

Focus on Safety

Sally Briggs, General Manager of Gulf Greyhound Park, Tim Leuschner, incoming President of AGTOA and Diane Whiteley of the Texas Greyhound Association welcomed over 40 participants to the 6th Greyhound Safety and Race Track Surface Seminar, hosted at Gulf on February 22-23. The Seminar, sponsored by Gulf, AGTOA and the TGA, was a continuation of a program started in 2002 to focus on greyhound safety and welfare.

Attendees from Wheeling Downs, Southland, Daytona Beach Kennel Club, Valley Race Park, Gulf Greyhound Park, Palm Beach Kennel Club, Birmingham Race Park, Texas Racing Commission, TGA and Jacksonville Kennel Club attended the day and a half presentation of topics related to greyhound safety.

Kip Keefer of the Birmingham Racing Commission and Chairman of the RCI Greyhound Committee updated the group on the greyhound Model Rules under consideration by the RCI.

Richard Ferranti of Daytona Beach Kennel Club gave an informative presentation on the design, building and maintenance of the track surface at Daytona.

Gene Magliaro of Palm Beach Kennel Club presented several innovative techniques to enhance greyhound safety on the racetrack, explained the importance of hands-on maintenance and called for action to further reduce injuries.

David Peck, TGA and NGA Track Committee described the methods used at the NGA track to prepare and maintain the track surface to accommodate about 2,200 runners over 12 days.

Dr. Marty Tanner, NGA President, showed the correlation between certain types of injuries with track surface conditions.

Gulf provided an excellent barbecue dinner on Monday night, providing an opportunity for participants to exchange ideas on further improving track safety.

On Tuesday morning, Diane Whiteley set out the 2010-2011 strategic plan of the TGA to enhance greyhound safety and welfare, using the Texas Greyhound Foundation as a catalyst to provide funding for safety programs.

Marsha Kelly, representing the American Greyhound Council, provided a short course on dealing with the media, including the basics of messaging and getting out the good news about greyhound racing.

The Seminar wrapped up with a panel discussion on various topics, including school-backs, chart writing and greyhound welfare. The TGA appreciates the participation of all of the tracks as we move to further improve the safety and welfare of our greyhounds.