



The winning dog, Marshals Supreme, with his trainer Mrs Marie Roche and (from left) Mr Andy Hughes, Sir Mark Prescott Bt, Mr David Midwood.

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Irish host 'Waterloo' as coursing digs-in

The greyhound classic, run at Altcar since 1836, was replaced by a 32-dog stake at Sevenhouses, between Kilkenny and Waterford. Joanna Russell reports

THE prestigious Waterloo Cup for coursing greyhounds having been outlawed under the Hunting Act, a 32-dog coursing stake took place in Ireland for Waterloo Cup nominators. It was the idea of Pat Loughlin, secretary of the Sevenhouses Club, to run a contest for English and Irish dogs, 16 of each, for Waterloo Cup nominators and the many followers who cross the Irish sea every year to compete in England's Waterloo Cup, run at Altcar, near Liverpool, since 1836.

Because so many enthusiasts were involved, each competing greyhound had about three nominators for the meeting, which was run at Sevenhouses, between Kilkenny and Waterford, on January 14 and 15. It was named the Seamus Hughes Memorial Cup in honour of Patrick Loughlin's cousin, a licensed coursing judge and chef d'equipe for the Irish junior show jumping teams.

The meeting was held in a vast field with a run-up of about 400 yards, and was well supported by

English competitors frustrated by the hunting ban (which includes coursing) and by the Irish.

Irish entries included the Bow-Wow Syndicate's South Marsh, nominated by County Cork Open Coursing Clubs, which started favourite, Strideaway Syndicate's Strideaway Razor, nominated by Patrick Loughlin, Sir Mark Prescott Bt's Equal Status, Miss Emma Roche's Marshals Supreme, and the O'Donovan trained and nominated Tywald Barney. Michael O'Donovan has trained five Waterloo winners. Another interesting contender was Michael Houlihan's Misty Hyland, which is by the fast sire Matt Hyland, and which had already qualified for the Champion Stakes at Clonmel, an eight-dog stake for males, all of which must qualify on points.

The English contingent was equally illustrious. It included last year's Waterloo Cup winner, Shashi, trained by the Teals and owned by Michael Darnell,

Ernest Smith and Albert Shackcloth, the Waterloo Cup runner-up, Hardy Admiral, trained by Cliff Standing, Basso Profundo, the 2005 Waterloo Plate winner, and the Audrey Hall owned and

Hats off to the English trainers who travel across Ireland to ensure that our dogs still run

nominated Wannabe Adored, a previous winner of the Altcar Junior Stakes. It was considered that Mounteden Radio, owned by Nasaar Raja Ahmed, trained and nominated by John Bushnell, also had immense potential.

In the first round of the Cup, the Teal-trained Noelle's Commando looked impressive, the Irish Carol's Bertie was an easy winner, Basso Profundo met another dog from the same Terry Richmond kennel in Markhall Joker, but got the flag by a distance, and Misty Hyland also won easily. By the end of the sec-

ond round, four English dogs remained, Noelle's Commando, Mucky Burky, trained by Liz Hall, Mounteden Radio, and Stroll to Town, owned by Mesdames Delahooke and Delamaine with Mr Campbell. The Irish Marshals Supreme just got up to beat the very fast fawn dog Noelles Commando, and Tynwald Barney beat Mucky Burky by two lengths. Mounteden Radio led Stroll to Town by a distance, and was the only English dog to get into the semi-finals. He was favourite to win at this stage. Tynwald Barney left the field, sore, after the third round.

The slips were very long as the meeting progressed, and the hares ran beautifully. The second semi-final was dramatic, with Mounteden Radio leading all the way, but a gallant last-minute thrust from Misty Hyland just put him ahead by a whisker, thus ensuring ultimately an all-Irish contest against Marshals Supreme.

The final was decisive, with Marshals Supreme establishing an advantage of five lengths. He had already reached the semi-finals of two other 32-dog stakes, the Tipperary Cup and the Knockgraffan Cup. The Seamus Hughes win gave him the necessary points to compete in the Champion Stakes. He is owned by Emma Roche and trained by her mother, Marie. Her uncle, Michael Powers, transports all competing greyhounds between Ireland and England.

Marshals Supreme had two English-based nominators, Daniel Riordan and David Higham. Andy Hughes, owner of the 1976 Waterloo Plate winner, Tippin Around, presented the trophy, which Sir Mark Prescott accepted on David Higham's behalf. David Midwood, Waterloo Cup Committee chairman, presented the cup for the winning owner.

The Irish have been immensely supportive of English coursing. Several meetings have included stakes for English dogs. Liz Hall and John and Jackie Teal have attended these, travelling widely to ensure that British dogs still run. It is to their credit that coursing is still very much alive, and that ways have been found to defeat petty and unjustified prejudice. □