









GEORGE'S COLUMN

If anyone thinks I support Sunday racing they are either deluded or live on the moon. I don't support Sunday racing; I don't like Sunday racing and I don't much care for the way it has been reported (Stable Staff Chief Executive supports Sunday racing) which is a very unfair and was a misleading headline in the Racing Post.

The article was more balanced but the social media trolls and retweets don't read anything more than a headline. The coverage, live on Racing TV sees me clearly state that the staff don't want any Sunday racing, let alone six more meetings. I acknowledge and accept that Sunday racing is with us, but that is a world away from supporting it. I accept there is a war in the middle east, that doesn't mean I support it!

So, the logical question is, if I don't support it and the staff don't support it, why do we have these six additional meetings between January and March. The answer is simple enough, NARS doesn't sanction race meetings, the BHA does that. NARS doesn't make entries, trainers do. NARS doesn't host race meetings, racecourses do that.



When this was first proposed by the RCA (Racecourse Association) they wanted thirty additional Sunday meetings, both the NTF (Trainers Federation) and NARS opposed and eventually it was withered down to a trial of six meetings. NARS negotiated on the condition that the staff would get an additional payment of £150 per groom, maximum of two grooms per runner.





The alternative was to remain opposed, but the reality was that with ten different representatives on the Commercial Committee and with eight in favour, it would have got the support it needed even with the NTF and NARS opposed to it.

The decision was put to the NARS Executive Committee who had a difficult decision to make (I do not have a vote on the NARS Executive, my job is to guide and advise, provide information, and carry out their instructions). The committee was faced with either rejecting a proposal that would still go ahead or try to get the best deal for the staff possible.

The decision was the Executives to take as they represent the staff, there is a page on how to get elected to the Executive within this newsletter. Some staff have questioned why they weren't directly consulted, every paper on this subject as provided the BHA was marked private and confidential. The NTF, NARS, PJA (Jockeys Association), ROA (Owners Association) and TBA (Breeders Association), all had to consult through their elected boards, and not their entire membership.

The reason Sunday racing is so a despised is because for too many staff in racing it remains

their only day off in two weeks, that is what is not supported or accepted. It should be acknowledged that more and more trainers are embracing modern working practices with evening stables rotated on and off, others are trying different working practices. However, the majority are still working in the same way I did when I started in 1985 as an apprentice. During the negotiations with the National Trainers Federation, we have consistently submitted proposals for more time off for staff, be that a full day off or evening stables. That has been rejected every time by the NTF. It should be understood the NTF as an organisation fully understands our requests, but their board, made up of trainers reject our proposals every time, and then wonder why staff are leaving and fewer are joining. Why would anyone starting employment in 2023 accept a job that required you to work 13 out of 14 mornings per fortnight and getting just one full day off every two weeks? There are lots of industries that work round the year, petrol stations, supermarkets, pubs etc, but the difference is those employees get two clear days off a week. That is what we need to work on, the '40 hour' working week helped, but if it doesn't allow for a full day off or sufficient evenings off rota, then it isn't doing what it was designed to do.



This isn't the first time I have used this headline, and it isn't the first time I have urged the staff working in racing to take an active part in the running of their association. I have previously touched on the role of the Executive Committee in my column, but I will elaborate on what it entails in this article.

The Executive committee is the decision-making body within NARS. Contrary to popular belief, I do not make unilateral decisions on NARS policy. I am responsible for the day to day running of the association and it is my job to develop strategy and policy, manage the accounts (which are independently audited every year) the Executive Committee, the regional committees, and the Racecourse Inspectors Program represent the association on the various committees, twenty six at last count.

The Executive Committee takes guidance and information from me, but I don't have a say or vote on any decisions, only the Executive Committee can make decisions. Therefore, it is a responsible role, and you are open to criticism from your own members when they don't like a decision, however, many in racing were of the opinion that I alone make these decisions. That simply isn't correct.

The Executive is up for re-election every two years and their term runs up to 22nd August 2024. There will be an 8-week window prior to the 22nd of August for the members to put themselves forward for election to the EC. The members will be alerted firstly by this newsletter, closer to the date, the nominations will be published on our website and via dotdigital which is an email service we use to communicate with every single member who has an email.

Every employer must take the employees details down and register you on the stable employee register, providing the employer (or secretary) has your email address and not one that might be their business address you will receive an email from us, as you already do on occasions. The only concern I have here is the email address might not be correct, for instance, if you are working for Joe Bloggs racing, your employer might register your name and email as office@joebloggsracing, so your employer gets your email and not you! If you are not sure it is best to email us, admin@naors.co.uk providing us with your correct email.

There are 17 seats on the Executive committee. 15 general seats, 1 for women and 1 for BAME members. You register your interest in standing for the Executive and in the event the nominations exceed the total amount of seats available, there will be an election for those who wish to stand on the EC. If so you would be asked to provide a headshot and a statement (no more than 300 words) saying why you should be on the EC; this is so the members have some information on each candidate to help them make their choice. In the event of an election, a firm called CIVICA will be employed to manage the process. CIVICA specialises in handling and processing elections for local councils, boroughs and trade unions. NARS will only inform the members of the election and how to stand, after that everything is managed by CIVICA, including the results.

I wish all of the members who wish to stand for the Executive Committee next year the very best of luck.

George McGrath

JOIN OUR RACECOURSE INSPECTORS TEAM

RACECOURSE RATINGS.

JUDGED BY RACING STAFF, FOR RACING STAFF.

Every year since 2018 we have inspected racecourse facilities from a staff and equine perspective. The results from the first year proved what we all knew, apart from a handful of racecourses, most of the staff facilities were very poor, and that's being nice!

Once we published our first annual report we saw significant improvements, and year on year, we have continued to campaign to get racecourses to improve their canteens, day facilities and overnight accommodation, as well as the stable yard. We had to stop our inspections during Covid and for a few months once racing began, because it all looked so different with canteens shut and no spectators etc.

However, we are back with a bang thanks to the RCI team, which is made up of ten members, all of whom work in racing, the team is listed below.

We will be publishing our ratings for 2023 early in 2024, then we will send our NARS Racecourse Ratings to the printers for publication. A copy goes to every racecourse and the Racing Post who have always published our report.

There is now an opportunity for two more racing staff to join our team of RCIs. We are light on National Hunt staff and would very much welcome anyone from a jumping yard to join our team. Ideally an RCI is allocated six racecourses which they inspect twice annually. We pay £83 per report, you can do a report when at the racecourse, or in your own time if you prefer. We provide you with an iPad with pre-loaded questions for your report, a lanyard, summer jacket, tee-shirts and a winter jacket. We would love you to join our team, please apply to kevinparsons@naors.co.uk for further information.

Racecourse Inspectors and their courses.



TRACK TALK

YORK RACECOURSE

by Greg Davis

I may be just too young to remember the first race meeting at the Knavesmire in 1731, and although I've heard the anecdotes from Newmarket veterans who travelled to York on the train with horses in the not-too-distant past, one thing is for sure, the York Executive have not stood around twiddling their thumbs in the meantime.

As a stable lad, a Godolphin horsebox driver, and more recently a NARS representative, I have visited York many times with a variety of horses. There's always a sense of anticipation when visiting York, both for the racecourse and the grandeur and history of the city.

In my youth, we would share dormitory accommodation, it was the norm, at York and many other tracks.

Fast forward into the current era, and we see a dynamic, forward thinking management team at York, led by Chief Executive and Clerk of the Course William Derby, systematically developing and improving all aspects of the Racecourse.

I urge you to click on the link from the York website to see the "Behind the Scenes" videos highlighting the key staff, their roles and the superb facilities.

www.yorkracecourse.co.uk/behind-the-scenes.html

In one clip, Stables Manager Leanne Asprey, outlines the stable yard infrastructure, super modern wash down systems, loading ramps, overnight and day stabling for runners worldwide.

The modernization and upgrading of the accommodation at York Racecourse has been incredible. Stableside is now a luxury hotel style accommodation facility that is used year-round both for racing staff and commercially for visitors to York.

William, Anthea Leigh (Racing Manger & Raceday Clerk of the Course) and the whole team, are tirelessly working to raise the standard of excellence throughout, always looking at what can be done better and more sustainably.

Racing staff at York Racecourse feel valued and welcomed. The catering in Stableside is on a different level to anything we receive elsewhere, and all the racecourse staff are very friendly and cheerful. I always leave York feeling like I've had a good experience and looking forward to returning. Bravo. Bring on York 2024!



EQUESTRIAN CROSS INDUSTRY

Equestrian Cross Industry Concussion Symposium

Cheltenham, October 27th 2023

Julia Bennet NARS

Over 100 people attended this inaugural event, each one representing their own equestrian sport or organisation. This included people from the Pony Club, Master of Fox Hounds Association, British carriage driving, Polo Cross, British Dressage, Polo, British Showjumping, and Pony Racing to name a few

We listened to talks from industry leaders on the problems surrounding concussion awareness across all equestrian sports but more relevant to us. concussions that happen in the vards where no medical support is immediately available. It was really good to hear Martin Dwyer and Tabitha Worsley offer their support to racing staff and acknowledge that there are instances where racing staff are not stood down when they most likely should have been. They discussed that whilst strict guidelines are in place for jockey's following a fall or concussion, a rider on the gallops at home could suffer the exact same injury and be expected to ride out two more lots and then go racing. Nobody in their right mind would believe that that is the correct protocol but it is happening at the moment. We need to come together as a workforce and learn to recognise the symptoms of concussion in ourselves and our work colleagues and also learn how to respond to it. In a similar way that as a workforce we have taken on board our need to have mental health first aiders in yards, we need to ensure we are trained up on concussion awareness too. There is an excellent course on the Racing 2 Learn platform that I would urge you all to take a look at. It would be great to see this becoming mandatory training in all vards.

The UK Government says:

- RECOGNISE the signs of concussion:
- REMOVE anyone suspected of being concussed immediately;
- REST for 24 48 hours:
- RETURN safely to daily activity, education/work and, ultimately, sport.

Listening to other equestrian sports leaders, thankfully racing is in a very fortunate position and is streets ahead of other sports largely due to the huge infrastructure across racing that is the envy of others.

Alice Fox Pitt hosted the event and is well placed to understand the aftermath of head injuries as many of you will know; her husband William suffered a catastrophic head injury that left him in a coma for

several weeks following a fall at an event in France in 2015. Incredibly he survived and recovered but not everyone is quite so lucky. I found an article written about William and his post accident quest to ride at the Rio Olympics in 2016. It describes him as a "f*^king lunatic" whilst also implying that he was pretty awesome as he described in detail jumping fences with double vision, or occasionally no vision. Thankfully the world has changed and the majority of people no longer think that attitude is awesome. Alice touched on the support she received that was badly needed for all friends and family of someone who is recovering from a concussion as it can be a bewildering place to find oneself. It's pretty straightforward to help someone managing a broken limb as it is clear what damage has been sustained and what tasks will be challenging. Head injuries and concussions manifest themselves in many different ways that are not always obvious to non medical professionals.

Whilst our employers have a legal duty of care for their employees, we have a social duty of care towards our work colleagues. It isn't clever or heroic to continue working immediately following a concussion; it is dangerous. You are far more likely to suffer further injury if you continue working following a concussion and you are also more likely to put others in danger too. Additionally there is medical evidence across multiple sports that repeat concussions will lead to more permanent brain damage for which there is no cure.

In 2001 I was bucked off and kicked in the head. I suffered a skull fracture, a brain contusion, my jaw was broken high up on one side and snapped off on the other. Incredibly, I suffered all that damage without losing consciousness, a commonly missed scenario when assessing a concussion patient; most people are in fact not knocked unconscious when they suffer a concussion. I remember lying in the field and seeing blood dripping down beside my eye and thinking "shit I think I've really hurt myself." With the ignorance of youth on my side, a living to earn and rent to pay, I managed to convince the hospital that I was fine to go home and they duly discharged me. It was ten days later after a few anxious visits to A & E that I received my diagnosis. At the time, I wasn't trying to be clever; I just knew that I had to be OK because I could not afford to stop working. Thankfully our members are covered by RIABS who will cover the wages of someone who is signed off with concussion and it is hoped that workers will be encouraged to take this option rather than soldier on and hope for the best.

You've only got one head, make sure you look after it. For further reading;

https://www.britishequestrian.org.uk/assets/ EXTRA_Docs/BEF_concussion_guidance.pdf



A MESSAGE TO RACING STAFF FROM THE BHA

We have asked NARS to include this communication in its newsletter to let you know about some of the steps we will be taking to help ensure that everyone working in British racing feels safe and protected.

BHA will publish an updated Safeguarding and Human Welfare Strategy in due course which can be found on its website, as well as on the NARS website.

The strategy sets out how we intend to make sure racing is a great place to work – promoting the safety and wellbeing of participants and insisting on the highest standards of behaviour. This builds on the work we've been doing in recent years to support racing's workforce.

We are contacting you about this because we want you to be aware of the information below and why it is important for everyone involved in our sport.

Why this is important

Everyone in British racing should be treated with dignity and respect - and feel confident and supported in raising and reporting any instances of concern.

There are many parts of the culture in British racing about which we should feel very proud. We are a sport built on the shared values of camaraderie and respect, and we know the lengths that people go to protect, support and care for each other particularly in training yards.

But evidence collected over several years also shows some elements which are concerning, most notably a rise in the number of allegations relating to abusive behaviour, bullying and sexual misconduct. This includes some serious cases of sexual assault.

Alongside this, independent research into the experiences of women and girls in our industry [LINK], which will also be published tomorrow, found that more work is needed to improve working practices and behaviour, suggesting that:

- Sexual harassment and gender stereotypes exist within racing and can remain unchallenged or accepted as 'banter'.
- Attitudes towards pregnancy and motherhood can be an obstacle to career development, especially in more horse-facing roles.
- Some young women have felt the need to leave the industry because they don't believe they belong or will have the opportunity to reach their potential.

Please note that none of this is particular to one specific group or part of the industry. That's why we are contacting all participants to let you know about what we are doing to work with everyone to tackle it.

We are aware that many of you may never have experienced or witnessed conduct which causes any concerns and are rightly proud of the tight-knit community in the sport.

However, while we may not personally be aware of examples of harassment, discrimination, or exclusion, that doesn't mean they don't exist. In addition, views on what is acceptable conduct in society have changed over recent years.

The evidence we will be publishing this week shows that we must take this seriously. This is not an issue that is unique to racing. Other sports and society more generally face many of the same challenges. But it is our collective duty to do all we can to address them in our industry.

The actions we are taking.

The sport has worked together in recent years to modernise working practices and strengthen reporting lines, with a view to encouraging people to come forward if they have any concerns - and know that they will be taken seriously and treated with respect.

We have also introduced a dedicated safeguarding function at the BHA and an industry-backed Code of Conduct.

The publication of the Safeguarding and Human Welfare Strategy will build on our work to date, with specific actions around:

- Education and raising awareness, to help increase understanding of key issues like bullying and sexual harassment.
- Further improving reporting lines and how cases are managed, so that complaints are dealt with more efficiently, in a timely and sensitive manner and people have full confidence in the process.
- Seeking ongoing engagement with and feedback from racing's workforce

How you can help

We have seen the same in many other sports and industries. It is important that we tackle this issue head on, in public, if we are to bring about any change.

This is not about talking down our great sport. If we acknowledge that society faces an issue and that we as a sport want to play our part to address it, we believe this will be seen as a positive step.

The strategy has been fully endorsed by British racing's leaders, but for it to succeed, we need your help and support.

We can all commit to the highest standards and ensure that we do not tolerate anything that falls below what's expected. We also need to create the environment where people are given confidence to speak out.

If anyone, anywhere in the industry is subject to or witnesses poor conduct, please don't hesitate to report it. It may be that you're more comfortable speaking to someone at NARS in the first instance. But if not, you can contact the BHA directly at respect@britishhorseracing.com or by calling the confidential reporting service, RaceWISE on 08000 852 580.

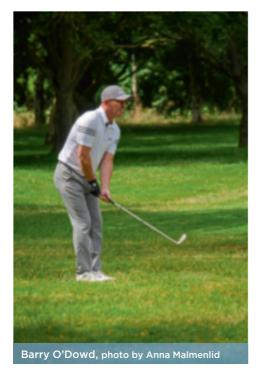
The success of our sport depends on the people like you who make it possible, and a happy and healthy workforce is essential to British racing's prosperous and long-term future.

Thank you in advance for your support as we seek to ensure our industry is a safe, respectful and enjoyable environment for all.

If you have any questions, please contact: respect@britishhorseracing.com.











NARS GOLF SERIES

Once again, we held our annual golfing series. generously sponsored by Morrish Solicitors, The Jockey Club and NKT Financial Services, a huge thanks to each of them for making this happen and keeping cost down for staff to take part in. The three qualifiers based around the country, seeing the top finishers from each reaching the final at The Warwickshire.

The first at West Berks in the South with thirty-six golfers taking part, and it was Jack Channon taking the spoils scoring forty-five points playing off a twenty-four handicap. Aaron Rid (M Bastard) followed in on second with Paul Francis (J Gosden) taking third place.

The next qualifier was in Newmarket, a total of forty-two players took to the tee to fight out for the bragging rights. It was Barry O'Dowd (J Gosden) who led the way, playing off a twenty-two handicap and scoring forty-one points. Second place went to Kieran Fallon (C Appleby) and third place Nick Van Eeden (C Appleby).

Our final qualifier was at Darrington Golf Course, an opportunity for the Northen staff to take part, with just twenty-three golfers taking part, it disappointingly saw just five golfers from the North take part. It was however Chris Durham (C Appleby) who took the trophy home, scoring forty-six points playing off an eighteen handicap. Second place went to Eddie Cuthbert (Godolphin) and third place was Ben Tillett (Farrier).

On to the Finals Day at The Warwickshire and the Chris 'Yorkie' Conway Memorial trophy to play for saw the forty players who had qualified or been offered a space on the day battle it out. And with some very good and competitive golf played on the day it was Richard Conway who took home the trophy, an emotional moment with it being the trophy in memory of his father.

It was very well deserved with some excellent golf played by Richard throughout the year in our competitions, having finished 4th in the South qualifier and 5th in the Northern one.

Second place went to Cieran Fallon (jockey) and third place to Chris Durham (C Appleby).

Pos So	outh	Pos	Midlands	Pos	North
1st Ja	ack Channon	1st	Barry O'Dowd	1st	Chris Durham
2nd A	aron Rid	2nd	Kieran Fallon	2nd	Eddie Cuthbert
3rd Pa	aul Francis	3rd	Nick Van Eeden	3rd	Ben Tillett
4th N	lick Bishop	4th	Danny Vrolyk	4th	David Allan
Ri	lichard Conway	5th	Saleem Golam	5th	Richard Conway
Ri	tikki Morse		Marc Halford	6th	Jack Hart
То	om Pirie		Dylan Hogan		Jimmy Thompson
8th R	ay Yule	8th	Eddie Cuthbert	8th	Ben Corke
9th Sa	am Davis		Cieran Fallon		Sam Davis
10th G	Gary Milligan		David Mcleod		Pete McCulloch
B .			Sam Davis		Rab McKellar

Warwickshire Final Results

	kshire Final			
Pos	Score	H'cap		
1st	36	7	Richard Conway	Jockey Club Estates
2nd	36	10	Cieren Fallon	Jockey
3rd	33	11	Chris Durham	C Appleby
4th	32	17	Paul Francis	J Gosden
	32	9	Gary Milligan	S bin Suroor
6th	31	15	Rikki Morse	Tattersalls
7th	30	8	David Allan	Jockey
	30	9	Nick Bishop	N Henderson
9th	29	14	Martin Bosley	C Cox
	29	18	Saleem Golam	C Appleby
	29	11	Shane Quinlan	V Williams
	29	11	Peter Hawkins	B Meehan
13th	28	8	Tom Pirie	C Cox
	28	17	Sam Warren	RACE
	28	12	Matt Ennis	C Appleby
16th	27	17	Wayne Dunkley	Tattersalls
	27	8	Marc Halford	C Appleby
	27	11	Pete McCulloch	Freelance
	27	17	Rab McKellar	Cheveley Park Stud
	27	11	Kieran Fallon	C Appleby
	27	12	Robbie Fitzpatrick	C Appleby
22nd	26	11	George McGrath	NARS
	26	5	Ben Corke	A Balding
24th	25	8	Alan Southworth	Godolphin
	25	7	Nick Van Eeden	C Appleby
26th	24	18	Sam Davis	R Varian
	24	10	Ciaran Jones	R Charlton
	24	13	Richard Cosgrave	H Whittington
29th	23	8	Aaron Rid	M Bastard
30th	22	18	Ross Carson	J Fielden
31st	21	10	Sam Garcia	J Ferguson
	21	9	David Egan	Jockey
33rd	20	14	Eddie Cuthbert	Godolphin
	20	15	Kevin Skelton	A Brittain
35th	19	14	Ben Tillett	Farrier
36th	18	15	Pat Leech	Retired
	18	17	Jimmy Thompson	R Varian
38th	17	18	Dan Kindell	Morrish Solicitors
	17	17	David McLeod	BBA
40th	10	16	James Halliday	Racetech
4001	10	10	James Hamaay	Nacetecii



CALLING MIDDLEHAM AND MALTON

We have regional committees in Epsom, Newmarket, and Lambourn, but we would like to see the North better represented. If this is something you would be interested in, then please contact the office on admin@naors.co.uk.

■ Why set up a regional committee?

The benefit of having a regional committee is to give staff in that region a say in the running of NARS as well as an opportunity to highlight issues that may be relevant just to that location. You can also discuss National issues, such as pay and conditions.

■ Who can join a regional committee?

Any employee registered as working for a licenced trainer can join the committee.

How many people should be on a committee?

Ideally, a committee would have between four and six members. This isn't a hard and fast rule so it can be more than six but it becomes difficult to manage with more than that number. Anyone else can attend as an observer, as long as they work in racing.

How often should the committee meet?

Ideally the committee could meet every two months, but the meetings can be called as often as the committee think necessary.

■ Who can call a meeting?

The committee should appoint a chairperson and the chairperson is responsible for calling the meeting and setting out an agenda.

What should the committee discuss?

Absolutely anything racing and job related.

Where would the committee meet?

The committee can choose any location they think best, this could be a local club, pub, restaurant etc

Do the committee members get paid for their time?

Yes. We pay a flat fee of £83 per meeting for each committee member, we will also meet the costs of the meeting, so if the committee must hire a room or pay for food and drinks then NARS will cover these costs. We need itemised receipts for any expenses incurred.

What does NARS want in return?

All we ask is that one person takes notes of the meeting including who has attended (both committee members and observers). We can help with an agenda but its up to the committee as to how independent they want to be.

Will my employer know if I am on a committee?

That is up to the individual themselves, they do not have to tell their employer as they meet outside of working hours. NARS will not share their names unless they give us permission to do so.

Are there other committees in the Country?

Yes, there is one in Newmarket, Lambourn and Epsom.

NARS EDUCATION **PROGRAMME**



A YEAR OF SUCCESS WHILST ALSO HOPING TO SECURE ITS FUTURE

The Racing Foundation are awaiting the strategy from the industry peoples board to help centralise funding for these types of projects, for better longer-term sustainability, outreach, and outcomes.

We are hoping that we become a part of that, and that we can further develop the project, education for staff across the industry, but most importantly have a longerterm plan rather than looking for funding year on year.

With much of the learning now becoming easier online, many staff are taking part on the various modules on Racing2learn, the industry online learning platform. This is where we have a few modules, all having staff take part on each week, completing relevant modules in Maths, English, Mentoring, Leadership & Team Skills, as well as a secretary module on there.

This has seen 263 staff members take part on these courses in the last year, 93 more than we had planned for, with many of those completing more than one.

Face to face learning has taken a back seat across a few of the subjects for now, English, Maths and ICT (computer courses) have been less needed/wanted, but also still available online via us with West Suffolk College.

However, our Equine Photography Course was once again a great success, so much so that following our end of course exhibition we have seen some of the staff gain work off the back of it, one now working for an owner, photographing his horses across the country at the many different yards where his horses are situated.

Another from the course is set to work alongside racecourse photographer John Hoy. One gained work at Burghley Horse Trials and some other horse events, two have also taken pictures for us at our NARS golf days.

We currently have two photography courses running, with much interest from those already having taken part to develop further, we are running an intermediate course, offered to those who have already completed our original course. As well as the usual beginner one.

In total the project had 306 staff members take part on our different courses in the last year.

That's 20% more planned outcomes, for just 70% of the funding planned. A great success for the year!



