

B. Forbes

Dear Sir,

This is my submission for the review of the Hunting act in Scotland, a little about myself, I have seen Scottish hunts breaking the law in the past, but sadly nobody seemed to do anything about it, so myself and some others decided to start a group to monitor the hunts, we called our group Perthshire Hunt Sabs and we go out to monitor the activities of hunts as often as we can, Sadly with our current law it is very difficult to seek a prosecution as the level of evidence required to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that they are breaking the law is very difficult to achieve, myself and others believe the law needs to be changed as its just simply too easy for them to carry on hunting as they have done before the law came into force

I am including a CD with my submission featuring 3 clips of footage I have taken while monitoring Fife Foxhounds

The first clip features a "dig out" this is what is legally allowed to happen when a fox hides underground, This incident happened after a fox had been chased over many fields and taken shelter in an old Badger sett, the hounds marked the hole where the fox had hidden and the hunt's terrier-man was called in, he then placed an aggressive terrier into the hole that proceeded to attack the terrified fox, the terrier-man and friends started to dig the hole to gain access to the fox and remove it from the hole, in the process they tore part of the foxes tail off (this can be seen sitting on a rock at the side of the hole) eventually one of them was able to take hold of the fox and start to pull it out off the hole with the terrier still biting the foxes face, as the hunts whip stands on the foxes neck causing even more pain to the terrified wild animal the terrier is removed and someone eventually shoots the fox before it is cast to the hounds to tear apart

The clear terror and suffering of the fox can be seen in the clip, but sadly in this day and age this is still legal, if monitors were not in attendance at the scene we do not know if more suffering might have taken place

The second clip shows monitors in attendance behind an area of woodland, the hounds can be heard in cry on the scent of a fox, no guns were anywhere to be seen, indeed the hounds end up very close to where the monitors are, if the fox had bolted from the top of the woodland nobody was in position to legally shoot the fox, the fox could easily have been caught by the hounds or pursued over many fields until it was caught, this is normal, the hunts often have a few people as token gesture guns to give the air of acting in accordance with the law, but they never have enough gunmen or in the right positions to shoot a fox

The third clip shows the hunt hunting an area of woodland, a fox runs for its life from the woods, nobody was in a position to shoot the fox again, the fox actually runs behind two hunt supporters on foot and in front of a police vehicle and hunt staff acting as spotters, the police were in attendance to monitor the hunt monitors and usually pay no interest in what the hunt are doing even if the hunt are openly pursuing a fox over open ground, the spotters informed the hunt by radio where the fox had ran and soon after the hunt carried on in that direction

I believe there is no place in a civilised society to chase down and kill a terrified wild animal in the name of "sport" and as the law stands it is far too easy for hunts in Scotland to break the law and get away with it, the level of proof is very difficult to achieve and terrier work is brutally cruel and goes unchecked in the discreet thickets it happens
The law really needs to be changed to protect wild animals from a horrific agonising ending

thank you,

B. Forbes (Perthshire Hunt Sabs)

