

RCA CLERKS OF THE COURSE SEMINAR

The RCA held a Clerks of the Course Seminar at Aintree Racecourse on Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 November 2007. We were highly delighted by



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the good turnout for the seminar, which included representatives from 41 racecourses as well as the BHA and other industry professionals.

The highlight of the event was the series of presentations on Monday afternoon which centred around Recording, Understanding and Communicating Raceday Information. This included presentations from Paull Khan and Kathryn Proudlove from Weatherbys regarding TRICL and the Racing Administration website and sessions from Dale Gibson (Jockey), Ferdy Murphy

(Trainer), Dave Nevison (Punter), Nigel Roddis (At The Races) and James Willoughby (Journalist) outlining the individual requirements of their respective professions.

This series of presentations was followed by a discussion session which raised a number of issues for further follow up. The clear message which emerged was that there is increasing call for the provision of accurate and scientific information throughout the industry. This was particularly relevant regarding ensuring that those on-course receive as much information as television viewers receive.

The RCA has compiled an action plan arising from the presentations and discussion session to develop these issues.

The Seminar was opened by a presentation from John Bridgeman outlining the future objectives of the British Horseracing Authority. This was followed by an informative presentation from Dr Iain James of Cranfield University detailing the findings of the 4 year irrigation project which had been commissioned by the BHA. Dr James appeared again during the seminar to provide a summary of the other projects which Cranfield University conducts, including the research into the use and effects of frost protection covers being conducted on behalf of the RCA.

The presentations on Monday also included a very lively and informative review of the progress with the year long trial of the Going Stick presented by Mike Maher of Turftrax, and an outline of the developments being made to running rail from Marc Windridge (Fornells).

The second day of the seminar included excellent presentations from Jason Brautigam (Tote) and Phil Smith (BHA Head of Handicapping) regarding competitive races before moving on to veterinary and medical issues. This included a fascinating presentation from Professor Alan Wilson of the Royal Veterinary College regarding on-going research into racehorse locomotion.

Initial feedback received from the delegates indicates that the seminar was the best one to date, and we would like to take the opportunity to thank all of the speakers for their valuable contributions and assistance.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Fornells for their generous sponsorship of the Seminar dinner on the Monday evening, and to Letheby and Christopher for supporting the champagne reception prior to the dinner.

Holly Roberts

RACE PLANNING

Fixture Review

At its meeting on 10 December, the BHA Board had sight of an initial issues paper, as well as a summary of the data analysis provided by Deloitte. No recommendation was made but the Board was asked to choose the direction in which it wished to go in terms of future fixture policy. Stephen Atkin and Carla Moore will be meeting with the BHA to discuss progress and the way ahead on Thursday 13 December. It is anticipated that consultation with racecourses will take place in January 2008.

Carla Moore

Novice Chases

Once the Cheltenham Festival has been staged and the Flat season begins to get under way, the number of Jump Fixtures is reduced and the opportunities for Jump horses become fewer. This is felt most by the novice chasers which have won a chase and for which trainers are hoping to win one more race before losing their novices' statuses at the end of the season. The new Novice Chase system implemented in 2004, relies heavily on Beginners' Chases and a reduced number of opportunities for winners, in order that they have to run against each other.

During April 2007, the BHA Racing Department received calls from a number of trainers complaining that there were too many Beginners' Chases in April and not enough races for those that have won. The situation will be further exacerbated in 2008, with the movement of the Easter weekend fixtures into March. The BHA Jump Racing Sub Committee discussed the issue and agreed that a new structure could be introduced in April, which would allow racecourses to stage Novice Chases open to winners, without having to find the extra funds to run them at Class 3. The new April structure will be as follows:

Class 1	As previously (open to multiple winners)
Class 2	As previously (open to multiple winners)
Class 3	For novices which have not won more than 3 Steeple Chases Penalties, a winner of a Class 3 to 6 steeple chase.....6lb Of 2 or more steeple chases, or of a Class 1 or 2 steeple chase.....10lb
Class 4	For novices which have not won more than 2 steeple chases Penalties, for each steeple chases won.....7lb

Or Rating-related Novice Chases as previously published.

Racecourses will have been contacted by the BHA Racing Department (Stuart Middleton 0207-1520055 or Richard Russell 0207-1520054), but if you have any other questions or concerns about how the changes affect your races, please contact the Department. Or indeed if you already know that you intend to drop or drastically alter an existing Novice Chase in April, they would be grateful to hear from you.

Carla Moore

Raceday Accounts

The BHA have asked us to remind racecourses that raceday accounts liabilities must be settled within 7 days of the last day of the meeting taking place. Any account that has not been settled is currently charged interest at UK base rates until cleared funds are received.

In light of a spate of recently unsettled raceday accounts liabilities BHA is likely to introduce additional late payment charges in 2008.

Racecourses are able to settle their raceday liability by Direct Debit. Payments will be collected 7 days after the relevant meeting takes place. This option reduces unnecessary administration for all parties and ensures payment is always made on time. If you are interested please contact Mike Butts at Weatherbys on 01933 440077.

Carla Moore

RACE PLANNING

48-Hour Declarations

Agreement has been reached between the Horsemen's Group - made up of owners, trainers, breeders, jockeys and stable staff – and the racecourses/TV companies so that 48-hour declarations will continue for Flat racing during 2008, 2009 and 2010, pending confirmation by the British Horseracing Authority. The agreement is subject to an annual break clause, which will be activated in the event of income falling significantly below budget. It is hoped that this will go some way to addressing the concerns of many trainers who have reported that 48 hour declarations has caused them great problems.

The agreement will greatly assist Racing UK

and At The Races to sell British racing overseas for a period of three years unless they fail to meet their annual projections. It will also help the Tote in their work with overseas betting operators to build international Tote pools. Part of the agreement is that an additional £400,000, as a minimum, will be committed to a combination of prize-money and appearance money annually.

As the RCA has not been directly involved in the agreement, any further queries regarding prize money distribution/collection, should be directed towards the relevant TV companies.

Carla Moore

2008 Race Times – Second Quarter

The Race Times Working Party will meet up again on 24 January 2008 to discuss the timings for fixtures to be held in April, May and June 2008 (Programme Book II). Therefore if you have any requests for that period, please let me or James Savage at the BHA know in advance.

Carla Moore

Minimum Weight in Flat Races

At its meeting on 5 November, the BHA Board considered a presentation on early findings of new research by Dr Michael Turner in relation to a sample of the current crop of apprentice and conditional riders. This presentation included results which indicate a bone density deficiency in the male apprentice jockeys under study. The welfare of participants is of paramount concern to the Board and it has resolved to address this particular issue.

In taking this into further consideration, the Board will consider the question of minimum weights. However, the Board's view was that this factor was potentially only one of many that will require detailed consideration. What

the minimum weight should be in certain races is related to the bigger and wider question of the lifestyle and health environment for jockeys and, in particular, young male Flat jockeys. Raising the minimum weight has not been ruled out – nor has some alternative to an across the board increase, such as whether some apprentice jockeys should, depending on their physical characteristics, be permitted to ride only at certain weights. The next step is further research and investigation which the Board will review as quickly as it is available. The subject was further discussed on 10 December.

Carla Moore

RACE PLANNING

Jump Race Development Group (JRDG)

The JRDG met on Tuesday 11 December. The following topics were on the Agenda:

- Future Voice of Racing
- Report on Tokyo Visit by Edward Gillespie
- 48-hour declarations (update + Reserves)
- Order of Merit – update on future responsibility for managing this (sponsorship / REL)
- Channel 4 Racing sponsorship
- Jump Race Committee update
- Strategic Review of the Fixture List update
- Jump Race Focus Launch update
- Jump Racing Knowledge Bank – opportunities
- Communications Strategy (Director of Communications & Promotion / Racing Promotions Group Remit / Promotion and Packaging of (Premier) Jump Fixtures / Consistency of the welfare message)
- Bringing new owners into the sport
- 47th Levy submission
- VAT dinner report
- Membership of JRDG

A short report will be printed in next month's UPDATE.

Carla Moore

Divided Races

Please be advised that from Thursday 6 December until Monday 31 December there will be **no reduction** in prize money for those races permitted to divide and which subsequently divide at the declaration to run stage in accordance with Order 125. For further details please contact the BHA Racing Department.

Laura Holmes

RCA Race Planning Workshop / TRICL I Course

Booking forms for the RCA Race Planning Workshop on Thursday 17 January 2008 have been sent to Racecourse Managers and Clerks of the Course and should be returned no later than Monday 31 December. If you have not received a booking form, but would like to attend, please contact me.

Carla Moore

RACE PLANNING

Report of Jump Racing sub-Committee (JRC)

The JRC met on 16 November, a short report of which is printed below:

AQPS horses: Trainers and breeders were unhappy that the project to let AQPS horses into "National Hunt" Novices' Hurdle races and Bumpers had been put on hold (due to the expense and complications). The BHA will revisit the subject with Weatherbys and France-Galop with a view to attempting to find an alternative way forward.

Horses utilising old ratings making handicaps uncompetitive: The JRC was concerned that horses were taking advantage of an old rating which they had achieved over one type of obstacle which was much lower than their current rating over the obstacle they had recently been racing over. It would revisit the issue at its next meeting when more evidence had been gathered.

Claiming Steeple Chases: Approval was given for 3 or 4 Claiming Steeple Chases to be programmed in the 2008. The races would not be targeted at moderate horses and would be worth at least £8,000.

Riders carrying significant overweight: The JRC discussed the occurrence of jockeys carry-

ing significant overweight, information about which was only announced shortly before the race. It agreed that jockeys should be able to carry overweight, although a maximum limit should be set as to how much weight any horse should be expected to carry and the intention of carrying overweight, if known, should be declared and indicated with the list of declared runners. The matter will be referred to the BHA Racing Committee.

Entry fees for Jump Pattern races: Jockey Club Racecourses were keen to increase the stakes' percentage of total prize funds in Jump Pattern races so that they were in line with Flat Pattern races. The JRC acknowledged that there had been a historic differentiation between Flat and Jump stakes for valid reasons, but thought that the ROA's view should be sought before this proposal was given further consideration.

A race with 48 hour declarations every Saturday: The JRC discussed the concept of having at least 1 race every Saturday with 48 hour declarations so that newspapers could cover the race in detail on the Friday. The BHA would aim to progress the topic further.

Carla Moore

Report of the Flat Racing sub-Committee (FRC)

The FRC met on Thursday 22 November, a short report of which is printed below:

Slippage: The FRC discussed the latest update on the subject of slippage within the World Thoroughbred Racehorse Rankings, prepared by the Head of Handicapping for the Racing Director. There appeared to be a difference of opinion amongst international handicappers as to the appetite to address the problem going forward. Those differences would be an issue which would require addressing when the international handicappers met in December for the WTRR conference. There was no appetite to re-evaluate races historically on an internationally agreed basis. Several methods had been employed to address the problem. The subject would be addressed at the European Pattern Committee (EPC) meeting in January with a view to progressing it through the IFHA.

Going Descriptions by Overseas Racing Authorities: The International Racing Bureau had recently contacted the Racing Department to indicate the existence of a problem that is sometimes encountered with going descriptions from foreign countries. Going descriptions in Britain tend to be more detailed than those overseas and anything that could be done to introduce a similar system in Europe would be welcomed. One problem was often that going was measured well in advance of racing commencing and it was unchanged even if there was a substantial amount of rain. The committee agreed that the EPC should consider the matter at its annual meeting in January.

Also discussed were review of provisional pattern and listed race ratings for 2007. The EPC will discuss these at their meeting in January.

Carla Moore

RACETECH

RaceTech – Watching WiFi

With WiFi becoming a “must have” for many conference organisers, rather than a “would like to have”, racecourses are under increasing pressure to flood the site with wireless networking capabilities, as well as providing wireless internet access for the Press on race-days. RaceTech can advise and assist racecourses through this process – providing hardware, software, support and maintenance of systems if required, or simply advising on where/how/suitable suppliers on a consultancy basis if preferred.

There are a myriad of systems, suppliers and tariffs to choose from and racecourses need to be aware of third parties operating wireless

networks on their premises. Potentially, there are legal implications to third parties operating “rogue” networks – including acceptable usage policies and traceability in the event of an alert, as well as co-locating wireless networks that may then interfere with one another.

To find out more, and to get some free advice and a site survey if required, please contact RaceTech – we are well positioned to help you to choose the most cost effective and robust system to meet your needs, and ensure that you comply with all of the necessary regulations.

Catherine Pullan

“Brand” New for the New Year

RaceTech have been working with several racecourses to enhance their CCTV service on raceday, with particular reference to branding the CCTV service more heavily with racecourse livery/logos and messaging. Brand awareness and brand recognition is a hot topic with consumers and racegoers are no exception. Racecourses can maximise their profile exposure by branding the CCTV output with logos faded out on every screen, tighter messaging, timed messages (to encourage racegoers to bet/buy a drink/go to the Tote etc) in a highly immediate and effective way. CCTV is an ideal vehicle for racecourses to steer their racegoers throughout the day, and effective branding is a powerful tool. Talk to RaceTech about options and ideas and make your New Year “Brand New!”

With best wishes to all of you from the team at RaceTech, and we look forward to a successful racing calendar for 2008 for us all.

Catherine Pullan
07976 432271

PRESS

Photographers Meeting

A meeting with photographers was held at Cheltenham Racecourse on Saturday 17 November to discuss a number of issues that had arisen over the past 12 months. Over twenty five photographers attended the meeting including those that were accredited and commercial.

The photographers asked the RCA and the BHA to review the BHAGI 5.2 which relates to photographers conduct on the racecourse. This General Instruction was previously reviewed ten years ago and a meeting will be held in conjunction with the RCA, BHA, photographers and the HWPAs in the New Year to update it.

Concern was also expressed about amateur photographers being accredited by racecourses that had no knowledge of the rules and did not have public liability insurance, which could then make Racecourses liable for any accidents that may occur.

Updated Guidance and further details to follow in early 2008.

Lizzie Lea

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:

Month	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
November	151	627	£16,513	226	971	£21,163
Total	2,739	12,366	£230,702	5,406	23,279	£446,892
	(-50%)	(-47%)	(-48%)			

April 2007 saw orders taken on behalf of 44 different courses (49 last April)
 May 2007 saw orders taken on behalf of 37 different courses (49 last May)
 June 2007 saw orders taken on behalf of 36 different courses (38 last June)
 July 2007 saw orders taken on behalf of 40 different courses (42 last July)
 August 2007 saw orders taken on behalf of 42 different courses (40 last August)
 September 2007 saw orders taken on behalf of 26 different courses (39 last September)
 October 2007 saw orders taken on behalf of 32 different courses (32 last October)
 November 2007 saw orders taken on behalf of 21 different courses (24 last November)

John Phillips

Racecourse Leaflets / Admission Information

We have written to all racecourses requesting your brochures containing admission prices and group rates. If you have not yet sent us a supply please do so.

Paul Smith

Group Sales

As at 30 November bookings stood at 244 valued at £128,900.

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. See Page 10.

Paul Smith

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	5 August	Market Rasen	196
11 March	Market Rasen	42	5 August	Newbury	278
11 March	Warwick	20	12 August	Leicester	132
18 March	Carlisle	42	12 August	Wolverhampton	52
18 March	Fontwell Park	40	19 August	Bath	250
25 March	Kempton Park	50	19 August	Pontefract	616
25 March	Worcester †	36	26 August	Beverley	374
1 April	Hexham	36	26 August	Goodwood	754
1 April	Lingfield Park	92	26 August	Yarmouth	540
8 April	Musselburgh	12	2 September	Market Rasen	106
15 April	Kelso	64	9 September	Fontwell Park	198
15 April	Market Rasen	120	16 September	Goodwood	230
15 April	Worcester	102	16 September	Stratford	238
22 April	Southwell	110	23 September	Hamilton Park	22
29 April	Brighton	92	23 September	Plumpton	156
6 May	Hamilton	32	30 September	Ascot	552
6 May	Newmarket	968	30 September	Market Rasen	216
6 May	Salisbury	118	30 September	Musselburgh	58
13 May	Plumpton	98	7 October	Huntingdon	184
13 May	Worcester	140	7 October	Uttoxeter	204
20 May	Market Rasen	134	14 October	Bath	102
27 May	Fontwell Park	134	14 October	Goodwood	166
27 May	Uttoxeter	250	14 October	Lingfield Park	98
3 June	Brighton	40	21 October	Hereford	182
10 June	Bath	182	21 October	Kempton Park	38
10 June	Stratford	204	28 October	Wincanton	254
17 June	Salisbury	234	4 November	Carlisle	134
24 June	Hexham	34	4 November	Lingfield Park	86
24 June	Pontefract	402	11 November	Hereford	106
24 June	Warwick	102	11 November	Market Rasen	206
1 July	Salisbury*	68	18 November	Carlisle	62
1 July	Windsor*	286	18 November	Fontwell Park	218
8 July	Ayr	38	25 November	Plumpton	146
8 July	Market Rasen	270	2 December	Doncaster	182
15 July	Haydock Park	500	2 December	Leicester	48
15 July	Perth	100	2 December	Newbury	146
22 July	Newton Abbot	538	9 December	Kelso	36
29 July	Ascot	770	9 December	Lingfield Park	20
29 July	Carlisle	80	9 December	Warwick	74
29 July	Pontefract	392	TOTAL SOLD		15,084

* subsequently abandoned

† subsequently transferred

John Phillips or Valerie Larue

THE RACEGOERS CLUB

Racecourse of the Year Awards

Cheltenham Racecourse has received the Racegoers Club Racecourse of the Year Award for 2007, winning for the fourth consecutive year.

The full list of regional awards is as follows:

Scotland & North East:	Racecourse of the Year AYR Best Small Racecourse KELSO
North:	Racecourse of the Year YORK Best Small Racecourse WETHERBY
North Midlands:	Racecourse of the Year UTTOXETER Best Small Racecourse MARKET RASEN
South Midlands & East Anglia:	Racecourse of the Year CHELTENHAM Best Small Racecourse HUNTINGDON
South West:	Racecourse of the Year NEWBURY Best Small Racecourse WINCANTON
South East:	Racecourse of the Year GOODWOOD Best Small Racecourse FONTWELL PARK

Congratulations to all award winners.

John Phillips

Renewals

The renewal process is underway. Managers will shortly receive a sample 2008 voucher book.

John Phillips

SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship and Hospitality Questionnaire

Thank you to those courses that have already supplied figures. Horseracing sponsorship is under the spotlight at present – the pressure to attract new brand names to the sport has never been greater with the uncertainty over the Levy leading us to not know where we are on sponsorship with some betting firms, and the lack of a Derby sponsor in 2008 receiving much press. As a result the requests for general sponsorship statistics have been coming thick and fast. Many of these can be provided through the sponsorship statistical reports, but the only figure that can currently be quoted regarding the level of sponsorship income on the racecourse side of the industry is the sponsorship and executive contributions to prize money. It is essential that a more representative figure, including race sponsorship and other racecourse commercial partnerships, is available in order that these new brands can gauge the size of the industry and at what level they would sit (were they to sponsor)

within the sponsorship structure.

Likewise with corporate hospitality; in 2006 / 2007 racecourses on the whole have reported to me that hospitality sales have never been better. We quote to potential hospitality customers that the races is one if not *the* most popular sporting events to entertain your clients at – however, we have no total figure to demonstrate this. Most other mainstream sports do and at present it is impossible to compare horseracing hospitality popularity (other than saying most racecourses have met their hospitality targets), with them – or indeed other leisure activities.

Understandably these figures are sensitive, and if a racecourse has an issue with providing them (only the final total figure will be made public – individual figures will not be available to anyone other than myself), please would you let me know.

Mary-Ann Sandercock

COMMUNICATIONS

Special Events webpage

The Racecourse Association Website is currently undergoing development work in order to make it more accessible to both racecourse personnel as well as potential racegoers. There were over 19,000 visits to the website in September, most of which found the site by a search engine using the words racecourse and racecourses. On the site, potential racegoers can now find their local racecourse via the new live map as well as the existing postcode search facility.

Following a recent questionnaire sent out to racecourses a number of suggestions regarding improvements to the website were gratefully

received. One suggestion was to make better use of the 'Special Events' section of the website. Advertising a Special Event on the RCA website is a cost free and effective method of advertising, and would allow the webpage to be a comprehensive user friendly site for new racegoers.

All 2008 special events including Principle Races, themed racedays, feature racedays or non racing events can now be added to the special events section of the website.

For more information, or to add a special event please contact Paul Smith. *Laura Parsons*

www.racingfixtures.co.uk

We have recently been contacted by a number of racecourses about concerns they have regarding a website called www.racingfixtures.co.uk

A racecourse has informed the RCA that a number of their clients have been contacted directly by the website asking them to advertise on the site. The website told these racecourse clients that the racecourse already advertised with the site, this was incorrect.

Although the site has obtained a licence from the BHA to show fixtures the RCA would be wary of recommending use of this site as although they have access to the correct fixtures it is not regularly updated and still shows fixtures that have changed or been moved. *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*

Neil Wyatt Groundstaff Awards

The RCA has contacted racecourses to invite them to submit nominations for their groundstaff team for the 2007 Tote Sponsored Neil Wyatt Groundstaff Award. As in previous years there are three awards for Groundstaff at the racecourses judged to be the best Flat, Jump and Dual Purpose tracks.

The judging is due to take place in January by a panel including representatives of the NTF, Jockey's Association and Racecourse Inspectorate.

As in 2006, a standard submission form has been compiled and approved by the RCA Technical Group and has been distributed to all Clerks of the Course. Whilst all racecourses will come under consideration, tracks are invited to inform the panel of any significant work or training achievements which they believe deserve recognition in the form of an award.

Holly Roberts

TECHNICAL

RCA Technical Group Meeting

The RCA Technical Group met on Monday 19 November 2007. The racecourses were represented by Seamus Buckley, Simon Claisse, Bob Davies, Sally Iggulden, Tim Long, Anthea Morshead and Chris Stickels. Representatives from the NTF and JAGB were also in attendance. The notes of the meeting will be circulated to all Racecourse Managers and Clerks of the Course when available. A summary of the discussion is outlined below:

X-Ray Machines: The Group discussed the proposal for the provision of Veterinary X-ray machines at racecourses and agreed that due to requirements for Health and Safety, space, staff and timing it would not be practical to introduce this. The NTF confirmed that trainers were satisfied with existing arrangements.

BHA Foot and Mouth Protocols: The Group reviewed the BHA Foot and Mouth Disease Protocols and agreed that these were in need of review as well as protocols for other exotic diseases which could affect horses or other animals.

BHA Officials Procedures 2.4: The Group reviewed BHA Officials Procedure 2.4 regarding action to be taken when there are doubts about the safety of the track and agreed that this should be referred to the BHA GI Liaison Group for a full review and update.

2007 Neil Wyatt Groundstaff Awards: The Group approved the standard submission form to be sent to all racecourses for submission of nominations for the 2007 Neil Wyatt Groundstaff Awards.

DEFRA Water Consultation: The Group was informed that the DEFRA Consultation regarding proposed changes to restrict non-essential uses of water had been concluded and DEFRA's response had been issued. Any decisions regarding water use with financial implications, as for racecourses, will continue to be governed by Drought Orders, the procedures for which will not be altered.

Stalls Handlers: The Group was made aware that there was to be a review of stalls handlers, particularly regarding stalls handler numbers and that there was a possibility that courses may be asked to provide additional staff for extra flexibility.

Going Stick Trial: It was agreed that the Going Stick proved to be a useful turf management tool for racecourses, but that its original objectives were unlikely to be met.

Frost Covers: The Group was informed that Betfair has agreed to fund Phase III of the Frost Protection Covers Research and that the protocols for the racecourse trials were being developed by Cranfield University.

Halt Race Procedures: It was reported that discussions regarding the extension of the existing Hazard Ahead procedures to include a Halt Race Procedure were continuing with the BHA.

Jockey Injury Notification Arrangements: The Jockey Injury Notification Arrangements guidance document was reviewed and amendments agreed. It was also agreed that arrangements for amateur and foreign jockeys should be identified.

Light Metres: It was agreed that flexibility was necessary and that strict criteria regarding light levels should not be introduced.

Physiotherapy: The Group was informed that the BHA intended to reframe the proposals regarding the provision of physiotherapy services, and that the JAGB intended to establish a sub-committee, including representatives from all interested parties, to investigate this further.

Access and Passes: The Group was informed that the RCA has entered into initial discussions with the BHA regarding the introduction of PASS Cards for Casual Officials and Local Stewards.

Caroline Davies or Holly Robarts

TECHNICAL

Provision of Going Information

The NTF has requested that racecourses endeavour to update their going reports in line with the prescribed deadlines wherever possible to assist trainers with making entries and declarations. We have also been made aware that trainers are very appreciative of all additional information which is provided by racecourses.

Holly Robarts

Review of Stalls Handlers

Racecourses are asked to be aware that a review of Flat Starting Procedures, including stalls handler numbers is scheduled to take place, and that there may be financial implications for racecourses arising from this. The RCA will represent racecourses during this review and will ensure that racecourses are kept informed of progress.

Holly Robarts

Turftrax GoingStick Archived Data

Clerks of the Course are asked to note the link that has been placed on the Racing Administration Going page to course-by-course archived going data from Turftrax. It shows the date of the meeting, official going and the GoingStick reading on that date. Trainers and Clerks alike have expressed interest in having the figures there for comparative purposes and Clerks are asked to point trainers to it if necessary.

Owen Byrne

2012 Olympics – Equipment and Re-locatable Venues

Equipment and re-locatable venues in use at the 2012 Olympics to be held in London are to be sold off after the event. The RCA (on behalf of racecourses and racing) has registered interest in purchasing certain items and facilities. This interest has been accepted and further details of the items will be released within the next year.

Holly Robarts

Weather Report

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

October was another generally dry month, and was the third consecutive month of below average rainfall across all our regions. Monthly mean flows decreased at more than half of the indicator sites in October. Decreases were most significant in northern and western England and Wales, where almost all sites fell to either *below normal* or *notably low* for the time of year. Flows from three groundwater dominated catchments remained *notably high* or *exceptionally high*. Groundwater levels decreased at the majority of indicator sites, with more than one third falling by one or more descriptive classes. Just four groundwater sites were lower than *normal*. Reservoir storage decreased in all our regions except Anglian and Thames. Overall storage for England and Wales decreased by 4% to 80%. Storage in all

reservoirs or reservoir groups remained *normal* or higher for the time of year, except Kielder Reservoir in our North East Region which fell to *notably low*.

Rainfall: October was another relatively settled month with below average rainfall across all our regions.

Soil Moisture Deficit: Soil moisture deficits (SMDs) fell in all of our regions during the month.

River Flows: Monthly mean flows decreased at more than half of the indicator sites in October, with flows at nearly two thirds of all sites approximately half the October LTA, or lower.

Groundwater Levels: Groundwater levels decreased at all but four indicator sites during the month; more than one third of sites decreased by one or more descriptive classes.

Reservoir Storage: Reservoir storage decreased in all but our Anglian and Thames Regions.

TECHNICAL

Hurdle Design

The BHA, having received samples of hurdle legs rounded off on the top which meet the proposed changes to hurdle construction, will in due course change the General Instruction so that this becomes a requirement.

The BHA hope that racecourses will be able to adopt this minor modification to all hurdle legs supplied to racecourses from 1 December 2007 if not already doing so, and to ensure there is no misunderstanding in the future as to what is required, please see the photograph opposite for your information.



Richard Linley

SAFETY

Siting of Mobile Generators

All racecourses are reminded that where portable generators are used, the operators should be given clear instructions to site them in suitable well-ventilated areas away from any work areas in order to prevent the risk of fumes affecting other workers or members of the public. *Holly Roberts*

BHA Health and Safety Committee

The BHA Health and Safety Committee met on Thursday 29 November 2007, and Holly Roberts attended on behalf of the RCA. A full update will be provided to the RCA Safety Group at their next meeting. An outline of the discussions is given below:

Parade Ring Safety: The Committee requested further information regarding which racecourses had introduced a dedicated parade ring safety officer and their role. The RCA agreed to provide further details. In addition, the issue of horses known to kick wearing ribbons was discussed and it was agreed by all that this should not be pursued. The Committee was also informed that parade ring safety is an on-going issue for the RCA and racecourses and was asked to provide any assistance with promoting this.

Power Outlets and Cables: It was noted that due to the increase in electrical equipment being used by the Clerks of the Scales there was a

difficulty with an available number of power sockets and with cables causing a trip hazard. Racecourses are asked to ensure that sufficient power supply is available and that all care is taken to ensure that cables running from this do not cause a hazard.

Chairs for Officials: It was requested that racecourses provide fully adjustable chairs for officials, particularly for Clerks of the Scales who are in them for several hours. It was noted that this may become an Instruction if suitable chairs are not provided.

Racecourse Visits: It was reported that Tony Payne, the BHA Safety Consultant, may conduct visits to racecourses. It was agreed that the relevant racecourse would be informed in advance if a visit were to be made.

Risk Assessments: Copies of the BHA Field Force Risk Assessments have been provided to the RCA and will be reviewed by the RCA Safety Group.

Holly Roberts

SAFETY

Chairs for Officials

At the BHA Health and Safety Committee Meeting on 29 November it was noted that BHA officials should be provided with suitable, fully adjustable chairs, and racecourses are requested to make such chairs available.

These chairs could be obtained from a local supplier, or those from the racecourse office used on a raceday.

Provision of suitable chairs is a necessary requirement under Health and Safety legislation, and if racecourses do not make them available it may become a requirement of their racecourse licence in future.

Holly Robarts

TRAINING

BHEST

In September 2007 the British Horseracing Education and Standards Trust (BHEST) re-branded its very successful and hugely popular education programme as 'Racing to School'. The staff and Trustees of BHEST are immensely grateful to all participating racecourses for their ongoing support and unfailing enthusiasm to welcome schoolchildren of all ages and ability through their gates.



'Racing to School' is designed to give young people the opportunity to experience the world of racing whilst supporting their education by providing exciting and innovative activities based on the National Curriculum. The range of subject covered by the programme is vast and all are based on the racing environment. These include understanding weights and measurements in the Weighing Room, history at Chester racecourse and the world of business explored through studying the whole racecourse operation.

Over 10,000 pupils have participated in the programme this year, the majority of whom had never visited a racecourse before. By the end of the day they are enthused by their experience and teachers are glowing in their praise of a fun day of serious study.

Feedback from both teachers and pupils indicates the enormous impact the day has on their understanding of the sport and their desire to return to a day at the races. As schools local to each racecourse are given the opportunity to participate it is an excellent way for each racecourse to support its local community.

Plans for the continued development and delivery of 'Racing to School' are in hand for 2008 and the BHEST team will make personal contact with each racecourse to discuss and agree participation over the next year.

Judith Allen

Racecourse Groundsmen Courses

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

BADGES & PASS

Local Stewards and Casual Officials

The RCA has entered into initial discussions with the BHA to replace the current passes issued to local stewards and casual officials with PASS Cards. The proposed implementation date for the introduction of these cards is 1 March 2008.

To prevent the passes being updated for 2008 only to be replaced, racecourses are asked to continue to recognise the existing 2007 passes for local stewards and casual officials until 1 March 2008.

Holly Roberts

BHA Stable Guards

It has been agreed that where possible a copy of the printout used by the PASS Operators, showing the names of all owners associated with horses should be provided to the BHA Stable Guards. This is as owners may accompany trainers into the stable yard, but there is currently no facility to check the horses these owners are associated with.

In order to achieve this racecourses are asked to request that once the PASS operators have printed this list they fax a copy to the stable manager's office for the attention of the Stable Guards.

As there is no requirement for the provision of a fax machine in the stable manager's office it has been agreed that this will be a flexible arrangement to be introduced only at racecourses which have this facility.

The PASS Helpline has contacted PASS Operators to also make this request.

Holly Roberts

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 Roberts

2008 Badges & 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 Roberts

RCA and Press Badge Lists

Copies of the lists of 2008 RCA and Press Badges holders are available on request. *Holly Roberts*

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 January and February 2008. For further details regarding specific dates please e-mail lynn@sportsguidelimited.com or contact Lynn Payne at Sportsguide Limited on 01344 774322.

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.

February 2008

4 Monday	Fasig Tipton Sale—Midatlantic
9 Saturday	Tote Sport Trophy Hurdle—Newbury
28 Thursday	Pontefract Press Luncheon

ADMINISTRATION

Capital Projects

HBLB have advised that, following the departure of Godfrey Ayres, Stuart Dean of DBK Back has temporarily taken on the role of providing support for Capital Projects. Stuart can be contacted on 0121 2140837 or sdean@dbkgroup.com.

Racecourses are reminded that Capital Credit Grants are only available for projects of a capital nature that are for the benefit/improvement of horseracing. Repairs, renewals and replacements do not qualify and nor do capital projects that relate to non-racing activities, so care is needed with the wording of your application!

Lance Havell

Flags - Request

We have received an enquiry from Alan Grundy, Assistant Curator at the National Horseracing Museum asking if any racecourse still has the flags that used to be raised when horses had weighed in or there was a Stewards Enquiry etc. If you have and are able to donate a set (or lend on loan) to the Museum please contact Alan Grundy at the NHM on 01638 667 333.

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

Spotlight On

Jill Williamson
Racecourse Manager
Sedgefield



Age	36
Marital Status/ Children/Pets	Just Married, 3 children, 2 dogs (1 Beagle available to good energetic home!!)
Previous Career(s)	Commercial Executive then Business Development Manager at Newcastle Racecourse
Best Bits About Your Job	Overcoming day-to-day challenges, walking the course on the morning of racing
Worst Bit About Your Job	Having to abandon a racemeeting
Best Racing Experience(s)	Experiencing Tony McCoy's three wins at Sedgefield in front of a delighted crowd
Worst Racing Experience	Large Screen crashing as the winner of the Cheltenham Gold Cup approached the finishing line!
Racing Hero	Tony McCoy
Most Fanciable Racing Personality	Too many to name.....
Hobbies	Walking, scuba diving (abroad), family time
Favourite Film & TV	Forest Gump, Top Gear
Favourite Holiday Destination	Montego Bay, Jamaica
Current Wheels	Astra
One Wish To Improve The Industry	For Associations to work as a team to benefit the racing industry together

MISCELLANEOUS**ROYAL WINDSOR RACECOURSE
REQUIRE****2 x FULL TIME GROUNDSMAN****Responsibilities include:**

- Reporting to the Estates Manager, as a member of the Groundstaff, you will help maintain the racing surface and all other racing associated areas to a high specification.
- Duties will include track irrigation, mowing, strimming, treading and soiling, operating tractors with rotary mowers and other associated estate work to prepare the grounds for racing and all year round events.

Essential Requirements for Both Roles :

- You must be committed and hardworking with high standards and be self motivated to work as an individual and as part of a wider team.
- Full time hours as required to meet the needs of the business
- A flexible approach to working within the leisure industry
- Be committed to help with other duties on the Racecourse as required
- The ability to work independently and manage multiple tasks at the same time
- Previous racecourse experience would be an advantage.
- A team player with good communication skills
- Ability to demonstrate initiative
- Trained to at least NVQ Level 2 in Turf Maintenance or equivalent.

Please send your CV and current salary to Mr Tom Stobbart
Windsor Racecourse, Maidenhead Road,
Windsor, SL4 5JJ
Closing Date : 20th January 2008

Royal Windsor Racecourse
A subsidiary of Arena Leisure Plc.

DIARY DATES

22 January	Racing Committee
28 January	Members Forum—Cheltenham
29 January	RCA Board Meeting
31 January	Members Forum—York
19 February	RCA Race Planning Group

ATTACHMENTS

Watt Fences Limited—First Newsletter

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HAPPY CHRISTMAS
TO ALL OF OUR
READERS



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