

STRIDE FORWARD

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NEWS ON INDUSTRY LEARNING FROM RSDP

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the June edition of Stride Forward, our bi-monthly newsletter keeping you up to date with industry learning opportunities, events, and resources offered by the Racing Staff Development Programme (RSDP).

MENTORING CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to 24 learners who have successfully completed the Level 3 Award in Workplace Mentoring.

Representing a wide range of roles across British horseracing—including racecourses, studs, training yards and industry stakeholders—the group brought a wealth of experience to the programme. Their willingness to share ideas and support one another created a fantastic learning environment, enriching the experience for everyone involved.

As qualified workplace mentors, they are now equipped with the skills and confidence to support the development of others, strengthen workplace relationships and make a lasting impact within their organisations and across the industry.

Applications are now open for our next Level 3 Award in Workplace Mentoring, starting 16 September. The programme begins with a face-to-face session at the National Stud, with the remaining training and support delivered online.

If you'd like to develop your mentoring skills and help others thrive, we'd love to welcome you to the next cohort.

The cost remains at £55 for this year during the final pilot stages.

Email hello@rsdp.co.uk to receive our mentoring brochure and an enrolment form.



Graduates:-

Lyndsey Bull – NHC
Claire Daniels TBA
Zoe Elliott – Careers in Racing
Michelle Douglas – Careers in Racing
Andrea O’Keeffee – BHA
Kay Cunnington – Andrew Balding
Ali White – SRA
Polly Steele – SRA
Deni Harper Adams – ROR
Lisa Dix – Michael Mullineux
Vicki Boyle Atkins – Richard Phillips
Naomi Benson – NHC
Sophie Woolfe – Rockcliffe Stud
Alex Garven – SRA
Fiona Rawson – SRA
Jessica Gillam – Freelance Racing Groom
Milly Maxwell – Ian Jardine
Rachel Cosh – SRA
Ruth Burne – Johnston Racing
Ellie Errington – Micky Hammond
Alex Smith – Sky Sports Racing
Olivia Mellett – BHA Data Analyst
Sean Simara – Careers in Racing
Phillipa Colley – Assistant steward team leader

BIOSECURITY: KEEPING RACING YARDS SAFE

A recent article in Trainer magazine highlighted the importance of good biosecurity in protecting racing yards from disease and infection. Simple measures such as regular handwashing, wearing clean clothing and boots, cleaning equipment, and checking new arrivals for signs of illness can significantly reduce the risk of spreading infections such as equine flu, strangles and ringworm. Vaccinations are a vital part of horse healthcare, but they need to be planned well in advance, as immunity is not immediate. Even if a vaccinated horse does become ill, symptoms are often less severe. Good ventilation is equally important, helping to reduce dust, humidity and ammonia levels that can contribute to respiratory problems. With spare boxes and extra space becoming increasingly difficult to find, and staffing pressures continuing to grow, preventing disease has never been more important. The recent equine flu outbreak was a timely reminder that effective biosecurity protects not only individual horses but the wider racing community. To help yards put practical measures in place, we're hosting a free webinar on 22 October with Alice Brown. Join us for practical guidance and straightforward advice on strengthening biosecurity, reducing risk and keeping your horses healthy.



WHY ROYAL ASCOT STILL FEELS SPECIAL.

Royal Ascot remains one of the highlights of the Flat racing season, combining world-class racing with tradition and a unique atmosphere. Across five days, the sport's leading horses, trainers and jockeys compete in some of the year's most prestigious races, including the Gold Cup, Queen Anne Stakes and Prince of Wales's Stakes.

Beyond the racing, the Royal Procession, elegant dress code and vibrant crowds help make Ascot a showcase for British racing, attracting fans both old and new. As always, the meeting produced outstanding performances, memorable stories and plenty of horses to follow for the rest of the season.

One eye-catching talking point came before the Gold Cup, when Trawlerman appeared wearing an equine version of ski goggles. The specialist eyewear was used to protect his sensitive eyes from the bright UV sunlight. Trainer John Gosden explained that the goggles had proved beneficial during training at home. They were worn in the paddock and on the way to the 2 1.2 mile start then removed.



Paddy Trainor RSDP Ambassdor & Johnston Racing Senior Groon Offers his Perspective on Royal Ascot Week

Paddy recalls "During race week, a small team is based at the racecourse stables, preparing boxes for each day's arrivals and caring for the horses after they have run. Post-race checks are always a priority to make sure each horse is comfortable, settled and fit to travel home or stay overnight.

On race day, the travelling Head Girl starts early to feed, before the rest of the team heads to the yard. Some staff stay behind to muck out and complete yard duties, while I go to the track with the riders to oversee the runners as they have a gentle canter before racing.

Once the horses return, they are washed off, allowed to relax, and prepared for the race. I usually lead up the younger horses or those with trickier temperaments, making sure each runner has its cooler rug and water ready before and after competing.

It is a real team effort to keep the horses' welfare at the centre of everything we do. Ascot is my favourite racecourse because of its atmosphere, history and prestige, and I always feel proud to be part of a team working with horses good enough to compete there."



LEVEL 3 QUALIFICATION IN EQUINE EMERGENCY FIRST AID AT THE NATIONAL STUD

A huge thank you goes out to the National Stud for hosting this course and providing great facilities and support for the day.

A varied sector of delegates from the racing industry gained practical and theoretical emergency first aid skills, working together, sharing experiences and creating a fun filled educational environment.

The care given in the first few minutes of discovering an injured or sick horse in distress can be critical in maximising the success of veterinary treatment. The iPet Network Level 3 Award in Equine Emergency First Aid Qualification is held at locations across the UK and is delivered over one day. Designed for racing staff who wish to improve their knowledge and understanding of dealing with emergency situations and want to boost their confidence and practical experience to deliver emergency equine first aid. It will enable current staff to gain recognition and bring commonality to skills and the application of equine first aid across the industry.

Special thanks must go to the Thoroughbred Education (TB-Ed) and Racing2Learn for supporting the course through promotion and helping to create blended learning opportunities for the participants.

Our next course at the National Stud, will be the Level 3 Qualification in Workplace Mentoring when session one, (our face to face session), will take place on 16th September, 2026. For more information and to make an application email hello@rsdp.co.uk.

Equine First Aid Course dates remaining in 2026:-

4th August Andrew Balding Racing – FULL

29th September The Unicorn Centre Trust, Stow on the Wold.

20th October New Beginnings Horses, Bishop Wilton, York.

Epsom TBC





GILL GREEVES RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

Several close friends and colleagues enjoyed an afternoon at Pontefract Races on 29th June to celebrate Gill Greeves' 33 years of service to the horseracing industry.

As BHA Vocational Training Manager, Gill has been instrumental in developing training and coaching strategies across racing, as well as creating the BHA's online learning platform, Racing2Learn. She will be hugely missed for her exceptional ability to bring together committees, organisations and individuals for the betterment of the sport.

Gill also played a pivotal role in helping Sam get what is now known as the RSDP off the ground through the early development of regional training programmes a good few moons ago. Her expertise, encouragement and commitment helped lay the foundations for a programme that continues to benefit the industry today.

Her dedication, professionalism and lasting contribution to British racing have left an enduring legacy, and everyone wishes her a long, happy and well-deserved retirement.



RETRAINING OF RACEHORSES (ROR)

Retraining of Racehorses (RoR), the BHA's official charity, supports retired racehorses in finding safe and fulfilling second careers through retraining, rehoming, education and welfare. On 23 July, RSDP welcomed Ali Dane, National Development Officer at RoR, who gave an insightful webinar on the charity's work, the retirement process, what yards can do to help racehorses as they prepare for retirement and the many opportunities available to former racehorses beyond racing. The webinar is available to view by contacting hello@rsdp.co.uk.

LIBRARY OF RESOURCES

Our Industry Insights Webinar Library offers a growing collection of short, expert-led webinars designed to support CPD, staff training and professional development across the racing industry. Topics cover equine health and welfare, leadership, safety, apprenticeships and inclusion.



Available webinars:

- Horse and Rider Physio – Lee Clarke MCSP SRP BSc ACPAT
- Apprenticeships in the Racing Industry: Boosting Careers and Growing Talent – Sam Trainor & Emma Cassidy
- Colic: 'A Pain in the Guts' – Nigel Haizelden BSc BVetMed MRCVS
- Safeguarding Awareness – British Horseracing Authority
- The Power of Mentoring: Building and Supporting Your Teams – RSDP & Women in Racing
- Racing Welfare: Supporting Racing Staff Across the Country – Racing Welfare
- Building Inclusive Teams in Racing – RSDP & Autism in Racing
- Understanding Worms in Horses: Types, Risks and Control – Westgate Labs
- Getting Induction Right: Best Practice for Staff and Junior Team Members – Race2Resource
- Getting it Right: Accident and Incident Reporting in the Workplace – British Horseracing Authority
- Staying Safe on the Road: Employer and Employee Responsibilities in the Horse Industry – British Horse Society Road Safety Team
- What is Equine Lameness and How to Recognise It – Nigel Haizelden BSc BVetMed MRCVS
- Strangles Awareness: Prevention, Recognition and Control – Strangles Awareness Week
- Mental Health Awareness: A Racing Welfare Webinar – Racing Welfare
- Equine Lameness: Treatment & Prevention – Nigel Haizelden BSc BVetMed MRCVS
- BHA Health & Safety Training: Risk Assessments – British Horseracing Authority
- Equine Bones – Nigel Haizelden BSc BVetMed MRCVS
- Environmental Suitability in Racing: Optimising Conditions for Performance – Ruth Dancer
- What Does Diversity & Inclusion Really Mean at Work? – Erik Tomlinson, British Horseracing Authority
- Wind Problems in Racehorses – Mark Collins, BHA Senior Vet
- Racehorse Vaccinations: What We Need to Know – Amy Hawthorn, BHA Senior Vet
- Beyond Racing: Preparing Racehorses for Their Next Chapter – Retraining of Racehorses (RoR)

To request a webinar recording, email hello@rsdp.co.uk or contact Sam Trainor. Some webinars may request a small £5 donation to support the programme.

To find out what's courses are coming up visit our events calendar at www.rsdp.co.uk