



Grant Harris



From the  
Chief Executive

*'We have reached a watershed. For the first time in many years there is going to be quantum leap in the money derived from betting returned to horseracing. We must now decide how best to use this money to get the best possible return.'*

The School, along with our counterpart in the North and other stakeholders, have been in dialogue with the BHA and other members of the proposed Racing Authority, to ensure that training and people will be at the top of the Agenda for the additional monies coming downstream from the Levy Replacement. So it was great news that this was passed into law recently and the money is now being accrued. We are in the process of finalising how those involved in the delivery of training for the industry would use additional money and first and foremost this is by increasing the number of young people we train while simultaneously making headway with recruitment, retention and the welfare of those we do train. So if you are asked for your opinion of where the additional money should be targeted please remember that without a supply of trained staff, training racehorses is a very difficult concept.

Many people in the industry I speak to have noted that the BRS seems to be on recruitment drive. It is true that we have recently been advertising for a number of new staff roles and this is the first step in rising to the challenge of training more people. We have to invest in the staff first so that we can deliver on our target of increasing the number of indigenous young people entering the industry. This year we will put on two extra courses in a bid to help the acute shortage of stable staff as well as a number of other initiatives such as ground-based yard staff courses and transition courses for those from other equine courses and backgrounds.

## International Jockeys Visit the BRS



The Overseas apprentice Course on a trip to Epsom Racecourse.



We were delighted to welcome two sets of apprentice jockeys; one pair from Australia – Stephanie Thornton and Melissa Julius. The pair were the in the UK gaining experience with Ed Dunlop and Luca Cumani as part of the IFHRA scholarship programme. The girls were staying with us at the BRS and also had time to visit London, Cambridge, Dalham Hall Stud and Frankel at Juddmonte.

The second pair who visited were scholarship funded by the Childwick Trust - Calvin Ngcobo and Diego de Gouveia from the South African Jockey Academy, Durban. They also rode out each day for William Haggas before joining the Overseas Apprentice Course.

We also welcomed attendees from Denmark, Germany, and Norway to the Overseas Apprentice Course; each gaining and improving their skills. During their time here they also had fitness and simulator training as well as guidance on professionalism and nutrition for sport.

# LATEST NEWS

## BRS STAFF TO CYCLE OVER 450 MILES! – 7 RACECOURSES IN 7 DAYS



**Rory MacDonald Memorial Fund**



The Rory MacDonald Memorial Fund has been set up in memory of the late, former CEO of the British Racing School. The Fund will provide the opportunity for young people who are not eligible for funding to train to work in the Horseracing Industry.

Aside from general fundraising; staff from the BRS are cycling over 450 miles in May from Musselburgh to Newmarket via seven racecourses as a sponsored event, with all proceeds going in to the fund.

A selection of staff who will be completing the ride launched the event at the Newmarket Craven Meeting with Sheikh Fahad bin Abdullah Al Thani wishing them well on their way (pictured). Many thanks to our kit and ride sponsors - Qatar Racing, Boden, GBR, Lycetts, Bequestrian.

**We would be very grateful of any support you could give. There is a donation box on the BRS Reception desk or please visit...**

[www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/apprentice-school/rorymacdonald](http://www.justgiving.com/campaigns/charity/apprentice-school/rorymacdonald)



### BRS Welcomes New Head of Ofsted

**We were delighted to welcome the new head of Ofsted, Amanda Spielman, to the British Racing School, and allow her to see a less traditional, more practical type of learning and to demonstrate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment that takes place here.**

Amanda was accompanied by Paul Brooker the Regional Director for East of England and Matt Vaughan a Senior HMI. The group were shown to the yard where students from course 308 and 309a were pulling out for their first riding session of the day.

Once all 17 students were on their mounts and radio communication channels had been checked, the strings left the yard in their course groups to participate in a ridden lesson. Course 308, taught by Yard Manager, Julie Lingham, and accompanied by Instructor Alison Harper, headed to the 7 furlong straight gallop where the group could shadow students in the minibus at speeds of almost 30mph.



### Student Graduates: Lorcan & Connor Murtagh

We are pleased to share good news stories of past students who have overcome setbacks to achieve their dreams in racing. Connor Murtagh who completed our 4 week intensive Foundation Course in July 2016 recently had his first ride and first winner aboard his Father's horse Symbolic Star at Newcastle. He followed up this win with another two days later for his boss Richard Fahey at Southwell. Not only is this an amazing feat to ride two winners in three rides, but the talented teenager has overcome three major heart surgery operations – his last just six months ago. Connor's brother Lorcan too has overcome injury in the form of a broken leg – due to his dedication, he is now a conditional jockey getting regular rides and at the time of writing has 11 wins to his name and numerous placings. Lorcan also completed the Foundation course in July 2015. Good luck to both riders as their careers develop further.

**Pictured: Connor Murtagh with his family after his win aboard Symbolic Star. (Photo courtesy of Grossick Photography)**



## Staff Profiles: Ian Howell & Alison Harper – Yard Instructors



### What do you enjoy the most about working at the BRS?

The thing I enjoy most about working at the BRS is the rewarding feeling when students complete their courses, it's the best feeling ever!

**Past Experience:** Ian worked in the racing industry for 34 years which led to a few race rides over jumps without major success. He was noted for riding problem horses in and around Newmarket for many years and specialising in riding hard pullers, then in 1996 this role led to Ian being approached by Godolphin to become a work rider for their difficult horses.

In the latter years he worked for Godolphin and was in charge of building up and running the Hydrotherapy unit both in the U.K and in Dubai during the winter months which involved swimming the horses and using the Seawalker and equine spa's etc.

Ian's passion is for health and fitness which led to working for the BHA at the Racing Centre on leaving Godolphin, which consisted of promoting health amongst the stable staff working within the racing industry.



### What do you enjoy the most about the BRS?

Helping the student to progress in their career journeys and also seeing past students in their careers and further study beyond the foundation award.

**Past Experience:** Alison was on 'Course 1' at the BRS and the first ever graduate to ride in a race and also get a winner. Following her studies; she was an apprentice at Jeremy Hindley's for 5 years.

Her riding took her to seasons in Miami, Norway, Australia and Italy where she picked up a good collection of winners and then she went on to be Apprentice to Robert Williams. In total Alison had around 2000 rides with 100 winners to her name.

In 1999 Alison joined the Italian Racing School as an Instructor where they would have around 15 students attending a 10 month course to become Jockeys at a time. When Alison and her family decided the time was right they moved back to England where she spent a season as James Fanshawe's Assistant and then went on to run Marco Botti's satellite yard.

Her next move was to the BRS as a Yard Instructor where she has been for a year.

## 13<sup>th</sup> Century Joust Training at the BRS

The British Racing School has been welcoming some unusual weekend guests recently into the outdoor school. Spanish, Italian and Frisian warhorses, carrying armoured knights, have been charging against each other with lances and steel swords. These horses and riders are from Historic Equitation, providers of displays of jousting and also classical horsemanship, the noble origin of dressage practised at the time when the horse racing heritage of Newmarket was being founded. In normal jousts there is a barrier running between the horses called a tilt rail, but the new joust will take place without this and the large outdoor school at the BRS is the perfect venue for training for this exciting 13<sup>th</sup> Century event.

*'Historic Equitation' jousting practice in the BRS outdoor school.*



## New Arrivals in the BRS Family



Many congratulations to Clare Kingston our Operations Manager and her husband Joe on the birth of their twin boys Finn and Ren!



For back issues of the Newsletter and information visit The British Racing School website: [www.brs.org.uk](http://www.brs.org.uk)  
Address: Snailwell Road, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7NU  
Telephone: 01638 665103 Fax: 01638 560929  
E-mail: [enquiries@brs.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@brs.org.uk)