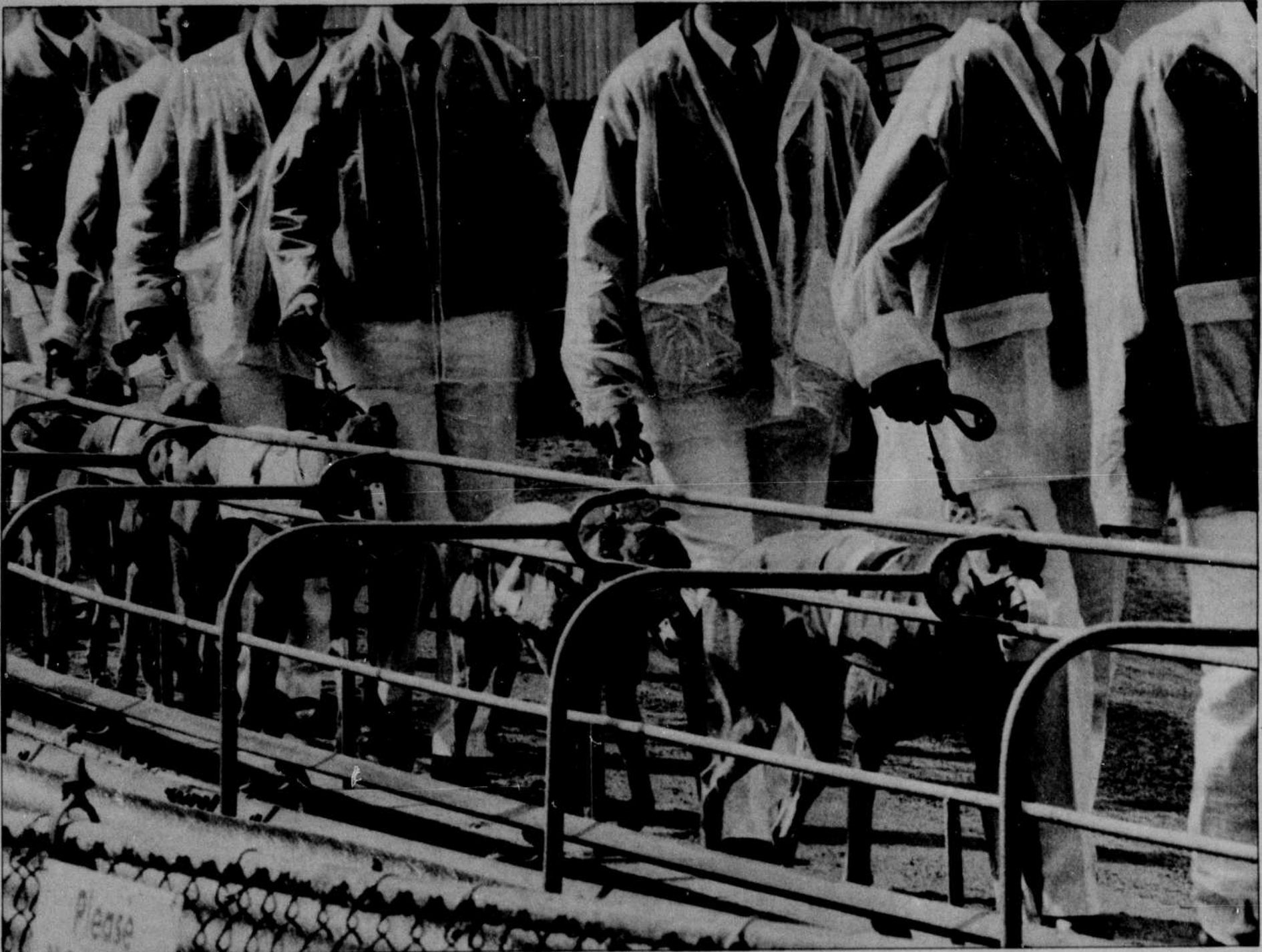


SIDELINES

Wednesday, May 14, 1986

Emerald Sport Supplement



Number one spectator sport? Yep, it's greyhound racing

Last year, some 601,141 fans gathered to watch the number one spectator sport in the state of Oregon.

They went to Portland's Memorial Coliseum, you say? Or maybe to Portland's Civic Stadium? Nope. They went to a 140-acre plot of land about 15 minutes east of Portland known as the Murray Kemp Greyhound Park, home of the Multnomah Kennel Club.

Keeping Oregon's number one spectator sport a secret from me has been all but impossible. Despite the two-hour drive to Portland and lack of financial support for wagering from the Emerald, I recently decided to take on the Sport of Queens.

The greyhound racing season began in Portland on May 1st and will continue through September 6th with racing Tuesday through Saturday nights at 7:30 along with Saturday matinees at 1 p.m.

For me, the logical choice was to take

on the Saturday schedule. That way, I could get in a full 24 races in two separate sittings. What a way to go.

The whole dog racing scene was like "Little Texas" in the east Multnomah County: the parking lot, rumored to be the largest paved parking lot in the state outside of things like airports, was gigantic; the four-floor building, which houses Club Skyview, the largest menu-service restaurant in the state, was enormous; and out in front of it all, the quarter-mile oval racing track made of sand.

The track may be where the greyhounds speed by at nearly 45 miles per hour, but the real action happens inside the building where thousands of fans scurry about, trying to decide which dogs to bet on.

With three minutes left before post-time, the March From River Kwai being piped in over the loudspeakers drives the crowd into a frenzy. Lines form in front of the pari-mutuel ticket sellers. And millions of dollars begin to change hands.

Story by Allan Lazo
Photos by Chuck Thompson

Continued on Page 3B