

Traps open for 10 million euro greyhound stadium at Greenpark

By
John O'Shaughnessy

Decade long campaign reaps its rewards

LIMERICK'S long awaited new greyhound stadium is finally up and running with confirmation this week that John Sisk and Son Limited, have won the building contract for the 10 million euro investment at the former Greenpark Racecourse.

The campaign for a modern facility to replace the almost 80-year-old Markets Field track had many twists and turns over the past decade.

Greenpark, which is now to be the venue, was first mooted by Patrick-swell-based Michael Field, former chairman of the Irish Greyhound Board.

When that did not work out, there were proposals to reinvest and modernise the Markets Field.



Greyhound trainer and supporter Tom Ryan campaigned for new Limerick track

That idea, too, fell by the wayside only after a refurbishment programme and the purchase of the former Eircom Building on Mulgrave Street and then it was announced that a site had been purchased in county Clare, close to the Two Mile Inn.

Clare County Council were not too impressed

and after planning restrictions were imposed, it was back to the drawing board again.

Angry greyhound owners, trainers and supporters put further pressure on the authorities to provide Limerick with a stadium in keeping with Shelbourne Park, Cork, Tralee Galway and Waterford.

None campaigned more vigorously than Gus Ryan, racing manager at the Markets Field, and former Limerick hurling manager Tom Ryan.

The new stadium on the Dock Road will provide employment in the city for 250 jobs during the build and 100 permanent jobs upon completion in Sep-

tember of 2010.

It will host over 1750 races a year and have a capacity attendance of 2,900, putting it among the top rank of greyhound racing stadia on an international scale.

It will have an 190 seat restaurant, private hospitality suites and gallery bars, all of which will

be a significant attraction for people in the mid-west region. The structure has been designed to accommodate the latest developments in building and environmental efficiency.

"This project is a cornerstone of the continuing development of our sport," said Irish Greyhound Board chairman,

Dick O'Sullivan.

"Our decision to proceed with the development is based on absolute confidence in the future of the sport and an opportune lowering of construction costs as we have seen through this very competitive tender process".

Said Sisk director Jm

Tuohy: "We are delighted to have been chosen to build such a prestige development. Limerick is a great sporting city and we are pleased to be given the opportunity of adding another high quality city centre stadium to stand comparison with Thomond Park across the Shannon".



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