes and, as soon as he walked out, yes, he was wobbly and drowsy, but no limp!! After a few days, he was putting equal weight on that paw and, to date, hasn't limped

once. I couldn't believe the difference!

I honestly can't recommend the procedure enough. I did worry that perhaps I should have tried other, non-surgical methods first, but if Harvey ever gets another corn, I will be straight back to Mike. Harvey is with Pet Plan insurance, Mike helped me fill in the claim form and it all went through with no problems. It's now been about 3 weeks since the surgery and, other than a little bald patch on his foot, you couldn't tell anything has happened. I've got my happy bouncy boy back and I will be forever grateful to Mike and for the fantastic advice from the Facebook group "Greyhounds with corns".

Erin Hounds also have first-hand experience of this treatment which was performed on one of our greyhounds on 24 August by Mike Guilliard.



In memory of Alex Smeeth

19/10/77 - 22/04/21

We were shocked and saddened to learn of the passing of Alex, one of our long term foster carers. Alex and his partner adopted lurcher, Chica from Erin Hounds (died July 2019), whom they renamed Freya as company for their existing lurcher, Porkchop, in 2013. Loki, their black cat oversaw this new arrival without turning a whisker and showed herself as a suitable feline to assess selected sighthounds' ability to live safely alongside cats. Some of the dogs that owe their adoptions to Alex and Loki's assessment are Nessa, Grafton, Daisy, Cello, Britta, Swallow, Foley, Wren, Monkee, Tarbuck, Lola, Cube and Zola. Alex loved animals, reading and outdoor pursuits and enjoyed his much valued role as a foster carer and was always flexible and reliable. We were very touched to receive a generous donation from his family in his memory and will all miss him.



Fostering in memory of Penny, the lurcher (Adopted 2011 – died 3rd June 2021):



Over 10 years ago, Penny arrived at Erin Hounds- the first saluki cross to come through and a very frightened and fear-aggressive little girl she was. My second (and last) foster, she really needed someone there nearly 24 hours of the day. Fortunately she got on very well with my other dog, Uschi, and fitted in as second in command. Even then she was definitely a prima donna, and knew it. Everyone said "Oh what a pretty dog" and she was renowned as the local diva along with the hair flicking when necessary. When Uschi left us, Penny finally became a Daddy's girl which only took 8 years and when I was at my PC there was usually a very long dog under my feet. (Bob)

She is very sadly missed, but we are very grateful that Bob bit the bullet and recommenced fostering as he knew how great that need is for dogs who simply require time rather than anything more complex, in order to get over their traumas. He has fostered male greyhound, Tandem and is now fostering

older female greyhound, Jambalaya. (Ed)

Where there is no will, there is no way

We are very frustrated to report that declines in industry welfare inspections continue...

Gerard Dollard, until very recently CEO of Greyhound Racing Ireland (GRI), previously the Irish Greyhound Board (IGB), stated there is a "priority of maintaining animal welfare at the centre of the industry" - following the conviction and €1000 fine (with €5,682 costs), in May 2021, of Kieran O'Donnell for welfare breaches involving twelve greyhounds.

The case dates back to GRI welfare inspections in November/December 2019 where GRI seized the twelve greyhounds after being found to be in "extremely poor condition".

Under the Greyhound Racing Act 2019 (still to be implemented) 'Conditions of office of members of board' state that a GRI Board Member ceases to hold office if convicted of an offence involving cruelty to an animal or relating to animal welfare'.

The same call was made, by greyhound welfare/rehoming charities, during the drafting of the 2019 Act to include that greyhound owners/trainers/breeders should also be banned following animal welfare convictions but those calls were rejected - instead just pitiful fines continue under relevant regulations of the 2011 Act.

The convicted trainer/owner, Kieran O'Donnell, continues to be the registered owner of at least one greyhound - showing that the greyhound



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industry in Ireland is not bothered if the owners/trainers/breeders it relies on continue to be allowed to be around greyhounds even after an animal welfare conviction.

The announcement and continued PR from the industry that there is a 'priority of maintaining animal welfare at the centre of the industry' raises an important question as to why industry welfare inspections are declining.

GRI's own reports show that for 2020 the industry conducted the lowest number of welfare inspections since 2015. Alarming, 2021, so far, shows a further, dramatic, decline in welfare inspections.

From January to March 2020, there were 219 welfare inspections (Jan - 95,

Feb - 92 and March - 32). From January to March 2021, there were 53 welfare inspections (Jan - 19, Feb - 19 and March - 15).

During the Covid-19 pandemic it was argued by the industry that the continued racing/breeding/selling of greyhounds (including greyhounds owned by Irish politicians) was 'essential'. At the same time GRI argues that Covid-19 has limited the industry being able to carry out welfare inspections.

December 2020, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) Minister, Charlie McConalogue, defending the funding for the industry, told the Dáil in 2016 there were 7,313 active greyhound owners. GRI show there were 571 welfare inspections for

2016. This would mean that less than 8% of owners were inspected - a figure that ultimately would show fewer welfare issues for the industry to investigate and report.

Similar declines in industry-activity on welfare for greyhounds can be seen in the decline of doping tests carried out. While the GRI's own welfare and doping reports show these alarming and concerning declines, their PR in the media shows their insincerity - it shows that welfare is not at the centre of the industry.

The DAFM should ensure that the GRI enforce the welfare law, as a condition of government funding, but the DAFM have not been forthright in doing so. Irish Greyhound Spotlight

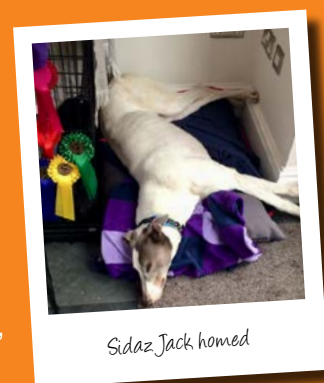
Massive thanks to all our wonderful supporters including:

Derry, Neil, Audrey, Joan, Lily, snood knitters and a bandana knitter who also donated sighthound pictures which we auctioned, Verena, Vashti, Vanessa, Max, Louise, Faye, David, Lily, Lisa, Phil, Wendy, Digby and Pam (in memory of Bandit), Evelyn, Susanne and Pets at Home VIP lifelines.

Thank you to Vanilla Ivy Art for designing wonderful Christmas cards for Erin Hounds and we are delighted to say we have more artwork from Vanilla Ivy Art to share with you in the not too distant future.

What more fitting way for Dazzle celebrate his 10th birthday on 8th June 2021 than to ask his adopter, Paul to donate funds to help save 10 dogs? He has his own page on Wikipedia under his race name Sidaz Jack. Some of the hounds who have been saved and found homes as a result of this this wonderful donation are Lourdes, Mahal, Mumbai, Mecca, Tandem, Yoghurt, Piccadilly and Psalm.

Although lockdown had many drawbacks, one silver lining was that sighthounds could win prizes without even getting off the sofa as Erin Hound, Bronya demonstrates with her first prize in the Treacle Market's fun virtual dog show in October 2020.



As ever, the hounds have the final say...

Someone should do something- if not you, then who?



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