

**Proceedings of the 21<sup>st</sup>**

# **NATIONAL EQUINE FORUM**

**Tuesday 5th March 2013**

**The Institution of Mechanical Engineers**

**1 Birdcage Walk**

**Westminster**

**London**

**In partnership with the British Equestrian Federation**





## ENCOURAGING VOLUNTEERS

### **Ed Bracher – Chief Executive, Riding for the Disabled Association**

The presentation will focus on the current and future opportunities for organisations involving volunteers and the challenges and opportunities that volunteers bring to organisations. The Equine industry is heavily dependent on volunteers – be they “formal volunteers” which we see in RDA and Pony Club, for example, or informal volunteers – particularly parents with trailers and the patience to help at events. We will look at four areas when considering how we should be encouraging volunteers and supporting their efforts.

First, the context – setting out the current volume of volunteering within the UK – generally and also specifically within the equestrian context (and within RDA specifically). Currently X people are active volunteers in the UK, Y within equestrianism and of these, 19,000 in RDA. These are of course a very diverse group – regular volunteers, event volunteers, young and old, and of widely varying social background. It is no longer the case that volunteers are all middle aged, middle England women, but it also not surprising that in many areas (equestrianism included) a lot of the most senior volunteers are older and more experienced.

Secondly, volunteering has changed dramatically in recent years, as has its management and delivery. There is a general recognition now that volunteers do not “simply appear” and the best organisations actively recruit and support their volunteers. This means that organisations are, generally competing for the time of a volunteer and without taking time to actively manage volunteers we will lose their goodwill and input quickly. Specifically, organisations should be seeking to make a clear offer to volunteers at the recruitment stage and then making sure this is delivered. Without becoming a major area of “HR Management” there should be policies in place, so that volunteers and the organisation, know where they stand on key issues. Organisations need to consider how the volunteers are rewarded/acknowledged (if at all); and, crucially, it is important to understand the motivation of the volunteer.

Motivation (or the need of the volunteer) is a vital area. Organisations should seek to understand the motivation of the volunteer – something which we have probably always done, but we need to make sure it is happening. Volunteering is a two way process and if the volunteer does not get what they want from it, they will not return. This could be the simple altruistic sense of having helped, it could be more specific (eg, CV enhancement for younger volunteers, or the ability to spend time as a spectator at an event).

Finally, we will consider the future of volunteering within equestrianism. There are increasing numbers of young people getting involved and it is a good option for young people wanting to combine a passion with personal development. But it is also an area where we should be making more of the health benefits of equestrian volunteering – activity, socialising, etc. – and don’t forget

that not all volunteers need to be horsey. Some of the key roles at an event are “behind the scenes” and non-equestrian.

As we are already doing, organisations need to be working together – for example through the Young Equestrian Leaders Awards, or the “Step up Step Forward” initiative. This combined with a more dynamic and professional outlook towards the management of volunteers will stand us all in good stead.

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## **RECENT CHANGES IN PRE-PURCHASE EXAMINATION OF HORSES**

### **Malcolm Morley MRCVS – BEVA Pre-Purchase Examination Committee**

What does it mean for horse owners?

Malcolm Morley is the chair of the British Equine Veterinary Association’s Pre-Purchase Examination Committee and has a strong professional interest in vetting horses. In 2011 and 2012 a revised pre-purchase examination certificate was introduced, along with a new document, the “Guidance Notes” which describe in plain English how a pre-purchase examination is conducted. His presentation will draw attention to the key features of the Guidance Notes.

Many of the changes to the certificate were aimed at providing clarity to purchasers in order that they understand what additional procedures have been performed, whether the veterinary surgeon has any knowledge of the horse and whether there is a professional relationship between the seller and the veterinary surgeon.

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## **COLIC – PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND OUTCOMES**

### **Dr Mark Hillyer MRCVS – Newmarket Equine Hospital**

Colic is one of the most important health concerns for horse owners. It can be a significant cause of morbidity in all horses and is now recognised as a major cause of mortality in the older horse. Although the term colic applies to any form of abdominal pain, it is most usually associated with an abnormality of the gastro-intestinal tract. Recent research has improved our knowledge of both causes of colic and treatments for colic. Epidemiological studies have identified a number of risk factors for colic. These include risk factors for colic in general and also risk factors for specific types of colic. Some of these risk factors are unalterable (eg age or breed) but others are related to management and therefore potentially alterable. Knowledge of these risk factors and subsequent alterations to the management may then be helpful in reducing a horse’s risk and thereby preventing colic.

These epidemiological studies have also identified other useful information. For example it is now known that once a horse has had one episode of colic it is at an increased risk of suffering a further episode of colic compared to a horse which has never had colic.

Some colic episodes are mild and self-resolving without the need for veterinary intervention. Withdrawal of feed and water and judicious hand walking is often recommended as a first aid measure. However, most colic episodes will require veterinary attention and at least administration of analgesic agents (painkillers) to control the signs of pain. Further specific medical therapy may also be needed. For many conditions a spasmolytic agent is given to help relax any intestinal spasm. For other conditions, such as an impaction of the large colon, fluid and electrolyte solutions may be given intravenously or by stomach tube. The majority of colic cases requiring medical therapy alone will respond to treatment and have a good prognosis.

Fortunately least commonly there will be a physical lesion causing the colic signs that requires surgical correction. These cases often show the most severe signs and are rapidly progressive. Historically the results of colic surgery were poor for a return to normal activities and even survival. Surgical and diagnostic advances have improved this situation and it is now hoped to have a good prognosis for survival (in both the short and long term) and for return to previous activities.

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## **RIDING AS THERAPY: THE PRACTICE, THERAPY AND EDUCATION**

### **Jennifer Dixon-Clegg – Director Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy**

Jennifer Dixon-Clegg's presentation will focus on the concept and method of the residential Further Education Through Horsemastership (FETH) Course at the Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy (FCRT). The course is for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities who communicate, co-operate and concentrate around horses more than at any other time.

The FCRT ([www.fortunecentre.org](http://www.fortunecentre.org)) is an Independent Specialist (Education) Provider to whom such young people (between 16 and 25 years old) are referred and funded by Local Authorities, when their educational needs cannot be met in local government provision. A multi-disciplinary staff team works with horses at the FCRT to provide an opportunity for vulnerable students to develop independent living skills - which most people take for granted - through a series of transferrable skills. Jennifer's presentation will highlight how thinking 'inside the box' becomes 'thinking outside the box'!

The FCRT is a BHS Approved Examination Centre and a recognised National Open College Network centre. The FETH Course is inspected by the BHS, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. Visitors are always welcome at the FCRT. To arrange to visit, please contact Jennifer by e.mail ([director@fcrt.ac.uk](mailto:director@fcrt.ac.uk)) or by telephone (01425-673297).

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## BHS THESIS

### THE EFFECTS OF RIDING ON THE JOINTS OF FIVE PHYSICALLY DISABLED CHILDREN

Sarah Rainford – Eqvalan Duo Equine Thesis Winner

#### Summary

**Introduction.** Hippotherapy uses the movement of the horse as a treatment for physical, occupational and speech therapy for people living with disabilities, with current literature showing documented increases in gross motor function, posture, muscle tone and spasticity, back geometry and trunk stability. The aim of this study was to provide a pioneering paper into the effects of an RDA Hippotherapy session on range of motion (ROM).

**Materials and Methods.** Five children between the ages of five and fourteen were included in the study, with disabilities including cerebral palsy (CP), global developmental delay and Cohen syndrome being included. The ROM of the hip, cervical, shoulder and knee was measured pre and post-Hippotherapy using a manual goniometer, with a question being asked to establish if physiotherapy treatment had been undertaken on the same day as Hippotherapy. Data was then analysed using t-Tests and ANOVA tests at varying significance levels.

**Results.** Results showed a very highly significant ( $t=6.25$ ,  $P<0.001$ ) increase in ROM<sup>(o)</sup> of the hip joint pre-Hippotherapy ( $32.89\pm14.12^{\circ}$ ) and post-Hippotherapy ( $50.86\pm17.25^{\circ}$ ), the cervical joint pre-Hippotherapy ( $38.14\pm19.15^{\circ}$ ) and post-Hippotherapy ( $51.50\pm26.40^{\circ}$ ), the shoulder joint between pre-Hippotherapy ( $131.31\pm32.33^{\circ}$ ) and post-Hippotherapy ( $154.75\pm24.84^{\circ}$ ) and the knee joint between pre-Hippotherapy ( $62.28\pm16.69^{\circ}$ ) and post-Hippotherapy ( $71.64\pm16.89^{\circ}$ ) treatment groups. No significant difference ( $P>0.05$ ) was found between physiotherapy and non-physiotherapy groups or the effect of the horse upon ROM<sup>(o)</sup> increase.

**Conclusions.** A thirty minute RDA Hippotherapy session significantly ( $P<0.001$ ) increased the ROM in all four joints, with individual children's results showing a significant increase throughout. It is proposed that further study with a larger sample size, over a longer period be carried out to further validate these results.

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## THE NATIONAL EQUINE YOUTH FORUM

**Matthew Cobble – Riding for the Disabled Association**

The National Equine Youth Forum is a new event endorsed by the National Equine Forum and developed in close consultation with the BEF Youth Action Group. The event will be a showcase of the challenges and achievements of young people in equestrianism and will be aimed at those aged

16-25. There will be a focus on networking and discussion between attendees with the opportunity to exchange ideas and share experiences from all sectors in the equestrian industry. The diverse programme will include topics and speakers around a broad theme of “Pathways and Careers within Equestrianism”

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## **LONDON 2012 – DID WE DELIVER?**

### **Andrew Finding – Chief Executive British Equestrian Federation**

#### **Introduction**

This afternoon, I aim to cover why we sought to host the Games at Greenwich, how we performed there, what made the difference between success and failure and what things looked like from the inside. I want to go on to define what legacy we sought, what we have achieved and what more we might expect. And, finally, I will address the question: did we deliver?

#### **Greenwich – The Venue**

Early in 2003, I stood with my small working party at General Wolfe’s statue, overlooking the World Heritage Site that makes up Greenwich Park.

We were tasked with finding a venue to host the Equestrian elements of the Olympic and Paralympic Games within 30 minutes travel of the proposed athletes’ village and Olympic Park at Stratford. As we stood at General Wolfe’s statue we developed a vision: to create the greatest possible potential to fire the best pictures around the world, to raise the global profile of our sport and to secure it in the eyes of the International Olympic Committee (the IOC) as a sport for retention in the movement when others are relegated.

Please note that we have just seen Wrestling thrown out of the Games, Modern Pentathlon under heavy threat and Hockey very low down the list of favoured sports.

We placed three recommendations before the leaders of our Olympic disciplines. They were, in order: first, Greenwich Park, second, Horse Guards Parade and Hyde Park, and third, Regents Park. Our Board supported the recommendations without amendment and they were duly passed to the London 2012 bid company.

We won the bid to host the Games in Singapore in July 2005.

But why was Greenwich so controversial? We struggled to communicate our argument effectively and to convey accurately the potential we saw for the venue. We also struggled in the face of some conflicted interest, the entirely understandable view that for years we have staged outstanding events at Hickstead, Badminton, Burghley and Windsor and assumptions that since ours is a country sport the Games should be staged in our traditional heartland – the countryside.

We also faced a media campaign developed by some in the Royal Borough of Greenwich under the NOGOE banner and parts of the press determined to spin and, frankly, present appalling distortions of the truth. And, I am bound to say that the FEI, the international equestrian federation, captured the anti-Greenwich bug.

Seb Coe and LOCOG, his organising committee, were resolute. They saw the vision and from the outset looked upon Greenwich as one of the greatest of the iconic venues - we pressed on.

Were we nervous? We certainly were, but our faith didn't waiver; well not too much!

So, what other benefits did we see? We were determined to show that our sport doesn't need an undue degree of special treatment, that it can be staged in the centre of a major global city, that it doesn't need hundreds of acres of land, that a temporary venue is quite acceptable, that we could bring the world's media to our show and not just the supportive equestrian media alone, and that the transport systems can work perfectly well if planned carefully. Never before have we seen so many spectators at an equestrian event in Great Britain. Over the 4 weeks of the Olympic and Paralympic Games we welcomed close to 400,000 people to Greenwich to witness our sport.

We also wanted our athletes and officials to feel they were an integral part of the Games, to drive the benefits of home advantage and to live at the heart of the greatest show on earth. And, so they did. They loved every minute of it.

Often we are told that we must do more to promote our sport. That was at the core of what we sought to achieve. As well as outstanding television pictures, we saw for the first time ever, pictures of our sport and our athletes on the front pages of the serious papers and for sporting reasons – we generated £34m of written media coverage, we discovered “dancing horses” and heroes recognised across the world.

## **A Golden Performance**

I turn now to the how we performed. You will know the outline figures: 5 Olympic and 11 Paralympic medals. But please allow me to indulge in some more detailed statistics.

The 3 Olympic Gold medals came from the dressage team, the show jumping team and the individual dressage Gold came from Charlotte Dujardin; the silver from the Eventing team; and an individual bronze from Laura Bechtolsheimer.

Never before have our dressage riders won an Olympic medal of any colour and our showjumping team last won a gold medal in Helsinki in 1952. We took 13 Olympic riders and 13 horses to the Olympic Games, 12 returned home with medals, only one missed out. That's a remarkable strike rate. They are all heroes. So too are the owners of the horses, some of whom are pictured here with HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, our Patron, who recently held a reception at Clarence House in their honour to say a very personal thank you. The owners are the outstanding sponsors of our time – they give and love so much in their support and involvement and all too often are overshadowed by the performance of their horses.

After a two week break, with the cross country and showjumping fences distributed across the nation for use elsewhere in legacy mode (pictures of Burghley and Olympia), our Paralympic riders and their horses took up residence. They were supported by the same level of professionalism as the Olympic riders. And once more they were supported by wonderfully committed owners of very high quality horses, specially matched to the needs of their riders. This remarkable team of 5 athletes, one in each of the Paralympic classifications (1a, 1b, 2, 3, and 4), won 11 medals, 5 Gold, 5 Silver and 1 Bronze. They entered 11 classes in all and won 11 medals – that's a 100% strike rate – and it's an astonishing achievement. As you will hear later, Natasha Baker was not selected for the team and so she promptly won the individual gold and freestyle gold in her grade, grade 2. As with our Olympians, this was an outstanding band of brothers – and sisters.

Our Olympic and Paralympic riders topped the FEI's medal tables winning more medals than any other nation in the world and together as a British equestrian team they won more medals in one Games than any other equestrian nation has ever won.

Our Olympic athletes represented 2.4% of Team GB but won 10.35% of the gold medals and 7.69% of the overall medal tally. On the Paralympic front they represented 1.67% of the athletes and won 14.71% of the gold medals and 9.17% of the overall medal haul.

Our athletes were simply outstanding in every regard, backed up by a level of professional support only made possible by the Government's positive determination to succeed; UK Sport's "no-compromise" approach in rewarding success and in directing the world's best scientific, coaching and leadership support; the National Lottery players who have supported the good causes; in the organising committee, LOCOG, the Games Makers, the men and women of the armed forces; in the British Olympic Association, the British Paralympic Association, the people of the Royal Borough of Greenwich; and in the Boards and staff of British Dressage, British Eventing, British Showjumping, the owners of the horses and my own Board and team at the British Equestrian Federation. In short it was you, the people of Great Britain, especially those in our community, who drove this level of success. On behalf of the riders I express our thanks to you all.

### **The Legacy**

So what made the difference and what's the legacy?

Legacy means different things to different people, for some it is bricks and mortar, stadia, tangible and visible high performance venues.

For others, it's learning, education, systems, governance, coaching standards, drug free sport, it's profile, reputation, professionalization, high levels of research and development, long term financial support for further high performance success and community support. Support for young people, for men and women and for the disabled, for new participants and those who want to return to sport.

For many of us it's either part or all of these things.

Chief amongst the demands in the run up to the Games was for an all-singing all-dancing stadium for use as a high performance venue in legacy mode. But our principal legacy benefit, a large part of the original vision, was to secure a long term future for our sport as part of the Olympic and Paralympic family.

The costs of running permanent stadia in legacy mode for a single sport are very high, not even athletics can sustain a dedicated stadium for their sport. For us a single high performance venue would compete with those already in place. There are many disused and unsustainable Olympic facilities across the world to prove the point.

However, we have been determined to establish new venues to meet specific needs in the London area and to improve the quality of our existing stock of high performance venues, as well as to support those riding facilities that show the greatest potential to increase levels of participation. With Sport England's support the Ebony Horse Club in Brixton opened before the Games and shortly an all new centre will be opened in Greenwich to serve the needs of Hadlow College and the Greenwich community. We have invested in improvements and upgrades to a range of riding facilities both within London, including Aldersbrook Riding School and Vauxhall City Farm, and further afield at centres such as Bradbourne Riding & Training Centre in Kent and Radway Riding School in Warwickshire. We will be investing in further facility upgrades where we can be confident that those upgrades will support more people riding for the first time, and through our "Take Back the Reins" programme, and our new initiative "Trot to be Trim". Please go to our "hoofride" website for more dedicated detail on these offers.

With Sport England's continuing support we will invest where we can be certain that we will increase the levels of participation, thus using the Games to inspire yet more activity. We must and will reduce the waiting lists for people with disabilities. Over 24,000 disabled people ride in over 500 clubs and yet we are not able to satisfy the demand and will increase the opportunities for more through a newly funded accessibility scheme.

Our Sport England funded Excel talent development programme is designed to underpin the UK Sport World Class programme. It has been extended as it is recognised as a jewel across all sport. It is designed to support the work of British Dressage, British Eventing and British Showjumping and, for the first time, the most talented members of the Pony Club with potential for medal success.

We also intend to increase progressively our investment in the existing stock of high performance centres in support of our elite riders at venues that are well located and meet demand. We will pay special attention to the needs of our Paralympian riders.

What of our other legacy benefits? Well, we go into the Rio Olympiad with a well developed high performance system. Over the last decade our systems, our governance work, our coaching programmes, our application of science in support of both horses and humans and the education of our people have made an immeasurable difference in the way we compete on the world stage.

To illustrate, just three weeks ago Hartpury College announced substantial increases of 10 – 35% in applications for a range of their courses. Russell Marchant, the Principal, said "When I speak to young people it's clear that the Olympics has had a big impact and opened their eyes to the possibility of building a career in the sport or equine industries."

Finally, on the legacy front, the sports councils have committed to supporting our success over the Rio Olympiad. Never before have we been so well supported and have won unprecedented levels of financial support to help us achieve more success. It won't be easy but there can be no doubt that this represents a huge legacy benefit.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, our riders and their horses achieved extraordinary and unparalleled success in 2012. We have enjoyed legacy benefits and we will secure more throughout the Rio Olympiad.

Princess Haya, the President of the FEI said "It's been a busy and wonderful year for equestrian sport...including one of the greatest sporting events of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games...I could not think of a more fitting reward to the wonderful host nation than the winning performances of their Jumping, Dressage and Para-Equestrian Dressage teams and Charlotte Dujardin's historic individual Dressage gold medal; it was simply magical. I take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the athletes and their support teams for being truly outstanding ambassadors and to thank everyone involved in making these Games so successful. They were the best Equestrian Games ever."

So, did we deliver? I think we can say: yes we did. Thank you.

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## **RACING AS 2 YEAR OLDS – ARE THEY READY OR CAN WE MAKE THEM READY.**

### **Pieter Brama - Professor of Veterinary Surgery University College Dublin**

Racing two year old horses is a long standing tradition within the racing industry but not without controversy. The debate focuses on whether two year olds are physically mature enough to cope with the intense physical training that they are subjected to and whether training is crucial for optimal physical development.

The major reason for so called wastage (losses) of horses from racing is musculoskeletal injury, of which the majority are bone and joint injuries. This ultimately poses the question of whether wastage in two year olds is the result of the inherent rigors of a demanding sport or whether this arises from the unrelenting demands foisted upon the young horse and the potentially harmful effects of intensive training on an immature musculoskeletal system.

Studies have indicated that an early introduction to training, such as race training at 2 years old, has a positive association with career length and success in racing. Cynics, however, question if this apparent advantage is truly a function of the benefits derived as a result of racing as a two-year old or if it is conceivably due to ability. In other words, are horses that start racing at the age of two simply better athletes?

We could either manage the musculoskeletal injury as it occurs or be proactive and examine current management practices to identify mechanisms to improve the musculoskeletal health of equine athletes before entering racing. Recent research has demonstrated the benefit of early exercise and the consequences of too little or too much exercise at a young age. Stimulation of the equine musculoskeletal system at a young age appears not only feasible, but it also seems a necessary prerequisite for the development of optimal physical health and longevity.

However, to date, there is no set recipe to optimize musculoskeletal health for two year olds, and further research is required to refine the optimal exercise stimuli and to further define the developmental window. Nevertheless current available information enhances the scientific approach to the question and brings us closer to the answer that we potentially could make them ready for racing. How we need to do it, however, requires further research.