

INDUSTRY NOTICE

ATTENTION TRAINERS

In recent months, it appears that we are having numerous greyhounds sustaining spike wounds and split webbings from racing incidents which have resulted in significant stand down penalties being applied. As a result, I have requested that the Official Track Veterinarians (OTV) monitor the length of greyhound's nails during the kennelling process and advise Stewards of any unacceptable length of nails.

The following procedure will be put into place immediately:

“The Handler of any greyhound presented at the time of kennelling with excessively long nails will be instructed by the Stewards to trim the nails of that greyhound before being allowed to proceed to be kennelled prior to competing in its drawn event.

After being instructed by the OTV and/or Stewards, failure to trim the greyhound's nails to a satisfactory length determined by the OTV will result in the greyhound being declared a late scratching by Stewards.”

Long toenails are not only unsightly, they are dangerous and uncomfortable.”

LONG: Nails that touch the floor are too long. To examine the length of your greyhound's nails, stand your dog on a hard, flat surface and view from the side. There should be some clearance between the nails and the floor.

DANGEROUS: Professional greyhound trainers know that a dog is only as good as its feet, and the fastest way to ruin feet is to let them end in long toenails.

UNCOMFORTABLE: When the toenails are hitting the floor, the bones of the foot spread causing discomfort and eventually splayed feet and lameness. Extremely long nails force the dog to stand with its weight on its heels, causing a hook shape to the front legs and distorting the configuration of the muscles in the legs, shoulders and back.

Your goal is to keep your dog's nails from touching the floor. Trim toenails every five to seven days in order to keep them from growing longer. Bi-weekly or monthly trimmings aren't frequent enough to stay ahead of toenail growth. By clipping every five to seven days, you take one step back and nature takes one step forward with nail growth. Clipping too infrequently allows nature to take a huge unchecked leap forward. It's impossible to stay ahead or even catch up in the latter scenario.

Reference: Caroline Coile, 1996. Greyhounds. Barron.

Michael Hoyle
Chairman of Stewards – Greyhounds