



British Equestrian Federation News January - June 2009

In Memoriam: Douglas Bunn, 1928 -2009 **18th June 2009**

Douglas Bunn, 1928 - 2009

Douglas Bunn, founder and owner of The All England Jumping Course, Hickstead, died peacefully in his sleep at home on Tuesday, 16 June, night, surrounded by his family. He was 81 and had been ill for only a short time.

Although some records show his birthday as 1 March 1928, Douglas was in fact born on Leap Year Day, 29 February 1928, so he only had a birthday every four years.

Horses were his life from the time he left the cradle, the passion inherited from his father, who always saw that he had ponies to grow up with and the right ones to further his show jumping ambitions.

The big owner at the time was Bill Gardner, and Douglas began riding for him in 1938, winning many important competitions through to 1939, when the beginning of World War II curtailed everyone's activities.

Fortunately, Mr Bunn senior and Bill Gardner's love of horses and show jumping survived the war, and Douglas's professional life in law and ultimately as a Barrister progressed alongside his role as one of the country's leading show jumpers.

It was his forays abroad to compete which led to him searching for, building and then opening the All England Jumping Course at Hickstead in May 1960, which became an integral part of the British show jumping scene. It allowed Douglas to explore and expand many ideas close to his heart - design of courses, presenting the sport to the public and the developing role television was able to play. There are many in the sport who view Hickstead as the home of British show jumping, and credit Douglas Bunn with a major role in the sport's development.

As well as giving Britain its most successful permanent show jumping course, which helped shape the future of the sport, he invented the entirely different sport of team chasing, which survives today, and produced many more new ideas, such as the Hickstead Eventing Grand Prix, the only contest in which top level show jumpers and eventers compete together.

The show ground will next year celebrate its half-century, and Douglas leaves memories of many great equestrian moments: Junior European Jumping Championship in 1961, Ladies European Jumping Championship 1963, Ladies World Jumping Championship 1965, Men's European Jumping Championship 1969, Junior European Jumping Championship 1971, Men's European Jumping Championship 1973, Men's World Jumping Championship 1974, European Team and Individual

Jumping Championships 1983, the Junior European Dressage Championship 1998, European Jumping Championships 1999, European Dressage Championship 2003, and six seasons - 2003-2008 - of Samsung Super League.

He was also the man who stepped in when the Royal International Horse Show's future was in doubt after being forced to leave the British Exhibition Centre at Birmingham. He gave it a home at Hickstead in 1992.

Douglas was vice president of the British Show Jumping Association at the time of his death, having been chairman in 1969 and from 1993 to 1996. He was also president from 2001 to 2005.

Says John Roche, FEI Director of Jumping, "The equestrian world has lost not only a tremendous supporter but also a close friend. We have much to be grateful for to Douglas. His presence will be greatly missed by all of us."

BEF's Futurity Evaluation entries now open and filling fast! 3rd June 2009

The BEF's Futurity evaluations for young potential sport horses and ponies destined for careers in dressage, eventing, show jumping and, new for 2009 - endurance, have got off to a flying start!

Entries opened online on 1 June and was at 25% capacity within 24 hours! This means that evaluation places at the 12 regional venues (which have a capacity of 60) are filling up fast. For your chance to be part of the action you need to have a British bred sport horse or pony which is either a foal, yearling, two or three year old and which is bred to compete in any of the above four disciplines.

June 2009

Update on Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act 2006

The act is designed to prevent unsuitable people from working with or volunteering with children or vulnerable adults. The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) will be responsible for administering the Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) and will work closely with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). The scheme covers all home countries with variations occurring in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Who will be affected?

It will be compulsory from 2015 for all individuals who work with children or vulnerable adults to be ISA registered.

After 2015 It will be a criminal offence to 'knowingly employ' an individual who is not registered.

Phasing in Period

There will be a phasing in period which will be as follows:

July 2010: Implementation begins and entry to the scheme will be optional for existing volunteers and workers

October 2010: It will be mandatory for new volunteers and workers to apply

2011: existing volunteers and workers can apply

2012 and 2015 those who have already have previously been checked can be introduced to the scheme.

This gives the equestrian industry a full year to prepare and to provide clear guidance for members at every level of our organisation. The Government will issue guidance specific to the sport and leisure sector and we will then be in a position to provide more detailed information and further our preparations.

How to apply

From July 2010 a new application form will be available from the CRB. This will include a section on applying for an ISA check.

Applicants can apply for an ISA check only, Enhanced CRB check only or both. Once the application form has been filled in and the appropriate identity documents checked, forms will be sent to CRB. CRB process and pass on information to ISA who will decide whether or not the person can be registered. The applicant will receive copies of CRB disclosure (if obtained) and their ISA registration number.

Cost

Volunteers will be free –umbrella/registered bodies administration charges will apply.

Checks for employees will be:

VBS only £64

VBS plus CRB £64

CRB alone £36

Umbrella/registered bodies administration charges will apply

More information

www.isa-gov.org.uk

www.crb.gov.uk

www.disclosurescotland.co.uk

www.accessni.gov.uk Update

Watch the Rome Meydan FEI Nations Cup Live on FEI TV 28 May 2009

On Friday 29th of May 2009, just two days after having seen the exciting final match for the crown of European club football, Italian capital Rome will be back in the spotlight of international top level sport by hosting the 2nd leg of the 100th anniversary edition of team jumping's most important annual competition, the Meydan FEI Nations Cup™.

The second phase of this years' series will be held in the prestigious Piazza di Siena venue and FEI TV, the new official video website of the Federation Equestre Internationale, will stream all the action live and in high quality straight to your computer.

The broadcast, presented by English commentator and horsesport specialist Stephen Hadley, will start at 15:45 CEST and cover both rounds. Additional features such as the draw, a virtual course walk and interviews will also be made available to users.

Simply register on www.feitv.org to witness all the passion and excitement as your favourite teams and riders battle for the ultimate honours.

Lancashire Rising Star Fund 26th May 2009

Lancashire Sport Partnership together with the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund and Family Bakers Warburtons are pleased to announce the launch of the new Lancashire Sport Rising Star Fund.

The Lancashire Sport Rising Star Fund will ensure that young sportsmen and women and their families receive financial support to enable them to excel in their chosen sport. Interventions like this at such a crucial time can often be the difference between a young sports person continuing and achieving in their chosen sport or quitting. On average each athlete and there families can spend in excess of £5,000 per year on equipment, training, traveling and all of the other essentials that are required to compete at the top level

The Fund

The Fund will provide financial assistance to Lancashire's amateur able-bodied and disabled sportsmen and women and will focus on giving grants to young people aged between 12-24years, from sports officially recognized by Sport England.

Grants of up to £500 will be awarded to successful applicants to help with costs such as travel, training, accommodation, competition fees and equipment, specialist coaching and other specialist support such as physiotherapy and nutrition advice.

It is anticipated that the grants will be available from April 2009. The grants we anticipate will assist around 30 individuals per year

Grant Criteria

Applicants must fulfill the following criteria to be eligible for the Lancashire Sport Rising Star Fund:-

- Applicants must be between 12 - 24 years old.
- Applicants must be a resident within in the of Lancashire Sport Partnership border (see map for clarification).
- Applicants must be competing at County, Regional, National or International level in their chosen sport.
- The sport must be a Sport England recognized sport (see list for clarification)
- Applicants must be of amateur status.

- Applicants must be fully endorsed by the relevant National Governing Body representative to be considered for funding.
- Grants will not be paid retrospectively
- Conditions of Grant

Appropriate recognition must be given to the Lancashire Sport Rising Star Fund in any media coverage received by the individual.

Funded individuals must be willing to be involved in promotional material undertaken by Lancashire Sport Partnership in the promotion of the Lancashire Rising Star Fund.

Funded individuals will be required to complete an end of year progress report stating their achievements.

Continuation grants may be awarded in exceptional circumstances for a further 2 years. These continuation grants will be up to £250 per year.

Application Process

To apply it is necessary to have an electronic statement of support from your relevant National Governing Body Officer and your Coach/Manager as these will need to be uploaded when completing the application form. Please contact Sonia Birch regarding the electronic statement of support.

Applications will be submitted to the Lancashire Sport Rising Star Fund Panel. The panel is made up of representatives from Warburton's Bakers, Lancashire Sport Partnership, Lancashire Sport Partnership Advisory Board, National Governing Body and the Duchy of Lancaster Benevolent Fund.

Deadline for this round of applications is:

Friday 26 June 2009

Applicants will be informed if their application has been successful within one calendar month of the closing date.

Lancashire Sport will reserve the right to reclaim any grant that is deemed not to have been used against agreed eligible cost.

The decision of the Lancashire Sport Rising Star Fund Panel will be final.

Eligible Sports:

Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Basketball, Boxing, Canoeing, Cricket, Cycling, Disability Sports, Diving, Equestrian, Fencing, Football, Golf, Gymnastics, Handball, Hockey, Ice Hockey, Ice Skating - Speed, Ice-Skating - Figure, Judo, Karate, Modern Pentathlon, Netball, Orienteering, Rowing, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Sailing, Shooting, Skiing, Snowboarding, Squash, Swimming, Synchronised Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Taekwondo, Triathlon, Volleyball, Water Polo, Water Skiing, Weightlifting, Windsurfing, Wrestling

**Register your event for the London 2012 Open Weekend
The London 2012 Open Weekend (24 - 26 July 2009) - Registration is now open!**

You don't have to wait until 2012 to be part of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Registration for the London 2012 Open Weekend 2009 has opened and we would like to invite you to register your event.

Last year over 700,000 people enjoyed the first London 2012 Open Weekend; this year we hope it will be bigger and better. Between 24 - 26 July 2009, the weekend will feature events all over the UK inspired by London 2012, enabling people - young or old - to join in.

We want organisations and venues across the UK to really open up, challenge themselves to do something different, something exciting. We want the public to take this opportunity to join in and try something new.

Whether it's trying out a new sport or learning to be a DJ; exploring unseen parts of the community or learning a new language, London 2012 is opening up new possibilities and bringing people together. We'd love you to be part of it.

What are we looking for?

The London 2012 Open Weekend is open to organisations and venues from the world of culture, sport, learning and sustainability. We are inviting organisations and individuals to 'Open up', do something 'like never before' and strive for personal best.

Open up your mind
Open up you organisation
Be inspired by London 2012

The criteria for participation are simple; we ask that your event/s:

Take place between the 24-26 July 2009
Is non-commercial and not-for-profit
Does not have any commercial sponsorship or offer any similar marketing rights - it should not provide a business with any rights to associate with, or be given visibility at, the event).
Reflect the core Olympic and Paralympic Values of:
Friendship
Determination
Equality
Inspiration
Courage
Excellence
Respect

Express the London 2012 value of being 'OPEN' through being:

Optimistic - the event should be positive and forward looking
Proud - the event should help generate a sense of pride
Engaging - the event should be easy to join in and get involved with
Now - Events should consider how they will be developing a legacy 'now'
How to register your event

Registering your event is easy -- simply visit www.london2012.com/openweekend and complete the online registration form.

You'll also find out more about why you should be part of the weekend and read our frequently asked questions on the London 2012 website.

If you have any queries regarding your participation in the London 2012 Open Weekend, please contact us at openweekend@london2012.com

Alltech Paint the Horse Competition Passes the Reins to Creative Kids 14th May 2009

Dublin, IRELAND - Global animal health and nutrition company Alltech, in association with Stamford Endowed Schools and the British Equestrian Federation, has announced details of a new U.K. equestrian art competition for school children. The 'Alltech Paint the Horse Competition', which is open to pupils aged from 6-18, aims to support Team GBR's attendance at the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games taking place in Kentucky in 2010.

To enter the competition, participants paint an original design using a horse template. The competition is sectioned into junior and senior categories and pupils can enter collectively, as a school, or on an individual basis.

The national winner of the competition will have their design professionally painted onto a life-size model horse which will be paraded at the Olympia London International Horse Show 2009.

"We are delighted to support this excellent programme and hope that it will inspire more young people to become involved with equestrian sport which offers such a diverse range of opportunities. We also have a very real challenge to fundraise in order to send eight teams to the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in 2010 and welcome Alltech's support in assisting with promoting some of the very exciting fundraising events and opportunities that we will be rolling out in the next few months," said Andrew Finding, chief executive, the British Equestrian Federation.

As title sponsor of the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games 2010™, Alltech hopes that this competition will help highlight the plight of Team GBR in their bid to send eight full teams to this global equestrian event. As Para-equestrian Dressage will be included, for the first time, at the Games, we also have a special interest in supporting Riding for the Disabled Association with this competition," said Steve Bourne, Alltech vice president for company development.

"We are very excited that Para-equestrian Dressage has been included in the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games in 2010. It is an excellent initiative to help raise awareness of both this and the fact that the U.K.'s success in Para-equestrian Dressage is, in part, due to the fantastic work carried out by Riding for the Disabled Association and our dedicated volunteers," said Ed Bracher, chief executive, Riding for the Disabled Association.

"We are proud to be a part of Alltech's Paint the Horse Competition, which is giving children in the U.K. aged 6-18 the chance to be involved with and support the Great Britain teams at the Alltech FEI World Equestrian Games 2010," said Stephen Roberts, principal of the Stamford Endowed Schools. "As a school that prides itself on inclusiveness, it is also very inspirational for our students that the event is open to disabled riders," he continued.

Each of the four category winners will receive a framed print of their design signed by a Team GBR member of their choice and will also be invited to paint their design on a scaled model horse at the Alltech FEI European Jumping and Dressage Championships 25th-30th August 2009 which will be showcased at The Land Rover Burghley Horse Trials 5th September 2009. This will be supported by Stamford Endowed Schools. The national and category winners will all receive hospitality tickets (1 + 2 guests) for the Olympia London International Horse Show on 21st December 2009.

World Class Development Riders Selected for Junior and Young Rider European Jumping Squads

11th May 2009

A number of World Class Development riders were in action at the Junior and European viewing trials that took place at the Wales & West Show, April 30th - May 4th 2009. A nucleus of riders were selected, from which the teams will be chosen to represent Britain at the Junior and Young Rider European Championships that take place at Hoofddorp in the Netherlands, 2nd-5th July.

World Class Development showed their support for the viewing trials by funding training vouchers to the total of £3,100.00, which were presented to the first six prizewinners in both the Junior and Young Rider European Trial Grand Prix classes.

Tina Goosen, World Class Development Show Jumping Co-ordinator said, "World Class Development are delighted to support the Junior and Young Rider European viewing trials by presenting training vouchers, actively encouraging these young riders to recognise the importance of correct training, which could make the all important difference when jumping under pressure at a Championship".

Two World Class Development Riders, and previous Young Rider European medalists are now successfully representing Britain at senior International level; Gemma Paternoster who last weekend was one of the four riders who represented Great Britain at Lummen, Belgium in the first Nations Cup of the 2009 season, where her 0 jumping faults in the second round was best of the British riders, and Charlotte Platt, who has been selected to represent Britain in the Nations Cup show that takes place at La Baule later this month.

The World Class Development Programme is Lottery funded via UK Sport and seeks to identify and develop riders who have shown the potential to reach the world stage. The Programme underpins World Class Performance and, together with the Equine Pathway, they comprise the Equestrian World Class Programme. It incorporates the three Olympic sports of Dressage, Eventing, Show Jumping and the Paralympic sport of Para-Equestrian Dressage.

For more information on The World Class Development Programme, see [here](#).

The Development riders selected for the Junior and Young Rider European Show-Jumping squads are:

Juniors

Jessie Drea (17), Horsham, West Sussex.
Henry Lacey (17), Warwick, Warwickshire.

Young Riders

Joe Clayton (19), Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
Danielle Farnsworth (18), Nottingham
Samuel Hutton (21), Southampton, Hampshire
Daniel Neilson (19), Brentwood, Essex
Tim Page (21), Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk
Matt Sampson (18), Sheffield, South Yorkshire

For further details on the viewing trails and the full squads selected visit www.equestrianteamgbr.co.uk

Horse-ing around at holistic exercise - Warwickshire's vaulting taster day 30th April 2009

Move over yoga and Thai-chi - a different kind of holistic exercise has hit the region and you can try it out in Shrewley, Warwickshire, on Thursday 28 May 2009.

Vaulting, which has been dubbed Pilates on horses, is growing in popularity. A form of gymnastics on horseback this sport offers enormous physical, emotional and social benefits - and is relatively inexpensive.

Windmill House Farm equestrian centre in Shrewley is running the vaulting taster day next month in a bid to encourage more people - of all ages and abilities - into the sport. No previous riding experience is necessary, but pre-booking is essential to guarantee participation on the day.

Thanks to funding from the British Equestrian Federation's (BEF) Club and Coach Programme, the centre now has an additional vaulting horse and equipment to enable them to involve more people with the sport.

The taster day will give people the opportunity to try some of the manoeuvres on the horse, learn more about the sport, speak to regular vaulters, and practice moves on the vaulting barrel.

Julie Newell, from the English Vaulting Squad, runs Windmill House Farm equestrian centre, said: "Vaulting is a fun sociable exercise that helps build your core strength and balance, develops your co-ordination and flexibility, and ultimately improves your general fitness and wellbeing. For riders it's a great way to improve their seat too.

"So we'd encourage anyone to come along and give it a go - you don't need to be able to ride or be a dancer or gymnast - it's just a great way to learn to move in harmony with a horse in a safe and structured environment."

Sonia Birch, West Midlands Regional Development Co-ordinator, BEF, said: "Vaulting offers so many benefits and is suitable and safe for most people, so we are keen to encourage people to have a go. This taster day will give people the opportunity to try it at a reduced rate - and I'm sure that once they've done that they'll be hooked.

"Julie has a wealth of vaulting experience and is such an enthusiastic and fantastic instructor. We hope to spread the word about the work she does to invite local schools and groups to try the sport too."

A two hour session on the taster day costs £5 - to include tea / coffee. Participants are recommended to wear flexible trousers and gym shoes - no specialist equipment is necessary. Spectators are welcome to watch, free of charge. To book a place or for more information on vaulting, contact Julie Newell on 07976 421789.

BEF Head of Governance and Legal gains place on UK Sport International Leadership Programme
28th April 2009

Janice Shardlow, Head of Governance and Legal for the British Equestrian Federation (BEF), has secured a place on the UK Sport International Leadership Programme following a rigorous selection process.

The International Leadership Programme is designed for National Governing Body members and staff with the potential to reach positions of influence within International Federations; all sports were asked to endorse strong candidates who they believed could help them achieve their international goals and raise the UK's voice in the international governance of sport. Fourteen candidates were selected to take part the programme which is now into its third year.

The twelve-month programme is both exciting and challenging, seeking to equip its participants with the leadership skills necessary to further their progression up the International Federation ladder and to represent effectively the interests of their sport and the UK.

As well as structured training modules designed to develop cross-cultural competencies, the course will also offer the participants the chance to absorb advice and guidance from high profile guest speakers, well respected mentors and an alumni network. Participants will also have access to International Federation staff during an international trip to Lausanne.

"I am delighted to be offered a place on the programme," commented Janice. "This is an exciting time in the development of the international governance of equestrian sports and it is essential that the UK plays a key role. I am looking forward to acquiring new skills and using these to support the ongoing effort to ensure that the voice of UK equestrian sports continues to be heard."

Janice is the second Equestrian representative to take part in the programme following David Holmes' inclusion in 2008 during his time as Chief Executive of British Dressage. David has since moved on to take a senior role within the International Equestrian Federation.

"David is testament to the success of this high profile and rewarding programme and it is great news that Janice has now been accepted onto it," said Andrew Finding, Chief Executive of the BEF. "I am sure that it will bring benefits for the entire Federation and the benefit the position of equestrianism within the international sporting landscape."

Volunteers needed for Alltech FEI European Dressage and Show Jumping Championships 2009
24th April 2009

Volunteers are being sought to help at the Alltech FEI European Dressage and Show Jumping Championships at Windsor from the 25th - 30th August 2009.

Various roles need to be filled and people willing to help in any capacity are sought. The volunteers will potentially start from Sunday 23rd August onwards to assist prior to the Championships as well as during.

Roles are varied from gate operators to presentation girls, Team host/hostesses (need to be fluent in at least one other language) and a team of people to help man the Equestrian, Press and Sales Offices. Prior experience will be required for the more specialised roles.

Meals will be provided but volunteers will need to arrange their own accommodation. There will be an area within the grounds to put up tents or park caravans and toilet/shower facilities will be provided.

Please apply in writing including name, full contact details and any other information that you think might be relevant or useful for us to know when assigning roles.

Applications to be sent to Stephanie Pearce at the British Equestrian Federation by Friday 8th May 2009 e mail: stephanie.pearce@bef.co.uk or by post to British Equestrian Federation, Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2RH.

Ellen Whitaker claims World Class Development Championship Class
21st April 2009

Ellen Whitaker won the BEF World Class Development Programme Championship at the British Open Show Jumping Championships on Friday 17th April 2009, which were held at the NEC, Birmingham.

Ellen riding CS Online owned by Mr G H Harding, was fourth in the World Class Development Programme Pathfinder class the day before - this class decides the order of jumping for the Championship class the following day, so Ellen did not start from a winning position.

The Pathfinder class produced six clears rounds, and the winner after the jump off was Nicole Pavitt riding Gemmaire Precious with a clear round in a time of 32.32 seconds. Jemma Kirk took the runner up spot, with Joe Clayton taking third place.

After the first round in the Championship class, there were five clears, including Nicole Pavitt, but it was Ellen, who claimed the title with a clear round in the jump-off in 40.30 seconds. Tim Gredley also rode a classic double clear in 42.78 seconds on Valente for second place. Third went to Lucy Guild on Titi D'Oase who was the only other rider to go clear in both rounds.

Last to go in the jump-off, Nicole had to produce a fast clear to catch Ellen, but faulted with one fence down to finish fourth.

Ellen was clearly delighted to win this title, as it was her last opportunity to take part in this class due to its age restriction of riders being under 23 years of age.

Besides training vouchers and prize money on offer, there was also a John Whitaker bridle, supplied by David Dyer of Frogpool Manor as the prize for the 'Style and Performance' award.

Swiss International show jumper, Markus Fuchs judged this award, and was very impressed with Development rider Daniel Neilson, to whom he awarded a mark of 9.75, but it was Ellen, who he gave the winning mark of ten, due to her faultless show jumping round.

Will Connell, World Class Performance Director said, "The interest that the WCD Programme Championship class has generated among some of the best young show jumping riders in Great Britain signifies the importance they place on qualifying to compete in the Championship class and with the high level of riding required in order to win this prestigious title, this demonstrates the value and importance of correct training and riding".

As part of its sponsorship of the WCD Championship, The World Class Development Programme has funded the first place prize money at the six qualifying competitions, as well as training vouchers to the first six prize winners. The prize fund at the British Open totaled £3,000 with training vouchers to the value of £4,475.

The World Class Development Programme is Lottery funded via UK Sport and seeks to identify and develop riders who have shown the potential to reach the world stage. The programme underpins World Class Performance and, together with the Equine Pathway, they comprise the Equestrian World Class Programme. It incorporates the three Olympic sports of Dressage, Eventing, Show Jumping and the Paralympic sport of Para-Equestrian Dressage.

For more information please contact: Debbie Lee, World Class Development.
Tel: 02476 698876. Email: Debbie.lee@bef.co.uk

Philip Billington Obituary
PHILIP GORDON BILLINGTON
15 MAY 1944 - 13 APRIL 2009

Philip Billington, sadly died on 13 April following a sudden heart attack while driving his car in Jersey, aged 64 years.

Philip started his business career in banking - Westminster Bank Plc - both in the UK and USA, achieving the position of Assistant Manager in his twenties. He accepted Executive Directorships over a number of years, firstly with Racal Electronics Plc and then Wilkinson Sword. From 1986 to 1997 he was Chairman and Chief Executive of Chemring Group Plc, a fully quoted British company with some 17 manufacturing companies located in the UK, France, Belgium, Malaysia, Australasia, New Zealand and USA. He decided to take early retirement in 1997 and devoted his business talents to assisting the structural reform of equestrian sport.

Philip has been actively involved in equestrianism for over 50 years, initially as a competitor in eventing, show jumping and showing riding horses and hacks and then as a show jumping judge and course designer for that sport and for eventing.

A voluntary official for the last 40 years, his talent for designing show jumping courses took him from local to advanced national level with the British Show Jumping Association (BSJA). Philip was a familiar face at county shows around the country in the summer, and designing courses at the indoor arenas during the winter months.

He became interested in the judging of show jumping in particular, finally holding BSJA National Supervisory Judge status and from 1992 being an International Jumping Judge with the International Equestrian Federation (FEI). He officiated in this capacity on the international jumping circuit around Europe, as well as being a regular at Britain's major international shows such as The Royal International Horse Show at Hickstead, The Horse of the Year Show, Olympia Show Jumping Championships and The British Open Show Jumping Championships

Philip's business and management acumen were soon recognised and his vision for equestrian sport led him to be nominated for Board level positions in major equestrian organisations, which were currently moving through a period of change and in need of modernisation and structural reform.

From 1989 to 1996 Philip was Trustee then Chairman of the International League for the Protection of Horses (now World Horse Welfare), a prominent charity dealing with the welfare of equines both at home and abroad. Soon after his chairmanship of the ILPH/WHW, when he left Chemring, he committed himself to voluntary work for equestrian sport; this commitment was complete and absolute.

His passion for show jumping combined with his corporate leadership skills made him an excellent choice for Director (1997) then Chairman (1998-2000) of the British Show Jumping Association (BSJA). During this Chairmanship, he was also a Director of the British Equestrian Federation representing one of the BEF's major Olympic sports, and playing a significant part in the structural reform of the Federation.

At the completion of his term of office as BSJA Chairman, it was a natural progression for Philip to be elected Chairman of the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) and he served in this capacity from January 2001 until April 2005 when the new BEF Board of Directors was elected as part of the modernisation programme. He took on the new non executive role of BEF Director for International Affairs, and provided an important supporting link for the new Chairman for the first twelve months, before stepping down in June 2006.

Philip's standing with his contemporaries on the world stage, and his corporate leadership skills lead to his appointment as a Member of the International Equestrian Federation's (FEI) Finance Committee, then of the FEI Audit and Compliance Committee of which he was Acting Chair from June to November 2008. In 2008, he was elected Chair of the latter Committee by the FEI General Assembly and as such became a FEI Bureau Member. He always encouraged our national leading equestrian talent to offer themselves for election onto the FEI's international committees, governing equestrian sport, and during his term in office a record number of British candidates were successful in securing appointments. Philip represented the FEI on EU Working Parties, and he served on FEI Working Groups reviewing Medication and Anti-Doping issues.

Philip was appointed a Trustee of the British Equestrian Federation Fund from 2001-2006, tasked with providing funds "to make a difference" to senior international teams contesting the Olympics and World Championships in addition to the Lottery Funding available.

Philip Billington led the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) through a critical period (January 2001 - April 2005) of modernisation transforming it, with the member bodies of the Federation, from its virtual post office status to become a leading and professional national governing body of sport.

Three high points marked the final year of his BEF Chairmanship: 3 Olympic medals (gold, silver and bronze) and 8 Paralympic medals (5 gold and 3 bronze from 9) at the Athens Olympic and Paralympic Games 2004; the completed implementation of a modern, professional governance structure; hosting a record number of nations at the International Equestrian Federation's annual General Assembly in London in April 2005, which was regarded as one of the best ever and significantly just three months before the Olympic Games were awarded to London for 2012.

A quiet and self effacing man, Philip Billington will be greatly missed by his friends and colleagues throughout the equestrian world. He leaves a devoted wife, Pat, three loving step children and five grandchildren.

Former BEF Chairman passes away 17th April 2009

Former BEF and BSJA Chairman Philip Billington died from a heart attack while driving his car in Jersey on Easter Monday.

Philip was a member of the BSJA Board of Directors and then became Chairman in 1998 through until 2000. He then become Chairman and President of the BEF over the period 2001-2005.

He was a former rider and international cross country and show jumping course designer but was latterly a very active international show jumping judge. Philip was elected by the FEI General Assembly as a member of the FEI Finance Committee from 2004 to 2006 and then of the FEI Audit and Compliance Committee, of which he was Acting Chair from June to November 2008. In 2008, he was elected Chair of the latter Committee by the General Assembly.

He lived with his lovely wife Pat in Jersey and Spain.

A full obituary will follow shortly.

Regional Foundation Squads launched 15th April 2009

Five Regional Foundation Squads aiming to produce a pool of up and coming talented riders are being launched across England.

The squads, which have been set up through funding from Sport England and are being co-ordinated by the British Equestrian Federation (BEF), will include the four Olympic disciplines and one Paralympic discipline of dressage, eventing, show jumping and para-equestrian dressage. The aim is that the squads will identify talented riders who are not currently on the BEFs World Class Programme.

Eight riders from each of the disciplines, aged between 16 and 24 years old, will be selected for each of the five regions; North, East Midlands, West Midlands, South East - including London, and South West.

The programme, which is being developed in partnership with British Dressage, British Eventing and the British Show Jumping Association, will provide selected

riders with the opportunity to have access to top equestrian specialists including; coaches, physiotherapists, psychologists, vets and nutritionists via a series of clinics.

"The financial support received from Sport England is allowing this stepping stone to be put in place at regional level," comments BEF head of regional development, Maggie Still. "We hope that this extra support will make selection onto the World Class programmes more achievable for talented performers.

"The idea is to develop a pool of regional talent to help support the strength of our equestrian Olympic and Paralympic squads in years to come. We are looking for exceptionally talented riders - so strong judging criteria applies."

Amanda Bond, chief executive of British Dressage sums up the support of the individual sports for the programme: "We are really excited by the new Foundation Squads as it will allow many more riders to benefit from training and support. To have a programme that encompasses both able-bodied and para sport will really help us further develop the talented riders we are seeing coming through the regions. It is a real boost to our existing regional activity."

Riders can now apply to the first Regional Foundation Squad for the North (16 April - 29 May); the subsequent regional squads will be open from August.

National Equine Forum announces Royal President 6th April 2009

The chairman and committee of the National Equine Forum (NEF) announced the appointment of HRH The Princess Royal as their President, at the seventeenth Forum, held last Tuesday 31 March. The event, which was attended by over 200 of the country's most influential members of the equestrian industry and included a number of representatives from the equestrian trade, also received a letter of support from HRH Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, President of the FEI, who hopes to be able to attend in future years.

Professor Sir Colin Spedding, Chairman of the NEF said: "We are both honoured and delighted that Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal has graciously consented to become our president. She has been a respected participant for a number of years and her input and association with the Forum are highly valued."

The Rt Hon Jane Kennedy MP, Minister for the Horse, was unable to attend because of illness. Her speech, delivered in her absence by Arik Dondi, Deputy Director of Exotic Diseases Policy at Defra, spoke of the progress made by a working group on African Horse Sickness (AHS). Mr Dondi said that the government has learnt lessons from Bluetongue, so if African Horse Sickness comes to our shores it will be ready to tackle it.

Jack Watts, economist for the Home Grown Cereals Authority (HGCA), discussed the impact of biofuels and world food demand. He explained how international grain pricings are led by US maize and that surpluses of wheat, barley and maize in 2008 have helped to improve stocks. He showed how biofuels are creating extra demand for US and EU grains but emphasised that production capacity is available to meet demand. He also explained how straw availability and price are driven by the increasing cost of replacing lost nutrients.

Dr Pat Harris, head of the WALTHAM® Equine Studies Group, presented a thought-provoking paper on supplements - sage of wisdom or a waste of thyme. Dr Harris explained why the potential benefits and risks of feeding a supplement to the horse should be realistically assessed and monitored appropriately. The active ingredients and nutrients in the remainder of the horse's diet should also be checked to ensure the prevention of an inadvertent overdose. She pointed out that even if there's no scientific evidence to prove the effectiveness of a supplement, this doesn't mean it doesn't work. Equally, though, the fact that it apparently worked for another horse does not mean that it will necessarily work for yours, nor that it is safe or legal to feed in all circumstances.

Chris Gordon, Chairman of the BETA Feed Committee, discussed cross contamination, accidental doping and naturally occurring prohibited substances and announced the launch of the new BETA/Universal Feed Assurance Scheme (UFAS) code later this spring. He defined the three classes of prohibited substance and explained some of the mysteries of naturally occurring prohibited substances (NOPS), specifically the recent increase in the cultivation of morphine poppies in the UK, which can lead to traces of morphine being found in feed, supplements and forage. He said that the new Code should considerably reduce risk of NOPS and offer the best possible protection for those racing under FEI or racing regulations.

Richard Bacon, from Warwickshire College talked about horse world - hobby, sport, business, industry? He concluded that "the ongoing challenge to anyone involved with horses, as a hobby, sport, business or industry body, is to be continually moving forward in interconnectedness and professionalism, for the benefit of the horse and the whole industry."

Lucy Katan, Executive Director of the British Grooms Association (BGA), presented an update on her organisation, the impetus for the formation of which was generated at the NEF six years ago. She explained that the BGA now had over 700 members and had won support from UnLtd, the foundation for social entrepreneurs and from Lantra, who had helped with the development of the Equine Skills CV scheme. The five future aims of the BGA were summarised: to offer dedicated support and advice to grooms; to increase the skills recognition and job status of grooms; to achieve modernisation of the working conditions of grooms; to build a sense of community in the groom's population; to contribute towards the stabilisation of the recruitment and retention issues in the equestrian workforce.

Madge Moore, Lantra's National Director for England followed with a brief overview of developments in workbased learning. She explained the apprenticeship scheme and the benefits to both apprentices and employers.

The Master, Jonathan Godrich of the Worshipful Company of Saddlers, The Master Carl Bettison ACWF Hons of the Worshipful Company of Farriers and Past Master Richard Walker-Arnott and Patricia Nassau-Williams of the Worshipful Company of Loriners gave insights into the history and function of their ancient organisations.

Will Connell, the World Class Performance Director of the British Equestrian Federation (BEF), reported on the challenges and achievements of the 2008 Olympic Games. He set the scene for a presentation from Tim Hadaway, Equestrian Manager for the London Organising Committee on the preparation for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012. A balanced debate was held on the pros and cons of using Greenwich Park as a venue for the equestrian element of the Games, which included a statement from the local pressure group No to Greenwich Park Equestrian Events (NOGOE). The issues of course size, spectator capacity, legacy and park

heritage were discussed, with Tim Hadaway concluding that Greenwich presents a highly suitable site in the heart of London, for the delivery of a compact and 'green' Games.

The British Horse Society undergraduate presentation 2009 was delivered by ex-Warwickshire College student Laura Corbin who is the winner of the Equivalan Duo Equine Thesis of the Year 2009. She presented a comprehensive analysis of foot balance and lameness in riding school horses. The study emphasised the importance of maintaining good foot balance in order to prevent lameness.

In the topical spot Graham Cory, Chief Executive of the BHS provided some tips for horse owners on how to survive the credit crunch. Dr Nicola Menzies-Gow presented a summary of a recent BEVA/BVA-AWF study on the recovery from acute pasture-associated laminitis in horses and ponies managed in a first opinion practice. She provided the take home message for horse owners that laminitis may be more severe in ponies, large breeds of horse and overweight individuals and that overweight horses that get laminitis are more likely to be euthanased. Brigadier Paul Jepson, Chief Executive and Veterinary Director for The Horse Trust delivered an overview of the role of vaccinations, explaining how they work, perceived safety and efficacy and the development of new vaccines such as those for African Horse Sickness, Grass Sickness, Sarcoids, RAO and Sweet Itch.

The National Equine Forum is chaired by Professor Sir Colin Spedding and is convened by Air Cdre (Retd) Miles Williamson-Noble. It is supported by the ABRs, BETA, BEF, BHS, BHA, The Blue Cross, Dodson & Horrell, The Donkey Sanctuary, Fort Dodge Animal Health, Jeffress Scholarship Trust, NFU Mutual, South Essex Insurance Brokers, The Horse Trust and World Horse Welfare.

Voluntary Action Leicester create a funding opportunity for local riding clubs 6th April 2009

The Grassroots Grants Programme, a project created by the Government Office of the Third Sector to build stronger and more active communities, has got off the ground in Leicestershire.

BEF Regional Development Co-ordinator and Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL) worked to find out ways in which the programme could benefit Riding Clubs in the area. The Small Grants programme was earmarked as most suitable offering up to £5,000 for community activities.

Sport is one of the priorities of the scheme, but for an application to be successful, an increasing involvement with the local community has to be demonstrated. Blaby Recreational Riding Association and Lytchgate Pony Club, Burbage both submitted applications in November last year but were unsuccessful the first time round. However, Lytchgate were advised to modify their bid and resubmit it, which they subsequently did and were successful in receiving an award of £4,800 in March. The grant will be used to promote the club, improve facilities and training, in addition to engaging with the wider community to encourage more young people to take up riding.

The programme will run until 2011 and applications for funding will be launched in 2009 with closing dates of 26th June and 2nd November and in 2010 with closing dates of 21st May and 7th October. Application forms and more information can be

obtained by ringing VAL on tel: 0116 2580666 or e-mail:
info@voluntaryactionleicester.org.uk

Yorkshire and Humber Coaching Bursary Programme provides funds towards UKCC for coaches

3rd April 2009

The National Skills Academy for Sport & Active Leisure Yorkshire and Humber Coaching Bursary is funded by Sport England and is currently offering active coaches AND potential coaches the opportunity to part fund their first or next coaching qualification.

With 60% reimbursement of the course cost available to individuals. There has never been a better time to undertake your qualification.

Gain a Recognised Qualification

The Coaching Bursary is providing funding for UK Coaching Certificate (UKCC) endorsed sports of which equestrian is one. UKCC is an endorsement of coach education programmes across sports within the UK set against agreed criteria including:

advance coach education programmes and practices
support the development of coaching as a profession
require a commitment to review and develop existing programmes and practices
To find out more and how to apply see here

Get Riding with the British Open and BEF! 31st March 2009

The British Open Show Jumping Championships (The British Open) returns to the NEC this Easter (16th - 19th April) and in a bid to get people riding the British Open has teamed up with the British Equestrian Federation (BEF), to offer people in the West Midlands area an 10% discount off riding lessons at regional riding schools. The BEF is committed to raising the profile of the sport at all levels and abilities and increasing access to it

The British Open and BEF have compiled a list of eight Riding Schools in the West Midlands area, all BHS and ABRS approved, who are offering a 10% discount this May half term giving you the best reason to 'Get Riding!' Quote 'British Open Promotion' when booking to receive your discount - it is that simple! You could also win tickets to visit the British Open when you book as each riding school has family tickets (for 4 people) for Sunday 19th April to give away. The British Open is a great family day out featuring the best British show jumpers in action, exciting equestrian displays and entertainment, including a celebrity Arena Polo match featuring Katie Price and Amy Guy, aka Siren of the Gladiators. Please visit www.britishopenshowjumping.com for full details.

The BEF is the national governing body for horse sports in the UK and represents the interests of 4.2 million riders, vaulters and carriage drivers in Great Britain.

Still need some convincing to give riding a try?

Horse riding is for everyone regardless of age, ability or background.

Horse riding is one of the most versatile sports you can try, look at the range of disciplines featured at the British Open!

Horse riding is a fantastic stress reliever being both relaxing and challenging in just the right quantities!

There are numerous opportunities to compete if you have a competitive streak.

Riding will boost your energy levels and relieve mental fatigue.

Horse riding is a great way to keep fit and healthy. Not only in aerobic fitness but also tones the leg and stomach muscles.

Riding at a reasonable speed once competent can burn around 400 calories an hour! Getting the right start, good basics and sound tuition are essential if you are novice or returning to the sport after a long time off. Choose British Horse Society and Association of British Riding Schools approved centres to be confident you are at a certified establishment. More information on this can be found at www.bhs.org.uk or www.abrs-info.org.

The Riding for the Disabled Association provides opportunities for riding, vaulting and carriage driving. Riding is a proven form of therapy offering disabled participants improved mobility, co-ordination and confidence. Check out www.rda.org.uk for more info.

Featured Riding Schools

North Worcestershire Equestrian Centre Shangri-la, Woodfield Lane, Romsley, Halesowen B62 0LR T: 01562 710245 www.silvrettahaflingers.co.uk
Lessons from £20 adult £15 child (1/2 hour lesson)

Hole Farm Pony Trekking Centre Woodgate Valley Country Park, Watery Lane, Bartley Green, Birmingham B32 3BS T: 0121 422 3464
Lessons from £8 (1/2 hour lesson)

Bubbenhall Bridge Equestrian Centre Bubbenhall Road, Bagington, Coventry CV8 3BB T: 02476 301055

Middleton Equestrian Centre Vicarage Hill Lane, Middleton, Nr Tamworth B78 2AT
T: 0121 311 1601 www.middletonequestrian.co.uk Lessons from £20 child 1/2 hour £22.50 adult 1/2 hour

Sedgeley Equi-Centre Wood Farm House, Gospel End Road, Sedgley, Dudley West Midlands DY3 4HA T:01902 677998
10% discount to be used for initial assessment lesson. £18 half hour £28 hour (private)

Truemans Heath Riding School Truemans Heath Farm, Truemans Heath Lane, Shirley, SOLIHULL B90 1PQ T: 0121 430 7974 www.truemansheath-ridingschool.co.uk

Brookhouse Farm Riding School, Truemans Heath Lane, Majors Green, Shirley, SOLIHULL, West Midlands B90 1PG T: 0121 4742078

BRITISH OPEN OFFER CAN BE USED UP UNTIL 31 DECEMBER 2009 SUBJECT TO LESSON AVAILABILITY - ONE USE PER PERSON ONLY - Lessons from £11 (child)

Moor Farm Stables Wall Hill Road, Corley Moor, COVENTRY, Warwickshire CV7 8AP T. 01676 540594 Mobile: 07757 646295

OFFER TO BE USED FOR 10% DISCOUNT OFF SUMMER CAMPS ONLY.

Warwick International School of Riding, Guys Cliffe, Coventry Road, Warwick, Warwickshire, CV34 5YD T: 01926 494313

Lessons from £27 per hour. www.warwickriding.co.uk

Please refer to the individual schools websites or contact numbers for individual restrictions. The centres reserve the right to accept bookings at their discretion. The discount is applicable for the May half term 2009 unless otherwise stipulated. Lessons are subject to availability and must be pre-booked. Grandstand Event Management nor the British Equestrian Federation except no responsibility for this promotion and is in no way liable. Please contact each riding school direct for full details of the promotion.

Top Young Riders compete for BEF World Class Development Programme Championship Title 31st March 2009

Twenty three of the brightest young names in show jumping will compete in the BEF World Class Development Programme Championship, at the British Open Show Jumping Championships held at Birmingham's NEC on 16th - 19th April 2009.

After five qualifying competitions, the top twenty-one riders based on points accumulated throughout the qualifying series, and two riders who qualified at the one wild card show, all now have the chance to compete in this prestigious class and one rider will be crowned World Class Development Programme Champion 2009.

Joseph Clayton topped the qualifying points table after a second place and two wins, with George Whitaker and Lance Whitehouse second and third respectively. Ellen Whitaker has qualified four horses, however, as the rules state that riders may only compete on one horse in the Championship, Ellen now has to choose which one to ride.

A significant number of World Class Development riders have qualified and with a mixture of some old and new faces in the final line up, it will be a highly sought after title.

To determine the starting order of the Championship class, the riders will jump in the WCD Programme Pathfinder class the day before, with all clear rounds going through to a jump-off against the clock. The winner is the rider with the least faults in the fastest time that will then have the advantage of going last in the WCD Programme Championship class.

With a prize fund of £2,250 for the Championship class and training vouchers awarded to the top eight placed competitors ranging from £800 to the winner to £100 for the eighth placed rider, competing in this class is of considerable value to these young riders

An additional prize in the Championship class is a bridle, kindly donated by Frogpool Manor, which will be presented to the winner of the Style and Performance award that will be judged by an overseas International rider.

Will Connell, World Class Performance Director says, "This is the fifth year that the World Class Programme has supported this competition and once again we have been delighted with the interest that it has generated amongst some of the best young show jumping riders. With the calibre of the top twenty three riders who have qualified for the Championship, this will make for a very exciting competition".

The World Class Development Programme is Lottery funded via UK Sport and seeks to identify and develop riders who have shown the potential to reach the world stage. The Programme underpins World Class Performance and, together with the Equine Pathway, they comprise the Equestrian World Class Programme. It incorporates the three Olympic sports of Dressage, Eventing, Show Jumping and the Paralympic sport of Para-Equestrian Dressage.

For more information please contact: Debbie Lee - World Class Development Assistant. Tel: 02476 698876. Email: debbie.lee@bef.co.uk

Please see below for the list of qualified riders:

British Open Show Jumping Championships 2009
NEC Arena Birmingham 16th - 19th April

World Class Development Programme Championship Final

Joseph Clayton - Saveur
George Whitaker - Kairouan Rouge
Lance Whitehouse - My Boy
Matt Sampson - Chianti Classico
Timothy Page - Quentin Tarantino
Thomas Whitaker - Boyram
Danielle Farnsworth - Orlof Wisbecq
Nicole Pavitt - Amaryllis Van de Heffink or Maestro de Rend Peine
Ellen Whitaker - Cortaflex Kanselier, Ocolado, C S Online or Ladina B
Anthony Condon - Whinny Jackson
Emily Davies - Granita II
Jemma Kirk- Tosca or My Miss Saigon
Tim Gredley - Toklund
Lucy Guild - Titi D'Oase
Thomas Davison - Egano Star
Jodie Ward - Caloux Z
Daniel Neilson - Oscar IX
Alison Barton - Saffier Van De Brandkreek
Louis Godber - Seander
Joe Whitaker - Thalita
Samual Hutton - Top Limit
Abbie Squires (Wild Card) Enrique
David Harland (Wild Card) Celebrity

Facebook helps BEF unite equestrianism

24th March 2009

The British Equestrian Federation (BEF) has set up Facebook pages dedicated to bringing equestrian enthusiasts across the South East and South West of England together in one place.

The pages 'BEF in the South East' and 'BEF in the South West' have been set up by Anne Clarke, the federation's Regional Development Coordinator in the South, to share knowledge and offer networking opportunities for the equestrian community in the region.

Anne says: "I believe the power of Facebook will give the disciplines and bodies we represent, and work with, a tool to interact more effectively at a regional level.

"The page is aimed at coaches, those involved in running clubs, charities and businesses in the region, as well as at people who want to get involved or try something new with horses. Through it people can become more informed of a whole host of opportunities available to them, even if they don't own a horse or don't currently ride."

Facebook members can check the dates of the region's key events, find out about local initiatives which promote equestrianism to more participants and learn about the latest volunteering opportunities at major and regional events. Fans are also encouraged to post their own news or photos and get involved with topical discussions.

Visit the BEF regional pages for the South East and South West here for a link to the facebook pages.

Regions covered in the South East include Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire & IOW, Kent, Oxfordshire, Sussex and Surrey. In the South West they include Somerset, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire.

Riders get the opportunity to Explore Endurance

24th March 2009

Cheshire Endurance GB held its first 'Explore Endurance' day at Cheshire Riding School, Comberbach, on Sunday 22 February.

More than 30 participants, of all ages, enjoyed the full day which aimed to provide riders an insight into endurance - a form of long distance riding.

The day was jointly funded by British Equestrian Federation (BEF) Club and Coach Funding working in partnership with Cheshire Endurance GB - in an effort to increase participation in the sport. It was the first of its kind for the region.

Participants got to view a mix of presentations to help get them started in endurance, together with advice on horse care including; feeding shoeing, training and competition. There were also practical sessions which included a mock endurance ride and demonstration of the veterinary examinations which each horse has to pass at the beginning and end of rides, and at approx 20ml intervals at longer events, to make sure the horses are fit to continue.

Tricia Hirst an elite endurance rider from Team GB and one of the speakers, commented on the value of the day; "I took up the sport up fairly late in life after attending an information day on endurance riding similar to 'Explore Endurance' - and the rest is now history!"

Sonia Birch, North West Regional Development Co-ordinator, BEF, said: "It was excellent to see that endurance riding is open to all levels of rider ability and horse ability. Cheshire Endurance GB made a great effort to make everyone feel welcome and the structure of the day encouraged all participants to take part and try their hand at the sport.

"Everyone who took part is now associate members of Cheshire GB Endurance and will receive regular newsletter updates on where in the region endurance rides are available. Plus there is the support of the Cheshire Endurance Group now in place should participants need any help or advice on progressing with their endurance riding.

"I would like to thanks Liz Finney and all of her team who volunteered from Cheshire Endurance GB and beyond who put on this really informative, enjoyable and inspiring day."

It is hoped that the Explore Endurance day will now being used as a model for other regions to help promote the sport.

Cheshire Endurance GB will also be holding a number of pleasure rides during spring and summer where people can go and try the sport.

For more information visit the Cheshire Endurance Group www.endurancegbcheshire.co.uk or call Liz Finney, Chairman of the Group on 01565 633310

Sport England to invest in sporting opportunities for rural communities 17th March 2009

Sport England recently unveiled a £10 million investment fund that will create sporting opportunities for people in rural areas.

The first in a series of themed funding rounds, it will open for business on 1 April 2009.

Themed rounds will enable Sport England to tackle specific challenges and opportunities that exist in grassroots sport as well as helping ensure investment is effectively distributed across the country and across different communities.

People in rural communities are the focus of the first round because it is known they face particular barriers to participating in sport, such as reduced choice in the sports available to them and transportation issues getting to and from facilities. Sport 'Active People Survey 2 shows that two thirds of the local authorities with the lowest sports participation rates are in rural areas. There are also specific challenges for organisations and communities delivering sport in rural England; small and declining local populations and higher costs, for instance, can hinder sustainable local sporting provision.

The Rural Communities Themed Round will give a wide range of organisations, from local authorities to sports clubs and smaller community groups, an opportunity to develop and deliver new and innovative projects to overcome these barriers to both participation and supply.

Successful bids will make significant contributions to two of Sport England's strategic outcomes: growing participation in grassroots sport and sustaining participation by improving the quality of people's sporting experience.

Dr Stuart Burgess, Chairman of the Commission for Rural Communities, said:

"I am delighted Sport England is investing such a substantial sum in our rural communities. This will come as a welcome boost to people living in rural areas facing a tough time in the teeth of the recession. I hope the funding will bring forward many creative ideas that will help overcome barriers, such as access to transport, that rural people face in taking part in sport."

The minimum grant available will be £10,000, but in order to maximise the positive effect on sport in rural areas, Sport England is explicitly encouraging high value, high impact projects. A significant proportion of the successful bids are expected to be projects requiring National Lottery funding of more than £500,000.

ABRS Reports Unexpected Riding School Numbers 12th March 2009

The Association of British Riding Schools (ABRS) has recently undertaken a local authority survey of licensed riding schools which has revealed some unexpected findings.

Despite the severe difficulties experienced in the riding school industry and reports of declining numbers in recent years, the ABRS survey indicates that there are still some 2,000 licensed riding schools operating in the UK - with a significant number of Local Authorities seeing no change in the number of licensed establishments.

Julian Marczak, Chairman of the ABRS said, "This is heartening news for our riding school industry which has suffered so much as a result of soaring overheads and increasing red tape, leading to the closure of some establishments well before the present financial squeeze". He continued, "While the findings of our survey do not reveal the size, type and standard of the riding schools highlighted, clearly there is an opportunity for the ABRS to continue to increase its membership, enabling it to have a louder voice in lobbying for our approved schools in the crucial matters that affect their businesses".

The ABRS is showing itself increasingly to be an innovative organisation and its reputation as a crusader for riding schools continues to grow. No doubt this is why in recent weeks the Association has attracted thirteen new members as a result of regional meetings it has held around the UK, the most recent being two highly successful meetings in Scotland.

The Yorkshire Polocrosse Experience 23 February 2009

The Yorkshire Polocrosse Academy (YPA) finally held its first free 'taster day' at White Rose Riding School, Carlton Husthwaite, on Thursday 19 February following two cancellations because of snow.

Thirteen participants aged from 6 to 40 plus enjoyed the free polocrosse experience - taking part in the sport which has been dubbed 'rugby on horseback' - under the expert guidance of UK International coach Guy Robertson and local player Rebecca Stansfield.

The YPA has been jointly funded by the United Kingdom Polocrosse Association (UKPA) and the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) in an effort to increase participation in the sport, which combines racquet and ball skills with horsemanship. The taster days give the opportunity for people of any age to come and have a go, free of charge, using schoolmaster horses and under expert instruction. Previous riding experience is not always necessary.

Some of the horses at the Academy have played polocrosse at a very high standard helping many of those who are now in the UK Open squad (Guy Robertson included) to achieve international acclaim. Retired now from the elite squads these ponies are well schooled and offer those who want to learn how to play an opportunity, unique to the YPA, to do so on a real schoolmaster.

Following the success of the taster day, regular training sessions will be offered at the Academy when players can either hire a pony or bring their own. A new club, the White Horse Polocrosse Club, affiliated to the United Kingdom Polocrosse Association (UKPA) is opening to accommodate players who wish to take the experience further. Some existing members of the UKPA, including UK Junior Squad member James Stansfield, will be joining the club. With regular coaching from multi award winning player and Captain of the UK Under 21 Squad, Alex Richardson, and workshops with Guy Robertson and other top coaches, it is hoped the club will soon make its mark on the UKPA league table.

UKPA Director of Coaching, Christine Stansfield, said: "This sport is sadly overlooked by many. With the opening of the Academy and the new club I hope that many more people, young and old will take the opportunity to come along and have a go. Combining racquet and ball skills with horsemanship, it is exciting to both play and watch.

"The World Cup is coming to the Northern Hemisphere for the first time in 2011 and will be held at Bishop Burton College. So there has never been a better time to become involved in this up and coming, spectacular sport."

A few places are left on the next free taster day at White Rose Riding School on 29 March, further free taster days will be held on 26 April and a two day camp will be held on 26 and 27 May. In addition, further camps and one day tournaments will be held throughout the summer.

Information regarding the taster days, camps and tournaments can be found on the website: www.polocrosseacademy-yorkshire.com. Alternatively please ring Christine Stansfield on 01944 738714.

**RDA announces plans for 40th Anniversary celebrations
9th March 2009**

Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) National Office, based in Warwick, has announced a series of events to mark its 40th Anniversary and is actively seeking sponsors to join in the fun.

The events, designed to celebrate RDA's achievements over the last 40 years, will highlight the provision of riding and carriage driving opportunities for around 23,000 adults and children with learning and physical disabilities across the UK each year.

Events will include: setting the record for the Worlds Biggest Riding Lesson in September 2009, a Tandem Skydive for 40 willing fundraisers in October 2009, a display at the Chelsea Flower Show in May 2010, a reception at Buckingham Palace and the London 10k Run amongst others.

As well as raising funds for RDA, the celebrations will recognise the dedication of 18,000 RDA volunteers who currently give 3.5 million hours of their time each year and hopefully attract a new generation of volunteers.

Ed Bracher, RDA Chief Executive, commented: "We are confident that we will be working with a number of celebrities and attracting extensive UK media coverage for these events and are keen to hear from anyone who would like to get involved on a personal level or by involving their company."

For further information please contact:

Vaughan Pearson at RDA on 01926 405 964 vpearson@rda.org.uk

Take part in Sport England Survey and help shape future investment decisions 27th February 2009

Sport England has commissioned Ipsos MORI to conduct this important research study, which is the first of its kind in the UK. The survey, 'Satisfaction with the quality of the equestrian sporting experience,' will establish what is important to people when they take part in sport and how satisfied they are with the quality of their sporting experience. The purpose is not to try and sell anything, it is purely a research study.

The survey will go live in March 2009 and will be conducted online using a short questionnaire. At this stage Ipsos MORI simply wants to invite you to register for it. This process will take no more than two minutes.

Simply click on the link here and enter some details so that they are able to contact you directly in the future. All of your personal details will be kept in the strictest confidence and used only for the purpose of this study.

If you have any questions please visit the page on the Sport England website or email a member of the Ipsos MORI team at SportEnglandSurvey@ipsos-mori.com

We would encourage you to take the opportunity to participate in this important study and to have your say. If selected, you could be one of 1,000 people who take part in the survey for our sport. The results will help shape the future of our sport as they will support improved planning and investment decisions.

The Long Horse Ride - linking Beijing to London by horseback and raising money for good causes

24th February 2009

The Long Horse Ride is a journey on horseback from Beijing to London. The ride started out after the closing ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics and is scheduled to arrive in London in time for the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The ride is the idea of Megan Lewis, Ride Organiser and Team Leader who is an Endurance GB Life Member. Megan will be completing the ride in stages and successfully completed the first trial leg in October 2008. She will return to China in March to prepare for the start of the second stage and start of the official Beijing to London leg, which will begin in April.

The ride will bring a message of goodwill from Beijing in the Beijing Olympic year to London in the London Olympic year. It also aims to raise money for disadvantaged children through its chosen charity, British based Schoolchildren For Children, which will also run a partnership project with the children's charity in China - China Children and Teenagers Fund.

Starting from the China Children Charity Monument on the Great Wall at Badaling, it will cross the steppes, deserts and mountains of China and Central Asia, following the Great Wall and the ancient Silk Routes. In the path of the Mongols and Huns, it will skirt the northern shores of the Caspian and Black Seas, before the final leg through the fields and forests of Europe.

The ride is being backed through China by the Chinese Equestrian Association who have already helped Megan in the initial stages of the ride and also introduced her to Mr Peng Wenchao who travelled round China with three horses for eight months in 2008 and has offered to act as a guide/factotum for the ride.

There will be some limited paying places for riders wishing to take part in certain stages of the ride and raise money for the good causes. Megan will run a blog throughout the ride, which can be viewed at <http://thelonghorseride.blogspot.com>

Equestrian UK Coaching Certificate programme continues success 21st February 2009

The British Equestrian Federation has retained endorsement status for the UK Coaching Certificate (UKCC) at levels one and two until January 2010.

This is following an independent, bi-annual review, which is an ongoing requirement of the coaching certificate for all sports. This review was focused on ensuring that the programme is being delivered within high quality parameters and meets the exacting standards set by the UK Coaching Framework.

This ongoing endorsement is in addition to level three, which was achieved by the BEF in June 2008. Plans are now underway to include a level four certificate after it has completed the pilot phase it is currently undergoing with several sports. The plan is to add this to the equestrian programme later this year.

The ongoing excellence of the coaching work in equestrian summit has been demonstrated through an invitation for Suzanne Genery, BEF Head of Sport Development, to speak at the UK Coaching Summit in April. She will be addressing the sport-wide conference on potential barriers to coaching.

**Intermediate Standards for Child Protection Achieved across BEF
20th February 2009**

The British Equestrian has achieved the Intermediate Standard for Child Protection, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to the protection of children and vulnerable adults in equestrian sport. In order to achieve this all sixteen member bodies, as independent organisation, have demonstrated that they have individually and collectively reached the necessary standard.

This standard recognises formally that all the relevant procedures and policies are in place and that good practice is being demonstrated across the Federation, in all areas of equestrian sport. It shows that there is a strong concept of checking and challenging.

This project can only be achieved by the Federation working together and although a number of generic templates and policies can be produced and adopted it has been necessary for each organisation to tailor these to their own organisation and focus on what they specifically need to aware of.

The Federation is now working towards the advanced standard and an application will be made for this later this year.

**BEF World Class Development supports top young riders at British Open
13th February 2009**

The organisers of the British Open Show Jumping Championships, Grandstand Event Management, are delighted to announce the BEF World Class Development Programme is once again showing its commitment to Britain's young show jumping riders by sponsoring the World Class Development Programme Championship class and it's supporting competition, the World Class Development Programme Pathfinder class being held at Birmingham's LG Arena (16th-19th April 2009). The Pathfinder class takes place on Thursday 16th April with the Championship class on Friday 17th April and will feature some of Britain's most exciting young show jumping talent.

The British Equestrian Federation (BEF) is the national governing body of horse sports in the UK, affiliated to the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI), the international governing body for equestrian sports. It exists to provide leadership, vision and purpose in steering the direction of equestrianism.

The BEF is an umbrella organisation representing the interests of the four million plus riders, valuters and carriage drivers in Great Britain via sixteen independent member bodies.

The World Class Development Programme is Lottery funded via UK Sport, and seeks to identify and develop talented athletes who have shown the potential to reach the world stage. The Programme underpins World Class Performance and, together with the Equine Pathway, they comprise the Equestrian World Class Programme, incorporating the three Olympic sports of Dressage, Eventing, Show Jumping and the Paralympic sport of Para-Equestrian Dressage.

There are six qualifying competitions held across the country from which the top twenty horse/rider combinations, based on points accumulated as a result of that

horse/rider combination's best four results, will come forward to jump in the Pathfinder and Championship classes. They will be joined by the first two highest placed, previously unqualified, rider/horse combinations from the Wild Card qualifying competition held at Addington Manor Equestrian Centre in March.

As part of its sponsorship the World Class Development Programme is also funding the first place prize money at the qualifying competitions and Wild Card competition, as well as training vouchers to the first six prize winners.

Ellen Whitaker and Nicole Pavitt have made strong starts to their campaigns by winning the qualifiers at South View and Addington respectively.

The British Open Show Jumping Championships is a unique event with a variety of entertainment and top competition on offer, and plenty to satisfy every equestrian enthusiast and those that want to see something a little bit different. The NEC in Birmingham provides a world-class venue, offering a host of activities to see and do once you arrive.

New for 2009!:

New Parelli Zone

A number of activities have been planned for the Parelli Zone including seminars and demonstrations on Natural Horsemanship and Parelli training methods.

New Shopping Pavilion

The Show layout has also been improved! Trade stands will now be located in the new, enlarged Shopping Pavilion, which will be situated between the Andrews Bowen International Arena and the Parelli Zone. Selling everything from tack to tweeds under one roof, it's the perfect place for all your equestrian needs.

New Classes

NATIONAL SHOW JUMPING - Amateur Championship

SHOWING - Working Hunter Grand Prix

PONY CLUB - Home International Team Show Jumping

NED makes swift changes to protect horse owners

5th February 2009

The recent emergence of several incidents of horses being re-passported when out on loan has prompted the National Equine Database (NED) team to introduce measures to reduce the opportunity for this to happen.

Cases coming to light recently have involved freezemarked horses being put on loan and subsequently sold on for slaughter with new passports, causing great distress to their owners.

Under European Union legislation it is not mandatory for Passport Issuing Organisations (PIOs) to collect freezemark information and supply it to NED, although many of them do. Recent cases of re-passported horses have revolved around freezemarks associated with horses' original passports either not being marked on those passports, or the freezemark details not being supplied to NED. When the PIO being approached to issue the new (second) passport checked NED

to see if there was already a passport for a horse with that freemark, they did not find a passport linked to the freemark supplied.

To minimise the possibility of this situation recurring, Defra is due to suggest to all PIOs that they check NED for existing freemarks and microchips before issuing passports to adult horses. However, to strengthen the response, NED will shortly be launching an online facility for horse owners to notify NED directly of their horse's freemark and/or microchip details. This information will clearly be marked as data which has been entered by owners, rather than supplied by PIOs, but it will mean that a warning flag is raised if a second passport is applied-for and will indicate to the PIO that further investigation might be required before a passport is issued.

"Once it goes live, the success of this initiative relies on horse owners making sure that they have checked and entered security information for all the horses they own on to NED", says NED spokesman Jan Rogers, "NED is clearly the place where all horse information comes together to protect and inform the horse owning community and we are pleased to be able to work with horse owners to deliver the service they need by constantly reviewing what NED can offer".

British horses come tops at 2009 British Breeders Dinner

15th January 2009

Full report and pictures in the February 2009 issue of Horse Deals.

For the fourteenth time, the success of British breeders was celebrated at the glittering 2009 Breeders' Awards Dinner at London's Grange City Hotel.

Twenty five awards were presented in recognition of the continued development of the British breeding industry.

Six racehorses, re-schooled to excel as performance horses, received awards in the South Essex Insurance Brokers (SEIB)/ Retraining of Racehorses awards, one of whom, Liz Harcombe's Kings Piper was on the podium for the third time in the affiliated dressage section, and another - Joey Ellis' Blue Streak for the second time in the showing section.

Baileys Horse Feeds/BEF Futurity section boasted winners from areas as far apart as Aberdeenshire and Wiltshire represented by Craigmancie Cracker (Welton Double Cracker) and Knockleith Eureka (Shinglehall Senator) from Aberdeen and Classic Top Notch (Lauriston) from Wiltshire, all taking the bows. Foal Classic Prada (Classic Juan) won hearts and the stallion award to Woodcroft Garuda K (Munchhausen) and mare award to Sandrina (Sandro) demonstrated remarkable consistency in progeny quality.

High level success was recorded in the Sports Pony Studbook Society (SPSS) sponsored section with outstanding performance results being established by the progeny of sire Machno Carwyn (Carregcoch Bleddyn) - his own sire having been a previous recipient of this award.

British Eventing's Breeding Awards also saw some consistent patterns with the four (Cotton King) and six (Coopers Law) year old winners both being by event sire Mill

Law. Five year old winner was Newmiln Dakota by Newmiln Landini. Vincent Jones presented the trophies.

British Dressage celebrated a first, where all three winners were by the same stallion Dimaggio. The breeders of Half Moon Dynasty, Headmore Delegate and Woodlander Dornroeschen went home with the trophies, presented by Jennie Loriston Clarke.

BSJA's winners were presented by William Funnell and were; Sorceress by Cabri D'Elle, Jumping Mac Flash by Kannan and Billy Congo by Vechta. PJ Doyle and Donal Barnwell were there as breeders to collect their awards in person and MJ Dawson's was collected by Liz Wood.

The British Horse Foundation's Outstanding Mare Award went to another showjumper, Amber Du Montois, Denise Stamp's home bred mare by Abdullah. William Funnell's ride Amber retired this year, still jumping 1.50m tracks and having winnings of over £180,000. Amber bred a foal in 1994, a very good Grade A, Double Eclipse, by Animo.

The BEF Olympic Award went to Maurice Pinto, breeder of Miners Frolic (Miners Lamp), the 2008 Hong Kong double bronze medal winner and mount of Kristina Cook.

A surprise award was presented to Supporters of British Breeding Chairman Desi Dillingham, who was recognised for her contribution to British sport horse breeding over the last 14 years.

The room fell silent in anticipation of the announcement of the winner of the Meriel Meritoire for outstanding services to British sport horse breeding. As Mike Tucker announced the winner, Johanna Vardon, the room erupted. Johanna's story is a remarkable one and the tale was recounted by Mike as Johanna stepped up to collect her award, insisting that husband John Baxter be part of the celebrations.

With thanks extended to guest speaker Yogi Breisner and Supporters of British Breeding who organised the event, NED the National Equine Database, which made calculation of results so much easier, and to all of those who attended and made the occasion so memorable.

Dressage community honoured in New Year's list 2009

8th January 2009

Three para equestrian dressage riders were recognised in the Queen's 2009 New Years Honours list for their services to disabled sport. Lee Pearson becomes a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) for services to equestrianism and disabled sport while Anne Dunham and Sophie Christiansen each receive MBE's (Members of the Order of the British Empire) for services to disabled sport. All three riders were on the gold medal winning Paralympic Dressage Team from the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games held in Hong Kong as well as each scooping individual and freestyle medals.

Lee Pearson, no stranger to accolade, finds himself on the honours list for the third time, upgraded from an MBE, OBE to CBE at subsequent Paralympic Games. He commented: "I'm very proud but really more pleased for Sophie and Anne than myself; your first honour is definitely the most special."

"It's great to be recognised for your achievements and competing for your country but also great for equestrianism and for disabled sport. These honours help people outside dressage to appreciate what we do and it brings equestrianism to a wider audience."

Vice President and former Chairman of British Dressage Desi Dillingham is given an MBE for her voluntary services to equestrian sport.

The BEF says farewell to Victoria Underwood after seven years work for the federation

6th January 2009

The BEF is saying goodbye to Victoria Underwood, World Class Development Manager, after seven years with the BEF. Vikki was responsible for the Development arm of the World Class Programme, incorporating both Start and Potential. Together with Performance and the Equine Pathway this makes up the complete Equestrian World Class Programme.

The role of the Development Programme is to underpin the Performance Programme by identifying and nurturing talent, with the aim of that talent progressing to success on the world stage.

Vikki has developed and progressed the programme during her time at the BEF and has seen many riders successfully move on to win medals at senior international level. The programme has gone from strength to strength and Britain has consistently been successful at under 21 level during that time, teams which have regularly included members of the Development Programme.

However, Vikki felt the time was right to move onto a new challenge, but it's not completely goodbye as Vikki has only moved down the corridor. She now takes up maternity cover for the role of Deputy Chief Executive at British Dressage.

The BEF would like to thank Vikki for all her hard work over the years and we wish her every success in her new role.
