

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Sir Tristram Ricketts, Bt

Tristram Ricketts, Chief Executive of the Levy Board, who had been suffering from pancreatic cancer over the last few months, sadly passed away early on the morning of Wednesday 7 November 2007.



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There is no doubt that everyone who came into contact with Tristram will be aware of the significant contribution he made to the Racing Industry over so many years. His many talents, wisdom, sense of humour and care will be greatly missed and he will leave a huge gap in many people's lives.

Chairman of the Levy Board, Robert Hughes, said: "Many of us within the Racing and Betting Industries will feel that Tristram's death robs us of not just a great professional colleague, but a real and dear friend. That is a true testament of his stature. I was privileged to see Tristram only last week and although he was obviously very ill, he was, to use his own words, "quite chipper", and maintained a lively interest in everything that was going on at the Levy Board. He bore his illness with great fortitude, so ably supported by Annie and the rest of his immediate family. Our thoughts are of course with them at this time."

Stephen Atkin said: "We were all saddened to hear of Tristram's death and, like many in racing, I have lost a great friend. Racecourses will be eternally grateful for everything he has done, as will everyone else in racing. Our thoughts are with Annie and his family".

Events for Injured Soldiers

I mentioned briefly at the Members' Forum at Doncaster on 1 October that Newbury had hosted a successful event for injured soldiers. The hospitality was much appreciated by the guests and, in many cases, it was their first opportunity to see each other since returning from combat.

I have met with Major Jane Strangways, who is responsible for co-ordinating these events for the Army. As their resources are necessarily limited, the RCA has agreed to assist in co-ordinating the events. Further, the number of events would be limited in the initial stages and would ideally be accessible from the main centres at Selly Oak, Birmingham and Headley Court, Surrey and/or to the worst affected regiments. The worst affected regiments are:

- 1 Royal Anglian – Pirbright, Surrey
- 2 Lancashire Regt – Catterick, Yorks
- 4 Rifles – Bulford, Wilts
- 2 Mercian – Hounslow, London

As you are aware many racecourses have close Regimental ties which will help to provide a local focus. The numbers for the raceday would not exceed 30 with a minimum number of around 15 casualties.

Further to the email I sent to Racecourse Managers on 15 October we have received a positive response from many racecourses and we would like to hear from others who may be interested in holding such an event. Please contact Gloria Lewis, details on Contacts List.

Stephen Atkin

RACE PLANNING

BHA's Strategic Review of the Fixture List

The RCA submitted its paper to the BHA's Strategic Review on 18 October. All Racecourse Chairmen and Managers have been sent a copy of the submission. The analysis of the returns is now well under way (both at the BHA and Deloitte) and an Initial Findings Report will be presented to the BHA Board at its December meeting. Following this the findings will be discussed more widely either before or after Christmas.

Carla Moore

RCA Race Planning Workshop / TRICL I Course

A Race Planning Workshop / TRICL I Course will take place at Weatherbys Group Ltd on Thursday 17 January, 2008. As the RCA has organised a Clerks of the Course seminar this month, the day in January will be specifically geared towards Trainee Clerks of the Course, with ½ day spent on race planning and ½ day on TRICL I training. Full details will be circulated shortly.

Carla Moore

Late Changes to Race Programmes – A Plea to Racecourses

When you receive the latest Programme Book (I) and you identify that you wish to change a race, please contact the BHA Racing Department as soon as possible. They will then be able to communicate the change to the NTF and make appropriate alterations. Please do not wait until the relevant Racing Calendar. Trainers try to map out races for their horses in advance and if a race sud-

denly disappears from the Programme Book at Calendar stage it could be too late to consider other options or the next available opportunity is another 2 to 3 weeks away. Please also bear in mind that a change to your programme means that another racecourse may need to be asked to alter theirs!

Carla Moore

Deadline Programme Book II

A reminder to all Clerks of the Course and Racecourse Managers that the deadline for Programme Book proofs for Volume II is on **Tuesday 27 November**. Please bear in mind that any late submissions will have a knock on effect on the production of the Programme Book and could result in the BHA Racing Department having to request other courses to make late changes to their programmes. Your co-operation and punctuality would therefore be appreciated.

Carla Moore

RACE PLANNING

HBLB 7th Race Scheme and BHA Development Fund

Racecourse Managers and Clerks of the Course should now all have received the details for the HBLB 7th Race Scheme as well as the lists of races that will receive support from the Development Fund. If not, please contact either the BHA Racing Department or Carla Moore.

Carla Moore

Division of Races

Due to fewer races dividing than were anticipated this year, a surplus at year end (31st December 2007) has been created in the Divided Race Fund. The BHA has therefore decided that from 26 October for all divided races with race values of £2,500 and above the prize money for both divisions will be reduced by £500 rather than £1,000 previously. For those races with a race value of £2,500 or below, the advertised prize money in both divisions will be reduced to £2,000.

Carla Moore

Median Auction Prices

A list of main public auction sales prices which are used to calculate Median Auction Prices will be published on the britishhorseracing.com website and will also feature in the Median Auction supplement to the Racing Calendar that is published in March.

Carla Moore

Competitive Racing Statistics

Attached for Racecourse Managers' information are the latest competitive racing statistics which the BHA Racing Department produces on a monthly basis. Points of note, where the increase/decrease between the two study periods are marked, are as follows:

Annual: Oct '06 to Sep '07 compared with Oct '05 to Sep '06

Flat

- Handicaps have increased by 25% on the previous year.
- Classified/Banded Stakes have decreased by 65% and Claimers by 21%.

Quarter: Jul to Sep '07 compared with Jul to Sep '06

Flat

- 18% more handicaps were run from July-Sep 07 than 06.
- Classified/Banded Stakes decreased by 76% but field sizes increased by 17%.

Jump

- There were 11% fewer races run in this period in 07 than in 06 (mostly due to abandonments in July).
- NHF races run increased by 14% however.
- Chase field sizes were up 15% on the same period in 06.

Month: Sep '07 compared with Sep '06

Flat

- Conditions Stakes run have decreased by 10%.
- Overall 15% more flat races were run in Sep 07 than Sep 06.

Jump

- All races run increased by 19% in Sep 07. Field sizes were also up 19%.

RACE PLANNING

TRICL Facts & Figures

Racecourse Managers and Clerks of the Course will be pleased to learn that Weatherbys has progressed development of a mechanism to produce the Facts & Figures that are on TRICL, onto an Excel sheet. The RCA Race Planning Group discussed the data that would be available and suggested a few additions. It is hoped that this facility will be available shortly.

Switching Televised Races

Racecourse Managers should be aware that switching races at the request of broadcasters could result in additional costs, i.e. Sponsored Number Cloths and/or losing picture payment due to less than 8 runners. Therefore, you're advised to consider this before agreeing to a switch.

Carla Moore

Minimum Weights in Flat Races

At its October meeting, the BHA Racing Committee received a presentation from Dr Turner regarding raising the minimum weight from 7st 12lb to 8st 5lb. Dr Turner focussed on Body Mass Index (BMI) and bone density problems rather than dehydration. Although the Committee found Dr Turner's presentation interesting it did not believe there currently existed a problem and therefore recommended no change. It did recommend that all apprentices should be tested for bone density and BMI and for the Licensing Committee to determine whether a person would be medically suitable to become a licensed jockey.

Carla Moore

Level of Entry Stakes

The BHA has been approached by certain owners about increasing entry levels, especially Pattern races, in order that Racecourses can contribute more to prize money. The BHA Racing Committee suggested that this was a matter between the ROA and RCA.

Carla Moore

Double Declarations

At its previous meeting the BHA Racing Committee sought to amend Rule 144 to make allowance for situations where horses are declared on the same day to run on different days. Rule 144 has now been amended to take account of such situations.

Carla Moore

Geldings in Group 1 Races

The Flat Racing Committee (FRC) considered a paper on the policy of excluding geldings from Group 1 races for 2yos and 3yos. It had been questioned whether geldings should be allowed to run in the St Leger, for instance. Although this proposal had some support, it was questioned how often there would be a 3yo gelding good enough to warrant running in the race. Therefore, opening it up to geldings and making it different from the other Classics could demean it unnecessarily. Answer: No.

Carla Moore

Penalties for Winners of Overseas Black-Type Races

The International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) has asked individual racing authorities to investigate the way in which winners of overseas races were penalised. Currently Britain treats races run in countries in Part II of the International Cataloguing Standards Book, which includes places as diverse in racing terms as Hong Kong, Scandinavia and Zimbabwe, strictly according to their designated class, whilst the IFHA was recommending that winners of such races should carry penalties equivalent to a Listed race win. The current policy is deliberate as Britain was aware that some 'smaller countries' were able to offer substantial prize money for some of their races, so acknowledged that there was an option to plunder large prizes abroad before coming (or returning) to Britain and running with minimum penalties. The status quo was favoured.

Carla Moore

RACE PLANNING

Race Planning Group

The RCA Race Planning Group met on Monday 5 November. The Racecourses were represented by Nick Lees, Neil Mackenzie-Ross, James Hutchinson, Michael Prosser, Jim Allen, also in attendance were John Smee, Carla Moore and Laura Holmes. A summary of the discussion is below:

48 Hour Declarations: The Group agreed this was now a matter for REL, but confirmed that it would continue to support the system because of the potential for additional income to the sport. It was noted that following some concern from the Group previously about the number of non-runners declared because of vet certificates, that the matter had been raised in a letter to Malcolm Wallace, from which a response was still awaited.

BHA's Review of the Fixture List: The Group was informed that the BHA had received completed questionnaires from all but 5 racecourses and was assessing the information together with Deloitte. The Group strongly reemphasised that betting data would be vital for the review to prove worthwhile.

2008 Development Fund: CM reported that the fund's criteria had been approved and circulated by the BHA which generally mirrored the levels in 2007, concentrating the additional sum to the higher class races. The Group was informed that the BHA had decided to remove funding for Juvenile and Novice Introductory Hurdle races because they had underperformed in terms of quality. The Group was of the view that support for Juvenile races should be maintained as omission would mean that there will be no high-value targets for ex-flat horses at the beginning of the season. The RCA would take the matter up with the BHA.

Race Off Times: The Group was asked to suggest methods to try and avoid on-the-day race time clashes. It was decided that clerks of the course should be advised to be aware of other races running and react accordingly and where possible adhere to the request from BHA.

HBLB Late TV Payment Requests: Following a few occurrences where racecourses had swapped a race of less than 8 runners with one more than 8 at the request of Channel 4, the Group was asked its views on whether there should be compensation for the loss of BAGS income. It was also highlighted that a payment to cover the cost of sponsored number cloths should also be sought. After further discussion it was agreed the RCA should approach the HBLB about late changes to races

Enterprise Fixtures: The Group was presented with the RCA's draft paper on the process and format for Enterprise Fixtures for 2009. The Group was concerned about the change to the climate (Turf TV, determination of the levy) since racecourses had taken on Enterprise Fixtures and how the HBLB would react in terms of the conditions for future funding. The RCA Executive would request further clarification from the Levy Board and liaise further with the RCA Board on how to move forward.

Production of the Programme Book/Racing Calendar: CM advised the Group there had been a number of requests at the regional RCA/NTF meetings for the production of the Programme Book and Racing Calendar to appear online. The RCA would take this matter up with the BHA. In addition it was also agreed that the BHA race planners should receive written or verbal agreement from racecourses if they wanted to make a change to a race programme prior to its publication.

Selling Races: Following a request at the Group's previous meeting, the RCA wrote to the BHA about the standard minimum selling price which it suggested should be £3000 and not linked to the Total Prize Fund (TPF). The BHA Racing Committee had asked for more detail and the Group therefore recommended a compromise where if the TPF was greater than £5,999 the minimum selling price should not be less than £4,000. The RCA would put this to the BHA.

TRICL 1 Facts and Figures: The Group was informed that Weatherbys had managed to provide a data feed from TRICL into Excel which would allow courses to access race details and information in a spreadsheet with the ability to manipulate and use the information for their own purposes. The Group suggested that the data should also include class, age, rating and distance as well as any development fund allocations.

Review of the HBLB 7th Race Scheme: Following some discussion the Group concluded that the scheme had been reviewed last year and that it was more transparent than ever. The Group welcomed the inclusion of Apprentice Races.

Level of Entry Fee: The Group requested that the level for Jump Pattern races should be in line with those for the Flat. The RCA would take this up with the BHA.

Laura Holmes

RACE PLANNING

International Handicapping Review

There has been a perception for some time that there has been slippage in international ratings. A paper produced by the Head of Handicapping which looked at the history of the World Thoroughbred Racehorse Rankings and reasons for the decline in ratings over the years, proves that that is the case and goes some way to explaining how that has come about. It concludes that there are a number of complex and inter-related reasons for slippage, including the growth of the rankings committee, the increase in the number of tempting targets for the better horses, changes in handicapping methodology, control of the best horses in a few hands, and commercial realisation and fashion that demanded horses prove themselves at 8-10 furlongs. There is probably little that could be achieved in terms of restoring ratings to the levels that were achieved in the early years of the Classifications.

Handicappers have been concerned for some time about the calculations used to equate finishing distances. Britain, as well as other EPC member countries, uses 5 lengths per second, but the accuracy of that calculation has been researched by the Handicappers and appears to be questionable. Having canvassed other countries the position is that Hong Kong, Japan, Australia and Singapore all use a minimum of 6 lengths per second, a difference of 20%. It is therefore recommended that 6 lengths per second should be used for Flat racing, unless a race was on ground soft or heavy, when 5½ lengths per second would be used. Although the FRC deemed that no alteration to the Jump calculation was necessary, the BHA Racing Committee thought that this should be reviewed.

Carla Moore

PRESS

RCA/HWPA Press Liaison Committee

The Committee met on 9 October to review the applications for 2008 Press Accreditation. In addition, the Committee discussed other issues relevant to the press. A summary of these discussions is outlined below:

HWPA Press and Photographers Racecourse Representatives: In previous years the HWPA President has been the representative at all Festival meetings, this has now been altered so that the regional representatives will be responsible for any Festival meetings in their region. The Committee agreed upon the following regional HWPA racecourse representatives:

- North – Ray Gilpin
- North West – Jan Green
- East Midlands – David Carr
- West Midlands – Alan Lee
- South East – Graham Dench
- South West – Alan Lee
- Metropolitan – Geoff Lester

In addition, Dan Abraham and Alec Russell will represent photographers

Press Room Facilities: The Committee discussed press room facilities at racecourses and discussed any of particularly high or low standard for further action.

Accreditation for Racing Websites: With the growing number of racing websites now available the Committee reviewed the current criteria for the allocation of metal press badges. It was decided that the criteria should not be altered and any appeals would be addressed individually.

Lizzie Lea

HORSERACE BETTING LEVY BOARD

Godfrey Ayres

The HBLB has announced the departure of Godfrey Ayres, Deputy Chief Executive, who left the Horserace Betting Levy Board to pursue other opportunities.

Godfrey has worked for the Horserace Betting Levy Board since 1995 and has served as Deputy Chief Executive since October 2004.

Chairman Robert Hughes said, "The Board would like to thank Godfrey for the expert management of the Capital Fund which has dramatically modernised British racecourses during his stewardship. Godfrey has also contributed significantly to the Board's other activities to support Racing, especially the highly successful development of the HFL site at Fordham, which was sold earlier this year for £20.25M."

Godfrey Ayres said, "I have enjoyed working with the racecourse customers and wish them future successful developments of their facilities".

We all wish Godfrey every success in his future endeavours.

BHA

Race Times & Avoidance of Clashes

Following several incidents over the past two months that resulted in races at two courses being run simultaneously, Clerks of the Course are asked to ensure – in tandem with raceday Stewards – that they implement wherever possible any race time-related instructions from the British Horseracing Authority's Racing Department on the day of racing.

Whilst understanding that there may on occasion be circumstances wholly outside a Clerk's control, the fundamental ethos should be to avoid race clashes, which are detrimental to the Levy yield, lead to criticism from punters and racing's customers, and do not put British racing in the best organisational light. Telephoned instructions from the British Horseracing Authority's Racing Department are always given on the basis of minimising the risk of such a prospect and with all live picture feeds available. Alongside that, Clerks and Stewards are asked to take into account the broader racing programme in terms of the scheduled off times of other courses racing on that day. The *Racing Post* has a daily 'Running Order' on page 2 which can be of use. The BHA Director of Raceday Regulation and Operations has given assurances that the stipendiary stewards and respective chairmen of the stewards' panels will be informed that any specific request regarding off times should be adhered to.

Owen Byrne

Aircraft on Racecourses

After a recent racecourse incident where a helicopter took off whilst runners were leaving the parade ring, racecourses are asked to ensure that when giving permission for aircraft to land at the course, the company involved is given strict timings for possible landing and take off which should be drafted by the Racecourse with reference to that day's 'Timetable Plan for Start Times'. *Owen Byrne*

RACETECH

RaceTech – Ticketing, PASS and Access Control

RaceTech recently presented at the RCA Ticketing and Access Workshop, held at Weatherbys in October. We have undertaken an enormous amount of work and independent research to look into the needs and requirements of racecourses for their ticketing, PASS and access control functions. As a result, we have forged partnerships with a number of “best of breed” suppliers, all of whom have customers within racing, to be able to offer a range of ticketing, access control and CRM solutions, on a specify, supply and install basis or a fully hosted and managed service.

We are replicating the workshop for the North/Scottish courses and would welcome any of you who are interested to come along and hear some more – including the latest updates on PASS and also the BHA’s findings from their project on stable staff access. The Scottish event is being held on 21 November at Musselburgh Racecourse, by kind invitation of Bill Farnsworth, and anyone who has not already registered their interest can contact Musselburgh direct or contact me at RaceTech.

One of the long term aims ought to be to ensure that any future investment in systems for “must have” applications like PASS and stable staff entry is that

one set of hardware can operate a variety of different applications – for example, the PASS cards, stable staff entry, transporters etc could all have one common format so that information is easily gathered and used and “lists” of owners/trainers/staff etc can be easily produced, downloaded by the racecourse and distributed on raceday – currently some of these systems operate with RFID, some with Mag strips, some with paper licences/passes. This is difficult for the racecourse to administer and track and with many racecourses moving towards bar coded entry systems, we ought to be looking to the future on how we can integrate these diverse systems into something that is simple to use and results in useful data after raceday.

For more information on ticketing, access control and CRM, please contact RaceTech. With fraud being such an on going issue on racecourses, and one that is not going to go away, we all need to start thinking about how to maximise paying attendances and take advantage of customer information from racegoers to tailor promotions towards target audiences.

Contact Catherine Pullan at RaceTech on 07976 432271 cpullan@racetech.co.uk

PROMOTIONS

British Horseracing Call Centre

Since the start of April the RCA Promotions department has assumed the role of call centre for the British Horseracing website. Bookings taken so far (not accounting for any refunds) are as follows:

	2007			2006		
	Orders	Tickets	Value	Orders	Tickets	Value
April	340	1,454	£31,795	682	3,363	£69,387
May	369	1,943	£43,959	860	3,952	£82,146
June	597	2,610	£41,485	1,493	5,801	£123,853
July	739	3,173	£47,332	1,104	4,422	£62,330
August	253	1,179	£22,129	403	1,870	£37,070
September	146	642	£12,421	334	1,520	£25,131
October	144	738	£15,068	304	1,380	£25,812
Total	2,588	11,739	£214,189	5,180	22,308	£425,729
	(-50%)	(-47%)	(-50%)			

April 2007 orders taken on behalf of 44 different courses (49 last April)
 May 2007 orders taken on behalf of 37 different courses (49 last May)
 June 2007 orders taken on behalf of 36 different courses (38 last June)
 July 2007 orders taken on behalf of 40 different courses (42 last July)
 August 2007 orders taken on behalf of 42 different courses (40 last August)
 September 2007 orders taken on behalf of 26 different courses (39 last September)
 October 2007 orders taken on behalf of 32 different courses (32 last October)

John Phillips

PROMOTIONS

The Mail On Sunday Ticket Offer

Ticket sales for completed meetings so far are as follows:

Date	Racecourse	Tickets Sold	Date	Racecourse	Tickets Sold
4 March	Huntingdon*	92	15 July	Perth	100
11 March	Market Rasen	42	22 July	Newton Abbot	538
11 March	Warwick	20	29 July	Ascot	770
18 March	Carlisle	42	29 July	Carlisle	80
18 March	Fontwell Park	40	29 July	Pontefract	392
25 March	Kempton Park	50	5 August	Market Rasen	196
25 March	Worcester †	36	5 August	Newbury	278
1 April	Hexham	36	12 August	Leicester	132
1 April	Lingfield Park	92	12 August	Wolverhampton	52
8 April	Musselburgh	12	19 August	Bath	250
15 April	Kelso	64	19 August	Pontefract	616
15 April	Market Rasen	120	26 August	Beverley	374
15 April	Worcester	102	26 August	Goodwood	754
22 April	Southwell	110	26 August	Yarmouth	540
29 April	Brighton	92	2 September	Market Rasen	106
6 May	Hamilton	32	9 September	Fontwell Park	198
6 May	Newmarket	968	16 September	Goodwood	230
6 May	Salisbury	118	16 September	Stratford	238
13 May	Plumpton	98	23 September	Hamilton Park	22
13 May	Worcester	140	23 September	Plumpton	156
20 May	Market Rasen	134	30 September	Ascot	552
27 May	Fontwell Park	134	30 September	Market Rasen	216
27 May	Uttoxeter	250	30 September	Musselburgh	58
3 June	Brighton	40	7 October	Huntingdon	184
10 June	Bath	182	7 October	Uttoxeter	204
10 June	Stratford	204	14 October	Bath	102
17 June	Salisbury	234	14 October	Goodwood	166
24 June	Hexham	34	14 October	Lingfield Park	98
24 June	Pontefract	402	21 October	Hereford	182
24 June	Warwick	102	21 October	Kempton Park	38
1 July	Salisbury*	68	28 October	Wincanton	254
1 July	Windsor*	286	4 November	Carlisle	134
8 July	Ayr	38	4 November	Lingfield Park	86
8 July	Market Rasen	270	TOTAL SOLD		13,840
15 July	Haydock Park	500			

* subsequently abandoned

† subsequently transferred

John Phillips or Valerie Larue

Group Sales

As at 31 October bookings stood at 241 valued at £125,336.

Paul Smith

Special Events Diary

This can be viewed on the RCA website, www.britishracecourses.org. Please e-mail or fax me details of newsworthy meetings you wish to appear in the diary.

Paul Smith

THE RACEGOERS CLUB

Racecourse of the Year Awards

The members' vote for the coveted Racecourse of the Year Awards will close on Friday 30 November, having been promoted in the newsletter sent out in October. We will be contacting all winning courses early in December.

Paul Smith

Autumn Mailing

Enclosed for Racecourse Managers is a copy of our autumn newsletter, detailing among other things the 2008 concession scheme, Racecourse of the Year awards and free entry provided by Kempton Park, Sandown Park and Newmarket.

John Phillips

Newsletter Dates

If you wish to provide a special offer/free day for Racegoers Club members, please note the approximate times that we contact members with our quarterly newsletter: End of January, end of April, end of July, end of October.

John Phillips

SPONSORSHIP

News from the Horseracing Sponsors Association

Jump Racing Sponsorship Seminar – 18/19 October 2007

The HSA and Cheltenham Racecourse jointly hosted the Jump Racing Sponsorship Showcase Event on 18 and 19 October. Thursday 18th which was the seminar day, attracted 100 delegates who listened to presentations from Nic Coward, BHA; Michael O'Leary, Ryanair; Richard Ames, TNSSport; Sam Morshead, Perth Racecourse; Andrew Brown, RacingUK; Brough Scott, Racing Post and Nigel Pollard, John Smiths – Jim McGrath, Channel 4 presenter and Timeform MD did a fantastic job as our anchorman for the day.

The presentations were very well received and there were some lively Q&A sessions as well as a workshop session in the afternoon where delegates formulated a proposal to meet a sponsor's brief.

Activities continued into the evening of the 18 with a champagne reception in the Hall of Fame kindly sponsored by Allertons, during which Richard Killoan, who won the 06/07 Racing Post Hands and Heels Jumps Series, gave a demonstration on the racehorse simulator.

Letheby & Christopher kindly sponsored an excellent dinner and delegates were treated to a wonderful after dinner speech by Jim Lewis about his ambition and eventual realisation of becoming a racehorse owner. If anything could inspire someone to become a jump racehorse owner that speech would.

A smaller number of delegates attended a stable visit the next morning to Jonjo O'Neill's Jackdaws Castle. The Cotswolds were stunning on a beautiful sunny autumn morning and what a treat the delegates were in for as they saw second lot, including many of Jonjo's stable stars on the gallops. Jonjo's wife Jacqui was the perfect host as delegates viewed the wonderful facilities, saw a horse swimming, met a few of the horses in the yard and then were provided with brunch in what must be the best "owner's room" in the country.

Back at the racecourse delegates had lunch in a private facility and enjoyed a great afternoon's racing.

The HSA is most grateful to Cheltenham Racecourse, Allertons, Letheby & Christopher, as well as the speakers, for their all their support and making this event possible.

The delegate feedback has been excellent and due to popular demand it seems this event will be repeated. The HSA is also looking at the possibility of organising a similar event for flat racing sponsorship in the spring – more details will appear in Update in due course.

Mary-Ann Sandercock

SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship Statistical Reports

The RCA Board has agreed that for 2008 the monthly and annual Sponsorship Statistical Reports will be distributed free of charge to all RCA member racecourses. If other organisations wish to receive the reports they will need to subscribe as in 2007. The remainder of the 2007 monthly and annual reports will only be available to those racecourses and organisations that have subscribed.

Mary-Ann Sandercock

Betfair Apprentice Training Series and Pertemps People Development Hands and Heels Apprentice Series

The final of the Betfair Apprentice Training Series took place at York Racecourse on 12 October. The series was won by Kirsty Milczarek who will receive a £5,000 value working holiday (venue tbc). Many thanks to Betfair for their continued support of the series and for the excellent prize they provide to the winner of the series.

The final of the Pertemps People Development Hands and Heels Apprentice Series also took place in October – back at Doncaster Racecourse on 27. William Carson won the Hands and Heels Series and will be sponsored by Pertemps People Development for the next 12 months – they provided William with branded riding clothing and equipment and a cash prize.

Many thanks to the sponsors for their support of these series – which is so vital. Also many thanks for all the participating racecourses and in particular to Graham Orange at Go Racing in Yorkshire for his help with the press and media for both finals – they both got excellent coverage; Channel 4 interviews with both winners and interviews on Racing UK and At The Races respectively, as well as the jockey line-up photo-shoots.

Mary-Ann Sandercock

TECHNICAL

Betfair continue to support further Frost Protection Cover Trials

The RCA is pleased to confirm that Cranfield University has been contracted to continue research into the use and effect of Frost Protection Covers on Racecourses. This work will be funded by the RCA research partners, Betfair, the world's leading betting exchange and covers provided by racecourses.

The need for further trials was identified after the results from Phase II of the research, which was supported by Betfair and was conducted in the 2006-2007 winter season, yielded limited results due to the mild weather conditions.

Phase III of the research will be a three-year continuation of the racecourse trials used in Phase II. A number of racecourses, including Ascot, Newbury and Jockey Club Racecourses have agreed to conduct a level of research when the covers are deployed, in line with a protocol developed by Cranfield University. The data will then be returned to Cranfield University for collation and analysis.

Caroline Davies, RCA Racecourse Services Director, commented: "It is recognised that there may be

an expectation amongst the horseracing industry that Frost Protection Covers be used whenever there is a chance that frost could threaten a race meeting. However, it must be appreciated that there may be reasons why frost covers are not deployed, or where there is a limited resource, covers may be made available at one course in preference to another.

"The RCA also requests that the industry recognise that this is a period of research in order to determine the effects of the use of covers on the racing surface. As these effects are currently unknown, racecourses may be cautious in approaching the use of Frost Protection Covers."

Betfair spokesman Tony Calvin added: "The length of time involved in Phase III of the trial may be surprisingly lengthy to some, but it is vital that the proper level of research and analysis is performed as extensively and thoroughly as possible.

"And Betfair is delighted to continue to fund and support this initiative during these trials."

Lizzie Lea

TECHNICAL

RCA Racecourse Groundstaff Seminar 2008

A seminar for Racecourse Groundstaff will take place at Sandown Park Racecourse on Monday 10 and Tuesday 11 November 2008. These dates have been specifically selected to avoid a clash with those of the previous groundstaff seminar, with the aim that those who were unable to attend previously will be able to attend on this occasion.

If there are any topics that you would particularly like to see covered in this seminar please contact me and we will endeavour to include them in the seminar programme. *Holly Roberts*

BHA Racecourse Committee Meeting

The Racecourse Committee met at Cheltenham Racecourse on Friday 12 October 2007. Bob Davies, Kirkland Tellwright and Holly Roberts attended on behalf of the RCA. A summary of discussions is given below:

Hazard Ahead Procedures: It was agreed that the BHA would develop a standard Hazard Ahead Procedure to be agreed by the RCA, which could be implemented by racecourses should their individual risk assessments show this to be necessary.

Hurdle Design: The Committee was provided with an update on the production of trial hurdles, and agreed that development of these should continue.

Synthetic (AWT) Landings for Obstacles: It was noted that due to funding restrictions, research into synthetic landings for obstacles would continue to be conducted via the collection of injury data.

Cranfield Irrigation Project: It was reported that the second draft of the report from Cranfield University was being produced, and would be circulated when finalised.

TurfTrax Going Stick: The Committee was informed that the historical data would be available via a link on the Racing Admin site to the TurfTrax website shortly. It was also agreed that there should be an investigation into the effect of soil type on the readings.

Off Times: It was agreed that the BHA would write to the 10 racecourses with the poorest punctuality records to ensure they were complying with STI/2 forms. The Committee discussed occurrences where a delay at one fixture could cause races off late to clash with other fixtures, and agreed that on these

occasions the racecourse and the BHA Racing Department would be responsible for determining whether racing should be delayed to avoid these clashes.

Stalls Handlers: The Committee was informed that there would be a review of Stalls handler numbers.

Racecourse Facilities Review: It was reported that a further survey of racecourse facilities was to be conducted as this had not been done since 2000.

Review of Starting Procedures: The Committee was informed that a review of the starting procedures at the Grand National Meeting had taken place, and that the findings of the review would be published.

Jockey Injury Notification Arrangements: The Committee reviewed the proposed Jockeys Injury Notification Arrangements and suggested amendments to these. The proposals will be altered accordingly and further reviewed by the RCA Technical Group in liaison with the JAGB.

Light Metres: The Committee discussed the proposal for the introduction of light metres and agreed that the arrangements already in place when there were concerns over light were sufficiently flexible.

Racecourse 5 Year Veterinary Statistics: It was agreed that this topic would be included within the programme for the Clerks of the Course Seminar in November.

X-Rays: It was proposed that it might be beneficial for courses to have X-Ray machines as standard, particularly at festivals and AWT. It was agreed that this should be referred to the Veterinary Committee for discussion. *Holly Roberts*

TECHNICAL

Pony Racing

A meeting was held on Thursday 24 October 2007 to review the 2007 Pony Racing Season and was attended by Caroline Davies and Holly Robarts on behalf of the RCA, Rebecca Morgan on behalf of the PRA and Nicky Adams, Edward Arkell, Ilona Barnett, Jeannie Chantler, Brian Clifford and Anthea Morshead on behalf of racecourses. A summary of discussions is given below:

Pony Club Involvement: The Meeting was informed that the Pony Club did not have any formal involvement in the PRA but were regarded as the training body of pony racing, and attended the PRA Board Meetings as an observer.

Insurance: The racecourses were reminded that when staging Pony Racing under the racecourse insurance they should inform their insurers in advance.

BHA Officials: The Meeting welcomed the confirmed involvement of the BHA Officials in Pony Racing.

Vaccinations and Passports: The Meeting agreed that whilst it had been proposed that the PRA carry out checks on vaccinations and passports, to prevent this being done on the day this would not be appropriate, and these checks should be conducted by a qualified vet.

Medical Provisions: It was agreed that the BHA Chief Medical Adviser should be fully briefed on the medical arrangements for Pony Racing and the RCA was asked to pursue this. It was also agreed that the body weight of the participants should be provided to medical staff to assist in calculating dosages for any required medication.

Management of Participants: The Meeting agreed that the PRA Stewards and the British Racing

School or Northern Racing College Representative should assist in the management of participants. Both were to be briefed by the PRA regarding their raceday roles.

Scheduling of Pony Races: It was noted that some racecourses stage Pony Races before rather than after racing, and agreed that where this was the case it should be agreed in advance with the BHA Course Inspector. In addition, it was agreed that should racecourses wish they could schedule one Pony Race at two fixtures, rather than having both races on the same day.

PRA Steward: It was reported that for 2008 the PRA intended to engage 2 PRA Stewards, one for the North and one for the South, to attend all Pony Races.

Entries: It was recognised that the level of entries for the 2007 Pony Racing Season had been lower than in previous years and felt that this was due to the number of opportunities now available.

Height Certificates: The necessity for height certificates was queried, and it was agreed that it would be necessary for these to continue to be provided.

Entries: It was agreed that for 2008 entries should close at 14 days, but if there were insufficient entries they would be held open until 10 days, and the number of entrants would be made available but not the details. Following the 10 day stage the entries would be released and no further alterations would be permitted.

Review of Pony Racing Regulations: The Meeting reviewed the draft Pony Racing Regulations for 2008 and proposed amendments to these.

Caroline Davies or Holly Robarts

RCA Clerks of the Course Seminar

A seminar for Clerks of the Course will take place at Aintree Racecourse on Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 November 2007.

The event is designed to appeal to Clerks of the Course and other members of racecourse management teams such as Groundstaff, Racecourse Managers, Operational Managers, and Racecourse Directors, who would be very welcome to attend for all or some of the programme.

Monday's programme will feature a detailed session on the recording, understanding and communicating of raceday data and presentations from the BHA, Cranfield University and TurfTrax. Tuesday's programme includes presentations from the Tote and BHA Head of Handicapping. There will also be presentations on medical and veterinary issues and an opportunity to view the excellent facilities available at Aintree Racecourse.

As is traditional, on the Monday evening, there will be a reception supported by Letheby and Christopher, followed by a dinner sponsored by Fornells with a guest speaker after dinner.

If you have not yet returned your booking form, please do so as soon as possible.

Holly Robarts

TECHNICAL

Weather Report

Below is a summary of the September Weather Report (for England and Wales) from the Environment Agency:

September was generally a dry month with all our regions receiving less than 75% of the long term average (LTA) rainfall. It was the second driest month of the year to date. Soil moisture deficits increased over the month in all but two of our regions, and remained considerably lower than the same time last year in several of our regions. Monthly mean flows decreased at the majority of indicator sites in September, but despite the decreases only two sites were lower than normal for the time of year. Flows at four sites in groundwater dominated catchments remain exceptionally high for the time of year. Groundwater levels also decreased at the majority of indicator sites, although the descriptive class remained mostly unchanged. Approximately half of the sites were higher than normal, while just three sites remained lower than normal, of which one was exceptionally low. Reservoir storage decreased in all regions, with the exception of

our Thames Region where storage increased slightly. Overall storage for England and Wales decreased by 5% to 84%. Despite this, storage in all reservoirs or reservoir groups was normal or higher, with six reservoirs or reservoir groups either notably high or exceptionally high for the time of year.

Rainfall: The relatively settled and dry weather experienced during August continued into September, with all of our regions receiving less than 75% of the LTA rainfall.

Soil Moisture Deficit: Soil moisture deficits (SMDs) were higher at the beginning of October than at the end of August in all but two of our regions.

River Flows: Monthly mean flows decreased at the majority of indicator sites in September and were below average at over half of sites.

Groundwater Levels: Groundwater levels decreased at the majority of indicator sites during the month, though the descriptive class decreased at only five sites.

Reservoir Storage: Regional reservoir storage decreased in all but our Thames Region, with five of our regions recording decreases of 5% or more.

Watt Fences

Watt Fences are pleased to announce that they have recently launched their new website at www.wattfences.com. They are also the only agent for Fornells products in the UK and Ireland. Supplying racecourses for 15 years, aiming to offer a 'one stop shop' from steeplechase fences, hurdles, flags and tape".

TRAINING

Racecourse Groundsmen Courses

Intermediate Course:	British Racing School, Newmarket	18-23 November 2007
Advanced Course:	York Racecourse	10-15 February 2008
Foundation Course:	Cheltenham Racecourse	20-25 April 2008
Intermediate Course:	British Racing School, Newmarket	16-21 November 2008

There are places available on the above courses. For information please contact Chris Costello at the Institute of Groundsmanship, 28 Stratford Office Village, Walker Avenue, Wolverton Mill, Milton Keynes, MK12 5TW, Telephone: 01908 312511, e-mail: iog@iog.org

SAFETY

Tree Safety

Racecourses are asked to be aware that where trees grow in areas that they are responsible for, they are also responsible for the care and management of these trees. Racecourses should ensure that a qualified forester or arboricultural professional is engaged to conduct risk assessments of trees and to carry out any necessary work. Local Authorities employ arboricultural co-ordinators who can provide further advice if needed.

The RCA and Ascot Racecourse are in the process of producing a guidance document on this matter, which will be distributed to all racecourses when available. *Holly Robarts*

BADGES & PASS

Access and Ticketing Workshop

The RCA Access and Ticketing Workshop was held at Weatherbys on Wednesday 10 October 2007, and was attended by 43 delegates, representing 18 individual racecourses and each of the racecourse groups.

The morning sessions included presentations of the use and control of Wi-Fi, as well as practical and legal steps towards dealing with ticket touts and fraudulent tickets. In addition, the delegates were given an update the PASS System and recent upgrades. The afternoon sessions included presentations on barrier access systems and associated ticketing systems.

The workshop concluded with a discussion session centred around the day's presentations, which included a lengthy discussion regarding the possible future introduction of a racing industry 'smart card'

The RCA would like to thank each of the speakers for their valuable contributions to the Workshop, and to Weatherbys for hosting the day. *Caroline Davies or Holly Robarts*

2008 Badge Colour Scheme

The colours for the 2008 metal badges for the RCA, Press, Official, NTF and JAGB will be Light and Dark Purple.

Holly Robarts

2008 Badges and Badge Posters

8 copies of the large poster, and 4 copies of the A4 sized poster will shortly be sent to all racecourses. Extra copies are available on request.

Holly Robarts

RCA and Press Badge Lists

Copies of the lists of 2007 RCA and Press Badges holders are available on request. *Holly Robarts*

Missing Badges

RCA: 151, 152, 153, 154, 256, 257, 269, 307, 308, 316, 372, 380, 389, 426, 448, 459, 552, 582, 1030, 1146, 1147

Press: 76, 153, 188, 220, 264, 381, 416, 420, 425, 515

JAGB: 26, 42, 66, 281, 291, 332, 334, 356, 363, 410, 412, 448, 451, 452, 477, 478, 495, 546, 566, 586, 668

NTF: 383, 410, 470, 481, 526, 544, 545, 790, 793, 851, 1257, 1318, 1319, 1405, 1559, 1583

Officials: 40

RACING REGISTER

Free to use, Racing Register is an events diary maintained by Sportsguide Limited on behalf of the racing industry. Any organisation planning a press day, product launch or open day etc., involving racing professionals and the media can contact Racing Register to register their event and be advised of any potential clashes.

The following are highlights for November, December 2007 and January 2008. For further details regarding specific dates please e-mail lynn@sportsguidelimited.com or contact Lynn Payne at Sportsguide Limited on 01344 774322.

November

15 Thursday	Cheltenham Thoroughbred Racing and Breeding Seminar
16 Friday - 18 Sunday	The Open at Cheltenham
21 Wednesday - 22 Thursday	DBS Flat and NH in Training, Flat Yearlings
30 Friday	Hennessy Winter Festival - Newbury

December

1 Saturday	Tattersalls December Foal Sale
1 Saturday - 2 Sunday	Hennessy Winter Festival - Newbury
3 Monday - 7 Friday	Tattersalls December Breeding Stock Sale
3 Monday	HorseRace Writers & Photographers Annual Awards Luncheon, Royal Lancaster Hotel, London
14 Friday	DBS National Hunt Breeze Up Sale

January 2008

16 Wednesday	Goffs four and five Year old NH Breeze Up Sales - Dundalk
28 Monday - 31 Thursday	DBS Flat Breedingstock, Flat and NH Horses in Training, National Hunt Breedingstock.

ADMINISTRATION

The Companies Act 2006

Attached for Racecourse Managers is a briefing from Burges Salmon regarding The Companies Act 2006. This briefing is one in a series looking at the key implications of the new Act for companies and their directors. For further information please speak to your usual contact at Burges Salmon or contact Nick Graves (0117 939 2200) nick.graves@burges-salmon.com, Maggie Mitchell (0117 902 7791) maggie.mitchell@burges-salmon.com or Alyson Whale (0117 939 2294) alyson.whale@burges-salmon.com.

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

Spotlight On

David MacDonald
Racecourse Manager—Uttoxeter



Age	45
Marital Status/ Children/Pets	Married to Lindsey with one child (Fraser 3). Two cats and a variety of fish. I am allergic to the cats but Lindsey will not let them go so I suffer in silence (apart from the odd sneeze!)
Previous Career(s)	Regional Director with various Nightclub groups. Company Director of Sanctuary Leisure before joining John Halewood (Amberleigh House) in 2000 and heading his UK Sales Operation in the On Trade.
Best Bits About Your Job	The thrill of filling a concert or dance venue has now been replaced by the buzz from exceeding targets on a raceday. We try to exceed customer expectations and it is a great feeling seeing really satisfied clients.
Worst Bit About Your Job	Missing targets due to the weather. I admit to being completely and passionately results driven. We have a great set of Directors though who are quick to reassure you when it rains and praise you when the results come in.
Best Racing Experience(s)	Being connected with Amberleigh House and the famous Grand National win in 2004. I had been championing the horse for a full year and the phone didn't stop ringing for days after the race.
Worst Racing Experience	I am sure I am not the first to say that abandoning a meeting is the worst experience. It makes for a pretty miserable couple of days.
Racing Hero	John Halewood has been a big influence on my life. We parted on excellent terms and I wish him luck in his ambition to win another Grand National. Quite a shy man but very motivational and you don't sell 60 million litres of Lambrini a year without having a sharp business brain!
Most Fanciable Racing Personality	Heidi Range of The Sugababes whose tenuous connection with racing is that she played a gig at Newmarket!
Hobbies	I support Carlisle United. More fun than being a Man Utd fan. I also love music and music trivia and quiz nights. I also enjoy doing impressions although even I cannot compete with Simon Lee at Chepstow who does a better Rod Street than Rod Street. himself.
Favourite Film & TV	American Psycho and 24
Favourite Holiday Destination	New York, North-East Scotland (Crail, Anstruther, St Andrews) and Cockermouth to visit the family.
Current Wheels	BMW
One Wish To Improve The Industry	There are so many issues that are clouded in uncertainty at present. Bookmakers, Prize Money, TV deals, sponsorship etc. We are facing a most challenging time and the sooner we nail these issues the better.

DIARY DATES

19 November	RCA Technical Group
22 November	BHA Race Planning Committee
26-27 November	RCA Clerks of the Course Seminar, Aintree
28 November	RaceTech Board
6 December	Industry Committee
11 December	Jump Race Development Group

ATTACHMENTS

Racegoers Club Autumn Newsletter
 Burges Salmon Briefing—The Companies Act 2006
 Competitive Racing Statistics

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UPDATE is also available on our website:

www.britishracecourses.org