



## NTF WEEKLY – 27 FEBRUARY 2018

### **Ann Duffield succeeds Seamus Mullins as NTF President**

Last week's Annual General Meeting saw Seamus Mullins end his two-year term as NTF President and the role pass to our first female President, Ann Duffield. In view of the racing industry's vision for more diverse representation on governing boards, we are proud that the trend will continue when Emma Lavelle assumes the Presidency in 2019. In fact, one third of the NTF Council is now female.

You will be aware that the Presidential Triumvirate works as a succession plan for the Presidency and that the NTF aims to alternate codes and maintain geographical representations. With this in mind, the AGM confirmed the election of Ralph Beckett as the new member of the Triumvirate.

### **Congratulations to Lycetts Team Champion Awards winners and star rated yards**

We have had fantastic feedback about the AGM and in particular the inclusion of the ceremony for the Lycetts Team Champion Awards. Congratulations therefore to the first winners, Nick Alexander and Warren Greatrex and their amazing teams.

The judges made it clear that competition for first prize was intense and the decisions were close. They were full of praise about the overall entry and excellent work on staff management and working environment demonstrated by trainers through the nomination forms, which in most cases had been completed collaboratively with the staff. We would therefore like to congratulate the thirty nine trainers who were awarded a star rating under the scoring system. Their names were displayed in the award brochure on the day and on a slide show running almost continuously during the AGM and lunch. We will display the names of star rated trainers on a new microsite within the NTF's website to promote the award. The list will also be shown in the "Working for a Racehorse Trainers" area as a guide for job seekers.

Social media coverage of the awards and the winners was extensive. Thanks to Lycetts publicity efforts and the live stream organised by Anderson and Co, we raised the profile of the award and the standard on which it is based – The Winning Approach.

A successful first year of the Lycetts Team Champion Award has given us strong evidence of the great working environment offered by trainers. This provides the ammunition we need to dispel the outdated ideas about working in racing yards, still prevalent even among industry leaders, and enable us to present positive stories for the media.

### **Tracking down supplies of EHV vaccine**

At the AHT Equine Industry Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> February the NTF enquired about the availability of EHV vaccine. For several years it has been difficult to obtain the vaccine but we had speculated that France Galop's introduction this year of mandatory vaccination for Equine Herpes Virus to race in France might have led to an increase in production.

In response to our enquiry Richard Newton of the AHT commented that Zoetis will be doing their utmost to ensure continuity of supply according to presumed increased demand, although they may not have made pledges that they will be able to guarantee it.

Apparently there has previously been a policy to prioritise supplies for breeding mares. If demand outstrips supply now there is a mandatory requirement for racing, it will be interesting to see if priorities change.

### **Investigation into light weigh-ins**

Two occurrences of jockeys weighing in light at Musselburgh and Leicester prompted us to ask the BHA to investigate the circumstances. This week we have received their reply below.

*"In summary, based on this data [we] can see no evidence of any fault with the software or scales. If there was a calibration issue then all weights would potentially be out by ½ pound, and, as it was at different courses on different days... this is unlikely.....hundreds of weights are recorded every day by Clerks with no issues, [and] there is not a strong case for any system problem."*

An interesting fact to emerge was that one of the jockeys weighed out 50 minutes before the race. We suggest that there is potentially a higher risk of a light weigh-in when jockeys weigh out very early. This is not necessarily because of any change in equipment but could be a result of the jockey's body weight changing marginally in that period due to dehydration or other reasons.

### **ROA/Racing Post Owners' Jackpot races**

Below are the ROA Owners Jackpot races for March and April. As usual, a race each week will carry a £2,000 bonus. If the winning horse belongs to an ROA member, the extra payment is made on top of the prize-money on offer from the racecourse.

In the case of a horse owned in a partnership, the horse will qualify for the bonus if at least 51% is in the ownership of ROA members. For Syndicate and Club owned horses, the

majority of club/syndicate managers need to be members of the ROA to qualify. Full details and terms can be found at [www.roa.co.uk/jackpot](http://www.roa.co.uk/jackpot)

Date	Course	Race
March 4	Huntingdon	2m Class 4 4yo+ 0-115 Handicap Hurdle
March 15	Chelmsford City	7f Class 5 3yo+ Novice Stakes
March 23	Sedgefield	2m 1/2f Class 4 5yo+ 0-105 Novices Handicap Chase
March 25	Ascot	2m 3 1/2f Class 4 4yo+ Maiden Hurdle
April 3	Pontefract	1m Handicap 4yo+ 61-75
April 10	Southwell	3m Handicap Chase 5yo+ 0-110
April 17	Carlisle	2m 1f Handicap Hurdle
April 26	Beverley	1m 1/2f Handicap 4yo+ 71-85

### Clarification on increases in auto enrolment contributions

Under the phasing arrangements for pension contributions to auto enrolment schemes, employee contributions will increase from April. Please speak to your pension adviser for more details about how this applies to your scheme.

We have been asked whether employer contributions will also increase. The answer is that there is no requirement for the contribution rate to exceed the current 2% for the time being. When auto enrolment began, the NTF and NASS agreed that both employer and employee should pay 2% of relevant earnings in to the scheme to ensure that there was no discrimination against employees who, through the previous industry arrangements, were already receiving in excess of the required minimum amounts set out in the legislation.

### Regulation deadlines

- **19<sup>th</sup> January 2018** – notification of specified wind surgeries must be made on the Racing Admin website for notification for any horse having its first run following surgery.
- **1<sup>st</sup> April 2018** – mandatory Equine Herpes vaccination to race in France