

# Newsletter

The Voice of Britain's Racehorse Trainers



## BHA to make a significant change to the early season 2yo novice and maiden race programme

For some time the BHA has been concerned that 2yos winning on their debut in the early part of the season have very few opportunities to run again prior to the introduction of nursery handicaps. In addition, those opportunities that do exist tend to attract very small, uncompetitive fields. In recent years the BHA has explored various ideas for change to safeguard the programme of opportunities for winning 2yos and they came close to incorporating a radical overhaul of the programme during 2013. In the end it was agreed to try some alternative approaches first to improve the performance of Flat novice races, including modifying the race conditions and penalty structure and increasing their value to a minimum of £10,000. These measures have not solved the field size problem or the growing uncertainty about the future of this race type.

Increasingly the novice races programmed each season have delivered uncompetitive small-field races, with an average of 4.83 runners per race over the last two seasons. Equally, these events are not compelling from a spectator's and punter's point of view, with an average SP for the favourite of just 10/11 over the same period.

In the light of all of this, the BHA has agreed that it will trial a new approach to the novice and maiden race programme from 2016.

Next year will see the significant majority of maiden races (c. 90%) converted to novice contests between the start of the Flat turf season and the beginning of July when nursery handicaps begin to be programmed. Only by making such a significant change does the BHA feel that it can offer a meaningful improvement to the programme for winning horses, whilst maintaining overall field sizes at a time when this is a key performance metric for the sport.

The idea is to generally replicate the approach to the novice hurdle programme over Jumps. During the BHA's consultation with trainers in recent years it was pointed out that the system only work by converting a considerable majority of maiden races to novice events. If the proportion of novice races was any smaller, then trainers would generally continue to avoid taking on winners and novice race fields would continue to suffer as a consequence. It is anticipated that early season novice races will largely be contested by debutants (akin to existing maiden races), but it is hoped that the programme would then act as an encouragement for the majority of winners to run again. Horses bought at auction would not necessarily have to take on winners of open maidens, but will still be able to run in novice auction events.

## National Trainers Federation

September/October 2015  
Issue No. 1089

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The BHA will be keeping a close eye on the penalty structure in these races, and will be ready to adjust race conditions where necessary if evidence indicates that any specific advantage is being given to either winners or to maiden horses in these new events.

The NTF knows there are differing views among trainers about this proposal and it will not be to everyone's liking. Logic says that it will lead to fewer individual winners. We accept that the BHA has discussed the issue with trainers for the last few years, has trialled various options but with little effect, has listened to feedback and has now come up with a proposal that represents a compromise. Safeguarding opportunities in the programme for winning 2yos is recognised as a real issue. The NTF therefore believes that the changes the BHA is introducing for 2016 must be worth trying.

The table below illustrates what the proposed changes to the Maiden and Novice programme would look like for 2016 when compared with the existing programme for 2015.

Races	2015 (Mar-Jun)	2016 (Mar-Jun)
Open Maidens	134	13
Open Novices	13	134
Restricted Maidens	61	6
Restricted Novices	0	55
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>208</b>
Conditions Stakes	14	14
Pattern/Listed	10	10
Seller/Claimer	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>239</b>

The percentage of restricted races, i.e. median auction and auction races, would remain at their current levels. That is to say, around 30% of novice and maiden races are restricted. Penalties for winners in novice races would be 7lbs for each win in Novice Auction races. In Open Novices, 4lb for each Auction race win and 7lb for each win in all other race. There would be no allowance for unraced horse. Winners of auction and median auction races would have more chances to take on similar horses in novice events, rather than being channelled into open novice and conditions races.

## New Mares' Listed Steeple Chases for 2015/16 season

The British Horseracing Authority (BHA) has announced the details of two new Mares' Listed Steeple Chases, scheduled for the first time in the 2015/16 season.

The races will be run at Carlisle on 29 November 2015 and Huntingdon on 25 February 2016, both over 2m 4f, each offering prize money of at least £30,000.

In recent years the BHA has undertaken measures to enhance the Mares' Jump programme, in order to provide further

incentives for owners and trainers to own mares and keep them in training. These two new, valuable Listed races have been added to the programme to complement the Listed Mares' Steeple Chase held at Doncaster for the first time last season.

This follows earlier announcements of the Mares' Novices' Hurdle that has been added to The Cheltenham Festival and the upgrading of the Weatherbys Jane Seymour Listed Mares' Novices' Hurdle at Sandown to Grade 2.



## Trainers contributing to race planning consultation

During the latter part of September the NTF arranged meetings in Lambourn and Newmarket to enable trainers to get involved in the BHA's consultation on Holistic Race Planning (HRP).

The aims of HRP are to “better match [racing] opportunities to the available horse population, whilst simultaneously demarking... pathways for the development of certain animals and the breed as a whole.”

Race planning and the programme are fundamental to trainers' work. Persuading the BHA to use the knowledge and experience of trainers to help shape the programme has been a key part of the NTF's strategy for many years. In Nick Rust, the BHA has a Chief Executive who appreciates the contribution you can make.

Trainers and NTF executives will be part of a working group that develops the suggestions coming from the consultation. The consultation document is on our website in the Information – Race planning section.

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## Maiden conditions will encourage production of stayers

The BHA has announced a new initiative as part of the ongoing review of the race programme for staying horses. The development will see the conditions of 10 maiden races over distances of 7f, 8f and 9f adjusted by restricting them to two-year-olds whose sires won over 10 furlongs or more.

The 10 races will carry enhanced prize money support from the British European Breeders Fund (BEBF) and be run with EBF conditions. These races will help to prepare a proportion of the two-year-old population for a future staying career as well as provide encouragement for the ongoing production of such horses. The initiative has been approved by the BHA's Flat Racing Committee, which

includes representation from breeders, owners, trainers and racecourses.

The programme of 10 races will be run during the second half of each season, allowing time for the development of the type of horse that such races are aimed at attracting. Four of these races have already been programmed during the latter part of the 2015 season. Each race will carry prize money of £10,000. The race details are as follows:

-  7 October - Nottingham over 8f
-  13 October - Leicester over 7f
-  21 October - Newmarket over 8f
-  9 November - Kempton Park over 7f

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## 2016 Fixture List promises an earlier Programme Book

Ahead of schedule, the BHA published the 2016 Fixture List on 13th August. This passed with relatively little comment as there have been no dramatic or notable changes from this year's racing. Even the ratio of flat, AWT and jump fixtures remains broadly similar despite 17 Turf fixtures at Newcastle having been converted to All Weather fixtures.

A clear benefit of the early announcement is that Programme Book 1 for 2016 will be available to trainers by 30th October. Throughout the fixture process we pressed the BHA to keep to the timetable because in recent years delays to agreement on funding have delayed completion of the fixture list and trainers have rightly complained about the consequential impact on the publication of the Programme Book.



## Newcastle's remaining 2015 jump fixtures staying put

The NTF had been liaising with the BHA about the venues for Newcastle's remaining 2015 jump fixtures as they were set to be transferred during the main period of construction of the new All Weather Track. We wanted to ensure the fixtures were moved to appropriate racecourses and were still accessible to trainers in the north. It is therefore good news ARC has announced that the four remaining jumps fixtures in Newcastle Racecourse's 2015 race programme can remain at the track during the £11 million investment works which will include the construction of a new All Weather Track, alongside the existing turf jump track and improvements to Newcastle Racecourse's facilities.

Final confirmation of the construction timetable for the AWT means that the most disruptive works will have been completed by the start of November meaning the four remaining jumps fixtures (on 13 and 28 November and 10 and 19 December) can remain at Newcastle. This includes the Grade 1 £105,000 StanJames.com Fighting Fifth Hurdle and the £60,000 At The Races Rehearsal Chase which will take place on Saturday 28 November. Throughout the development of the plans for the works at Newcastle Racecourse ARC has worked closely with the BHA and its Chief Course Inspector, Richard Linley.

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## Purchased a Plus 10 yearling? Make sure it is eligible to win more

To be in the running to claim £10,000 bonuses on the track, yearling buyers are advised they must purchase Plus 10 registered horses in the sales ring.

Buyers who target Plus 10 yearlings in the sales ring can significantly enhance their racing returns and stake a claim in the £5.5 million worth of bonus prize money on offer to qualified two and three-year-old horses from 2016.

A horse's Plus 10 registration status will be indicated by the presence of a Plus 10 logo on the pedigree page in sales catalogues, with many horses also set to wear a Plus 10 rump sticker in the ring. Registration status of any yearling can also be found at [www.plus10bonus.com/eligible-horses](http://www.plus10bonus.com/eligible-horses) under foals of 2014.

### **Bought a Plus 10 yearling?**

You are just one step away from being eligible to win bonuses:

Pay the third and final 'Owner Registration' fee at the early bird rate of £300 by 31 December, or £350 by 28 February 2016, to qualify your horse for Plus 10. Potential to earn up to 25 times your investment with just the one bonus win.

For more information on the bonus scheme visit [www.plus10bonus.com](http://www.plus10bonus.com). To speak with a Plus 10 representative contact +44 (0) 20 7152 0026.

### **Bought a yearling not registered for Plus 10?**

There is no supplementary stage to enter yearlings bought at auction (or home-breds) into Plus 10. If you want to win Plus 10 bonuses on the track, you must purchase Plus 10 horses in the ring.



## New race speed and positioning system

Speed sensing to produce data on race times is a familiar system on the racecourse. Now some new systems are being tested and the BHA has been consulting us on the chips that are attached to number cloths. A recent development involves placing the chip on the midline of the number cloth behind the saddle. This is where it is placed in racing in the USA and trainers at one of our regional meetings were happy for a trial to take place using this position so weight is evenly balanced, the number cloth can be kept within normal size ranges and it is in the best position for radio performance and data transmission.

## Racecourse gallops at Lingfield Park

Trainers are reminded that gallops on the all-weather track at Lingfield Park Racecourse need to be booked through the racing office (01342 931718) and can only be conducted on weekdays between 8:00am and 10:00am. Galloping on race days is by arrangement.

## Is your horse box over weight?

Trainers are reminded to be vigilant to maximum vehicle weights for their horseboxes as many could be unwittingly overloaded on a regular basis. Recent inspections close to Chester and Nottingham racecourse have resulted in fines for trainers particularly for the small 2-horse boxes. The manufactures or ministry plates (usually fixed to the inside of the passenger door frame) specify the weights that should be adhered to on the vehicle. These weights must not be exceeded on public roads and it is important to also appreciate that these weights include the driver, passengers, horses and fuel. Please see the British Horse Society's guide for horse box and trailer owners on the BHA website for further information.

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## National Pay increases from 1st October 2015

Wage negotiations are ongoing between the NTF and NASS. Our aim was to conclude these in time for the new racing industry rates to be effective from 1st October to coincide with increases in the National Minimum Wage (NMW). However, though an agreement is close, negotiations will not be concluded in time so trainers need to ensure that as from 1st October the following minimum rates apply to comply with the NMW.

Please note these are not the final figures agreed between the NTF and NASS for Racing Industry Minimum Rates, which will be published as soon as negotiations are concluded.

Age	Hourly rate	40 hours	Consolidated (40 hours plus 2 hours every other Saturday and 3 hours every other Sunday)
16/17	£3.87	£154.80	n/a
18 – 20	£5.30	£212.00	£235.85
21 and over	£6.70	£268.00	£298.15

### National Living Wage

Trainers also need to bear in mind that from April 2016 anyone aged 25 or over will need to be paid at least £7.20 per hour (£288 for a 40-hour week and £320.40 for the standard consolidated week, working one weekend in two).

### Accommodation offset

The National Minimum Wage accommodation offset is also increasing from 1st October 2016 to £5.35 per day (37.45 per week). Further information on the accommodation offset can be found on the NTF website employment information section. Please read this to be confident you are applying it in the correct way.

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## Working to solve the stable staff shortage

We are regularly asked by members about the work that is being done to solve the shortage of well-trained and skilled stable staff. This article aims to outline briefly the main areas in which the NTF, the BHA, training providers and other organisations are involved. We believe it is also essential that trainers play their part. You will see that some of the tactical measures include the participation of trainers and we welcome any suggestions you may have and contribution you are willing to make.

### Website and Job Board

The Job board continues to grow in popularity with a large number of trainers, studs and racecourses using it. It has recently been redesigned to be fully mobile and tablet responsive making it easier for people to view jobs on their mobile phones. A redesign of the main website is planned for 2016.

The careersinracing 'team' made up of Zoe Elliott and Michelle Douglas, do their best to promote all new jobs via social media – twitter and facebook accounts. Traffic to the site has been reaching over 30,000 visits per month. If you have any problems when posting jobs, please contact [mdouglas@britishhorseracing.com](mailto:mdouglas@britishhorseracing.com)

### Partnership Development

**Equine Colleges** have an increased appetite to provide opportunities for their students to gain exposure to horseracing and career opportunities. Planning is underway for the 2015/2016 and will include guest speakers, careers talks, and visits. The BHA would love trainers/staff to get involved and support us with this activity and we will have more information on dates and colleges over the coming months. A talent scout initiative idea is currently being worked on which could identify potential work riders.

**The Pony Club** have agreed to distribute careersinracing posters and pens, in goody bags, to all PC members (350 expected) that attend British Champions Day hosted by GBR. Relationships continue to be built with the Pony Club at HQ level as well as branch level.

Careersinracing recently sponsored a fence at the Pony Club National Championships and also continue to sponsor the Best Turned Out prizes at all of the Charles Owen Racecourse Series Pony Races throughout the summer.

Working with the charity Highground, a series of racing careers lectures has recently been agreed over the autumn at 'Rural Careers' weeks being attended by military leavers at Plumpton College. Whilst there will be a variety of interest and skills, and a limited number may wish to gain hands on with horses roles, other roles such as gallop/grounds maintenance, tractor driving/logistics and racecourse roles may be relevant. Trainers in the Plumpton region are welcome to get involved.

### Open Days/Live Events

The careersinracing team attended both open days in Malton and Newmarket. Working with both BRS and NRC, full exposure was given to careers and training opportunities. Extensive careersinracing branding was in evidence throughout the yards with banners and leafletting supported by trainers. Godolphin distributed over 2000 careersinracing flyers from their sites. Editorial coverage was created to promote the trainers employment opportunities in both open day programmes. A big thank you to all trainers and staff involved!

Upcoming events over the autumn period include running a "Careers Speeding Dating Event" as part of Dubai Futures Champions Education Week in Newmarket, attending Skills London Regional Career Event, the National Riding Schools Championships and Suffolk Skills Careers Event.



## **Digital**

Throughout 2015 a social media advertising campaign has been running to drive website traffic to careersinracing, BRS and NRC. Video advertising was a huge success following its introduction to campaign in August, at a highly competitive time (GCSE/A level results/Clearing). The film was viewed over 75,000 times during August across Facebook and YouTube.

In particular, Facebook video yielded unparalleled performance both in terms of reach and cost, and proved that developing and employing, video-based content delivers strong engagement between youth audiences and the Careers in Racing brand. The video had a huge impact of social engagement, received over 750 Likes, 60 Comments, was shared between friends 86 times and created 420 new Likes for the Careers in Racing Facebook Page alone.

A video is currently in production which will be promoted to equine colleges and equine grooms to get them to consider horseracing. The idea is to create more movement of skilled grooms from other equestrian disciplines into horseracing.

A small careersinracing advert is in production which we hope all trainers will place on their websites – it will provide a pop up page of general information on the careers opportunities in racing.

## **European digital campaign**

Working with its digital partners and funded by the NTF, the BHA is launching a digital recruitment campaign across a number of European countries to attract experienced riders and grooms. As immigration restrictions prevent racing from recruiting from non-EU countries, the focus has to be within the EU and we know some countries have a particularly strong horse culture. A number of trainers and job opportunities will be profiled on the website to which potential recruits will be directed via social media. If you have a vacancy and are interested in taking part in this campaign, contact Rupert Arnold.

## **New Employer Led Training Programme**

The NTF, in association with BHA and NASS, is planning to pilot an employer led training programme aimed at new entrants to the industry over the age of 19. Training for new staff in this age range is currently limited and restricted at the racing schools to those who may be able to benefit from attracting Government funding.

Such entrants may come from a variety of backgrounds including equine college course graduates with established horse care skills but need racing specific training; external career change applicants who may or may not have any horse care/riding experience (such as ex-Forces personnel); equestrian career change applicants (such as grooms from other equestrian disciplines seeking a new challenge and needing to up skill) or athletes from other sporting disciplines seeking new challenges.

The Programme will require a trainer to take on a new recruit on an employed basis but will provide funding of up to £2,500 to support the training to bring them up to the required industry standard. The training should be delivered over a 30 week period with milestone payments made at agreed intervals.

During the pilot, skills will be recorded against a 'Skills Passport', to be completed by the employer and employee and will not involve external assessment or qualification achievement as a mandatory component of the training.

Trainers interested in taking part in programme should contact the NTF for further details or Gill Greaves at the BHA on 07887 560994 or email [ggreeves@britishhorseracing.com](mailto:ggreeves@britishhorseracing.com).



## Notice periods and references

We have been receiving a number of calls recently from trainers who have had employees leave without giving notice for which in practice there is little remedy. On the whole these employees may well be going to other yards and to help everyone, we would like to suggest that even in these difficult times of staff shortages that trainers ensure that where taking on new employees they are not asked to start straight away if they have notice period obligations to their previous employer.

We also receive calls from trainers who are frustrated that new employers have not contacted them for references in accordance with the BHA rules which require a trainer taking on a new employee who has previously worked in racing to contact the last employer for a reference. There is advice on good recruitment practices on the NTF website including information on giving references.

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## Accommodation rules explained

Where a trainer is paying a wage and then making a deduction for accommodation that deduction comes from the net wage not the gross wage. There is no tax free element to the pay.

Any tax free element comes on the benefit of accommodation where an employee is receiving a wage plus free accommodation. There are a number of criteria which have to be met for the tax free element to apply. In simple terms these are that the accommodation is within the curtilage of the training establishment or the employee can reach the yard within 10 minutes if they have motorised transport and live within five miles of the yard and that they are Scale 4, 5 or 6 staff and required to look after horses outside normal working hours.

Tax will still be payable on the cost of the accommodation paid by the employer such as utilities but exempt staff have that liability capped under tax legislation. More comprehensive information is contained in the guide to Tax Treatment on Accommodation on the NTF website.

Additionally employers have to take into account the National Minimum Wage and accommodation offset allowance which from 1st October 2015 is £37.45 per week (£5.35 a day). Employers have to ensure that any deduction for accommodation does not result in an employee earning less than the National Minimum Wage once the offset allowance has been taken into account. There is detailed information on the accommodation offset on the NTF website – go to Information, Employment.

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## New Administrator Contact for the Stable Employees Pension Plan (SEPP)

We are pleased to advise that the administration of the old Stable Employees Pension Plan (SEPP), on which accrual ceased in 2001, has been taken over by Winterbourne Trustees Services Ltd. All enquires for pension entitlement prior to the Stakeholder scheme (in effect from 2001) can be sent direct to Winterbourne. Contact details and information with a form for employees/members to complete, is on the Information tab.

Enquiries for the Stakeholder Scheme from 2001 with Friends Provident should be made to Friends Provident. This link <http://www88.friendsprovident.com/membersite/> will take you to the page to log in if members have their details or if not there is a telephone number and address in the 'Contacts' tab.

If you need any further information or have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the NTF office.



## Rules on payment of expenses for apprentices

Trainers who employ licensed Apprentice Jockeys will have received a letter from the BHA reminding them about the rules on paying expenses. The PJA had raised this subject with us earlier in the year and, as it is an agreed term of the Apprentice Training Agreement, it is reasonable to expect trainers to comply. Alternative arrangements are acceptable as long as the agreement is altered to pay full fees to the Apprentice.

There has been some discussion at trainers' meetings about the relevance of more experienced Apprentice and Conditional Jockeys being employed by a trainer. Many of them spend most of their working time away from the yard and outside the employing trainer's direct instruction. This is a subject for continued dialogue with the BHA and PJA.

### Auto Enrolment Pensions

Auto Enrolment applies to **all** employers.

Do you know your staging date?

Have you notified a contact to the Pension Regulator?

**Don't risk a fine by failing to comply**

Read the NTF Auto Enrolment Guide on our website and plan your scheme now.

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## Godolphin Stud and Stable Staff Awards – Nominations now open

We are delighted to announce that nominations for the 12th running of the Godolphin Stud and Stable Staff Awards open on Wednesday 7 October 2015 and close Wednesday 2 December 2015.

The Awards, sponsored by Godolphin and run by the BHA in association with the Racing Post offer over £120,000 in prize money and £40,000 is available to a single yard or stud. The winners and runners up for each of the six categories will be revealed by Clare Balding on the night. The finalists together with their friends and family will be invited to attend the unique awards ceremony held in London on Monday 22 of February 2016.

The nomination process is very simple and this year is available to trainers online via the BHA Racing Administration website. Nominations are accepted from anyone within the industry so owners, trainers, colleagues and managers can all show their appreciation for hard-working members of staff. Nomination forms can also be downloaded at [www.britishhorseracing.com/stablestaff](http://www.britishhorseracing.com/stablestaff) and via [www.racingpost.com](http://www.racingpost.com) or simply text AWARDS to 07970 527339 and a member of the team will arrange for a form to be sent to you.

### New category 2016

There are five categories dedicated to stud and stable staff including the David Nicholson Newcomer Award, Leadership, Rider/Groom, Stud Staff and Dedication to Racing. This year, in conjunction with Racing Welfare a new category is launched, the 'Racing Community Award'. This is a new category to recognise those who have made an outstanding contribution to the racing industry.

The award will acknowledge those who support the stud and stable staff or have made an outstanding contribution to benefit the wider racing community. Nominees for this award do not necessarily need to be employed within the racing industry but are those who contribute to the greater good of the sport. Prize money for this new award will be £5,000 for the winner and £2,000 for each of the two runner-up's. The same amount of money will be donated to a charity of the successful candidates' choice.



## BHA policy on post-sale test fails to protect buyers

Earlier this summer Keeneland sales company announced the availability of a post-sale test for substances prohibited at all times under the BHA Equine Anti-Doping rules. Subsequently the BHA issued a statement to clarify the status and effect of the post-sale test. The test is now available for sales in Britain and were taken up by a number of purchasers at the DBS Yearling Sales in September. The important points to note are:

- The test uses a blood sample only; not a hair sample.
- Purchasers must opt to have the test taken and will be responsible for the cost.
- The sample will be tested at LGC in Newmarket, which conducts all the BHA's sample analysis.
- A negative test allows the horse to be imported (if from the USA) to be trained and raced in Britain.
- A positive test allows the horse to be returned under the Conditions of Sale.
- The test does NOT give a guarantee that anabolic steroids have never been administered to the horse.
- Hair samples have been taken by the BHA for a period of time. Though they are scientifically accredited and form part of the BHA's anti-doping armoury, the regulatory framework has not been developed to allow a hair test, on its own, to be the basis of enforcing the return of a horse or for taking action against a person.
- However, a hair sample taken in Britain that showed historic administration of anabolic steroids could be used to stand a horse down from training for 12 months (from the date of administration.)

The NTF's aim has been to ensure bloodstock auction buyers are protected and we are therefore disappointed that the BHA, despite knowing our concerns, has been unable to develop a framework so a hair sample testing can be used in a post-sale test. The consequence is that it will be possible for a horse to race in Britain even if it has been administered a banned substance between 2nd March this year (when the new rules took effect) and the time at which a blood test can detect administration.

We are also disappointed that the BHA did not use the significant lever of the Equine Anti-Doping rules to ensure that vendors and/or sales companies bore the cost of providing confidence in the market place. The BHA says it envisages the market eventually moving to a position where the onus is on the vendors. There is no reason why this couldn't have happened immediately. Instead buyers are expected to pay to check the goods they have bought are fit for purpose.

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*“...the test does not give a guarantee that anabolic steroids have never been given to the horse.”*

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## Restrictions on veterinary procedures

We are regularly asked whether trainers are permitted to administer intravenous (IV) injections. Clive Hamblin, the NTF's Veterinary Adviser, has recently confirmed previous advice that IV injections are regarded as a surgical procedure and on no account should be carried out by trainers unless they have an appropriate veterinary qualification.



## Use and recording of Bisphosphonates

BHA Chief Veterinary Officer, Jenny Hall would like to draw trainers' attention to the recent publication of a BHA notice on the Use of Bisphosphonates. Osphos® and Equidronate® are the tradenames of UK licensed bisphosphonates. These medicines have the primary function of altering bone modelling and there is gathering momentum internationally to restrict their use through regulation.

Recognising the wide age range, prevalence of veterinary conditions and risk profile for sustaining serious injury across the British racehorse population, BHA's intention is that the Notice defines use of these medicines that would fulfil trainers' obligations under Rule (C) 28. This notice has been prepared in consultation with the BHA Veterinary Committee and it can be found on the BHA website in the Resource Centre; go to Veterinary Notices and Policies.

If trainers or their veterinary surgeons would like to provide feedback regarding the content of this Notice please get in touch at [jehall@britishhorseracing.com](mailto:jehall@britishhorseracing.com) or on 07887 051 932.

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## Network aims to improve racehorse health

The Thoroughbred Health Network is a collaborative pilot project of industry stakeholder organisations, including the NTF, for racing in Scotland and Northern England. If successful, it will be extended nationwide.

This collaborative project will evaluate and share decades of racehorse research but in an easy to read format that can be easily digested by all trainers, owners, racecourse officials, vets, racehorse owners, welfare organisations and universities.

From September, it will provide monthly advice on how to avoid, recognise or treat the most common health and performance-limiting problems encountered by Thoroughbreds in racing and training. You can join the network today by going to the THN [website](#) and you can follow on Twitter – @ThoroughbredHN. This is of direct relevance to trainers so those in the north should join up for help in improving the health of your horses for better results.

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## Regulation deadlines

🛡️ Pension auto enrolment staging dates\*

– **1st June 2015 to 1st April 2017** for businesses with fewer than 30 employees. Date for each business depends on last two letters of the PAYE reference.

– **1st October 2015** for 30 to 39 employees

**\*Number of employees in PAYE scheme at April 2012. It is essential that you check your staging date on the Pension Regulator website using your full PAYE reference.**

🛡️ **5th October 2015** – deadline for declaring a non-runner moves from 9.00am to 1.00pm to allow reserves to enter. Rider of reserves to be declared by 1.30pm

🛡️ **1st January 2016** – deadline to replace skull caps that meet the (BS or CSN) EN 1384:1997 standard.

🛡️ **31st December 2016** – deadline to replace skull caps that meet the (BS or CSN) EN 1384:2012 standard.



## Training Agreements

A trainer has recently rung up regarding an owner debt where the owner is challenging the authenticity of the signature on the training agreement, telling the court that it is not his signature. The trainer has correspondence surrounding the return of the document which is helpful to their case.

This is not an issue we have had raised with us previously but one that we feel worth flagging up to members given that owners will frequently be signing the training agreement away from the training yard.

The training agreement does state on it that if an owner fails to sign it, the trainer may be entitled to rely on the terms of the agreement if the owner has had the opportunity to see the agreement and not raised any objections about its terms.

Obviously it is best to have the training agreement signed and returned by the owner in person or signed by the owner whilst at the yard so the terms can be discussed (perhaps in the presence of a witness) but we appreciate the difficulty that trainers face in the practice – so how best to protect your interests in the real world?

If it is not possible to give the agreement to the owner in person then send it both to the owner's address and email with a covering letter asking for it to be signed and returned but also stating "in the event that you do not sign and / or return the agreement but continue to leave the horse with xxx for training this will be an acceptance and agreement by the owner to the terms of this training agreement and that these are valid and binding on both parties"

Hopefully that means that so long as they have received it and continue to use your services under the agreement you will not need to prove the agreement was signed just that it and the letter making it clear the agreement was valid was received by the owner. That initial letter should be followed up with a chasing letter if the agreement has not been returned again reminding that the agreement will be considered to be binding as above and a call from the office as well.

If the training agreement is received back signed from the owner, then email/write back acknowledging receipt of it or even just have your office make a phone call thanking the owner for the training agreement and make a note of that call. All that can be used to support any argument that it was not signed by the owner him or herself.

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## Get your HSE Employer's Guide to Risk Assessments

The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) used to provide their leaflet 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment' to the NTF free of charge and we send them to all new members. As we were running low on supplies we contacted the HSE but they will supply the leaflet free of charge any longer. The booklet has been updated and simplified and is now called 'Risk Assessment'. Anyone who goes on one of their courses gets a free copy and they are available to download from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg163.pdf>. Members can also download one on the NTF website under Information – Health and Safety.



# RACING COLOURS

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## Reducing the cost of non-domestic rates

We know from members' feedback that the cost of non-domestic rates is an increasing proportion of trainers' overheads. The NTF's rates adviser Bill Simpson does a tremendous job providing advice on and negotiating rateable value (RV) appeals for our members and with a revaluation of all commercial premises coming up in 2017, we are taking pre-emptive action. In September we had a meeting with the Valuation Office Agency to discuss our objectives. The NTF team included Christopher Marriott, who has negotiated reductions in RV for many trainers, and Andrea O'Keeffe who has done sterling work on behalf of trainers in the north.

In the meeting it was clear that the VOA held a number of misconceptions about the training business. We were also concerned at their policy on rating gallops and as a result have appealed a recent Valuation Tribunal decision to challenge the valuation basis.

Looking ahead, one of the key items of data we need is evidence of rental values of stables up and down the country. We will be coming to trainers to request this information in the interests of the wider training community.

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## 24 hour legal advice from the NTF and LAD

Trainers are reminded that as part of the legal expenses insurance scheme arranged by the NTF, there is a 24 hour legal helpline. Dawn Bacchus, the NTF's Legal Executive, remains the first port of call on employment problems so during office hours the helpline number of 0845 900 3592 (employment) and 0845 900 3585 (other legal enquiries) diverts to her.

At other times or when Dawn is not available it goes through to Legal Assistance Direct. Their helpline solicitors are highly experienced in advising employers and they are familiar with the procedures and agreements in place in racing. So if you have an employment problem – or other legal problem – out of office hours and are not sure what to do, then call the appropriate helpline for advice.

## Strict credit control protects against debts

Policy conditions for debt recovery under the NTF's Legal Expenses insurance cover are onerous and emphasise the need for a comprehensive approach to credit control. Our aim is not just to assist trainers to meet the terms of the legal expenses policy but to promote best practice, which ultimately protects your business from the bane of bad debts.

Darbys, our legal advisers, have provided much of the following content. Full guidance documents can be found on the NTF website under Information – Business. We strongly advise you to read and follow them rather than rely on the following brief summary of key elements.

-  Before taking their horse, meet the owner face to face and decide if you want to take them on. Consider taking credit references
-  Agree terms of business with the owner using an ROA/NTF Training Agreement. Make sure the owner signs the training agreement before you take delivery of the horse
-  Make sure you are contracting with the right person. Invoice the correct person promptly and accurately in accordance with your terms
-  Have a system for chasing overdue accounts and use it. Don't delay chasing overdue payments, allowing the debt to mount
-  You must notify the NTF's legal insurers **within 90 days** of the due date of the invoice. If you don't, the claim will not be met
-  Consider the right time to take further action such as asking the BHA to put the owner on the forfeit list; operating the lien in the training agreement allowing you to sell the horse to recover the debt; agreeing payment of undisputed amounts into the joint escrow account held by the ROA and NTF, entering into mediation or terminating the agreement.
-  Decide when it is appropriate to mitigate your financial outgoings by ceasing to run the owner's horse and taking it out of training. Notify the owner.



# RACESAFE

**JOCKEY VEST. LEVEL 1,2&3. BS EN13158:2009**  
**BHA RULE CHANGE REQUIRING ALL JOCKEY & STAFF BODY PROTECTORS TO MEET 2009 VERSION OF EUROPEAN STANDARD. BS EN13158:2009**

Jockey Vest. L1



Jockey Vest. L2



Jockey Vest. L3



CONTACT THE RACESAFE TEAM OR LOCAL STOCKIST FOR DETAILS. [WWW.RACESAFE.CO.UK](http://WWW.RACESAFE.CO.UK) | +44 (0)1536 771051



## NTF Meeting Dates

Region	Date	Location
South East	Wed 4 November	Kempton (before racing)
Central South	Mon 9 November	Newbury Racecourse
East	Wed 11 November	Rowley Mile
West Midlands & Wales	Thurs 12 November	Ludlow (after racing)
South West	Tues 24 November	Taunton Racecourse
North	Thurs 26 November	Leeming Bar
Council and Flat Comm	Mon 7 December	London

## Executive Month August – September 2015

Trainer representation by Rupert Arnold, Dawn Bacchus, Jill Crook and George Noad

- NTF NH Committee
- NTF Council meeting
- Scotland and Borders Regional meeting
- BHA Board
- BHA Members Committee
- BHA Executive Committee
- BHA Integrity Review meeting
- Holistic Race Planning consultation
- Horsemen's Group Board
- BHEST Board
- Stable employee insurances
- National Joint Council
- Migration Advisory Committee
- Valuation Office Agency meeting
- BRS Trainers Course presentation
- Animal Health Trust Meeting of Equine Industry Committee
- Andersons & Co. for the 2016 NTF Racing Diary and European Trainer Magazine;
- Meeting with Capita for NTF Life Assurance Two
- Conference call Future Purchasing on Procurement
- BRS Trainers Course
- Racing Secretaries Course
- BHA Racecourse Committee
- RCA Technical Group

### Check your diary details are correct

The final proof of the 2016 NTF Racing Diary is nearing completion. It's vital we have correct contact details for you and you can check what we have on record by looking for your name under the Contacts – Search UK trainers tab on our website. Please contact Jill Crook by email [j.crook@racehorsetrainers.org](mailto:j.crook@racehorsetrainers.org) or t. 01488 71792



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