



Issue Seven

April 2023



IN THE NEWS



Record Attendance for the Seventh International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses

In front of a record number of attendees, the seventh International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR) took place on 14 February in Melbourne, Australia, and provided an onsite visit to a Thoroughbred aftercare facility as well as a traditional conference covering a wide variety of aftercare topics.

“Our racing authorities are active in regulation, supporting Thoroughbred class events, engaging with the equestrian

community, providing a safety net if required and championing an industry culture that is moral and kind,” said Dr. Eliot Forbes, Chair of the IFAR Conference Committee “Racing, in every corner of the world, is here for the horses. With IFAR, we want to set the agenda for what’s next in aftercare: better science, better regulation, and better awareness of our responsibilities.”

The IFAR conference was held in conjunction with the 39th Asian Racing Conference (ARC), which is organized by the Asian Racing Federation (ARF).

“In addition to the success that’s been achieved, there’s still more to do in the aftercare space,” said Di Arbuthnot, the chair of IFAR. “Wherever your horse ends up, there should be a life after racing. I hope when we meet again, IFAR can showcase more countries that follow an aftercare plan, and we can share more videos of success stories.”

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IN THE NEWS

Replay Videos Available from the Seventh IFAR Conference

The day started with a visit to Spring Creek Equine, which is located in the Yarra Valley, approximately 50 kilometers from Melbourne. Founders Samantha Cesnik and Chris Height are RV Acknowledged Retrainers and are also involved in RV's RESET (Racehorse Evaluation Support Education and Training) Program.

"We were really excited to have so many wonderful delegates from all over the world here," said Cesnik. "We are passionate about racehorse rehoming, retraining, and life after racing. To see so many people from all over the world take an interest in that is really special. To be able to showcase what we do is a really unique opportunity. Horses live for a long time and race for a short time. A very small investment in time and money in their future gives them stability for a long-term life after racing and a healthy career."

Participants then returned to Melbourne for the afternoon portion of the IFAR conference. Tim Gilbert, the host of *Racing Dreams*, delivered the forum's keynote address.

"The story of equine welfare needs to be told so much better," said Gilbert. "You need to win the hearts and minds of the public. Facts need to be put next to great story telling. You have to get those stories out there, and the story telling needs to be rich and potent."

The [PowerPoint presentations and video replays](#) from the seventh International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses are available on the IFAR website. The videos can also be found on [IFAR's YouTube](#) page. In addition to the speaker videos, a conference highlight



reel as well as the second episode of the IFAR video magazine, which premiered during the forum, have also been published.

"The speaker videos are an important addition to the wealth of materials from prior IFAR conferences," said Arbuthnot. "This ever-growing body of work provides advice and guidance on a wide variety of aftercare topics. Additionally, for those unable to attend the conference, the highlight reel will give you a sense of being there, while the video magazine continues to showcase the good work being done in aftercare around the world."

IFAR received assistance from the Japan Racing Association (JRA), which has entered into a multi-year sponsorship agreement to support the activities of the organization.

"It is important not only to have these conferences but to make the information provided by our expert speakers available for future reference," said Forbes. "As the record attendance at the Melbourne forum demonstrates, racing is very aware of its responsibility to our equine athletes. IFAR strives to showcase best practices, raise awareness, and provide practical advice to enhance aftercare initiatives."

Prior to the virtual conference series in 2022 and 2021, IFAR had previously been held in conjunction with the 38th ARC in Cape Town, South Africa, in February 2020; the European & Mediterranean Horseracing Federation's General Assembly in Oslo, Norway, in May 2019; the 37th ARC in Seoul, South Korea, in May 2018; and the Pan American Conference in Washington, D.C., in May 2017.

Welcome to the seventh edition of Global Aftercare

Introduction by IFAR Chair Di Arbuthnot

Following my return from the immensely successful hosting of the International Forum for Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR) in conjunction with the Asian Racing Conference (ARC) in Melbourne, I know I can say on behalf of the steering group how proud we all are of the work that IFAR has been able to achieve since the inception in 2016.

The journey has been around the hosting of seven conferences and the development of new aftercare programmes around the world. This would not have been possible without the hard work of the group, the support of the conference organisers, and the sponsorship of the JRA.

The event in Melbourne comprised of an on-site visit to an equestrian facility, Spring Creek Equine, and an in-person conference held at the Crown Conference Centre. The morning visit was enhanced by the sunshine, the professionalism of the team at Spring Creek, and their passion for the Thoroughbred. It was truly an enjoyable and educational experience for everyone who attended.

To be able to watch the retraining and progress of these horses at various levels jumping as well as under flat work helped many of the attendees focus on the variety of presentations during the afternoon session in Melbourne.

The forum was moderated by Caroline Searcy, a long-time supporter of the work of IFAR, while media personality Tim Gilbert served as the keynote speaker. Formal presentations were delivered by Andrew McLean on training for success on and off the track, Seungho Ryu on the Thoroughbred temperament and the importance of transitional training, and Kim Duffy reporting on the success of the aftercare programme in Queensland.

The industry panel looked at new models for industry cooperation, while the equestrian panel, which had representatives from Japan, the UAE, Hong Kong, and Australia, talked about realising the athletic potential of the Thoroughbred.

The number of countries registering was 24 and 225 delegates registered; this was a huge increase in numbers from the last ARC in Cape Town. I hope this shows those of us involved with IFAR that more racing countries are looking at developing an aftercare programme or are looking at ways to improve the plans they already have in place.



Work will shortly be underway to plan the IFAR session at the next ARC, which will take place in Japan during August 2024.

As I write this, Animal Aid activists are on the television talking about banning jump racing and saying that the racing industry does not look after horses when their racing days are over.

Of course, many countries have an active aftercare programme, and thankfully many others are looking to start or do more, but we must not be complacent and shout loudly to message the many marvellous aftercare stories.

I am very much looking forward to a trip to Warsaw for the European and Mediterranean Horseracing Federation conference next month. This gives me a chance to catch up with members of these racing organisations to see how they are getting on and offer help where I can with ideas for a life after racing.

Planning is also underway for the next video magazine focusing on the many ways to use Thoroughbreds.

I hope you enjoy the content of this newsletter which demonstrates the versatility of the Thoroughbred.

News from around the globe



The Retired Racehorse Project (RRP) Adds Former Broodmare Division to Makeover

The Retired Racehorse Project (RRP) announced in November 2022 the addition of a Former Broodmare Division to the popular Thoroughbred Makeover retraining competition. The traditional Retiring Racehorse division of the Makeover welcomes horses in their first year of retraining for a new riding sport after racing and awards over \$100,000 in prize money. The Former Broodmare Division will welcome broodmares in all ten disciplines competing alongside the retiring racehorses for their own pot of \$10,000. Claiborne Farm, one of the United States' leading breeders, will be the title sponsor of the division.

"We've had calls to serve this special population of Thoroughbred for a while now, and we're pleased to make a contribution towards finding viable channels into next careers for broodmares," said RRP executive director Kirsten Green. "The RRP applauds Claiborne Farm for recognizing the critical need to support all facets of aftercare in order to most effectively serve the horses."

The RRP's Thoroughbred Makeover has made a measurable impact on Thoroughbred aftercare, with prices for horses retiring off the track steadily increasing each year since the event began and more first-time participants turning to the breed as their next partner for sport or recreation. Recognizing that retiring broodmares are an underserved population within the Thoroughbred industry, the RRP has added the Former Broodmare division to develop and drive demand for this unique group of horses and help more former broodmares transition to third careers.

The Former Broodmare division is also made possible by a grant from the ASPCA. Eligible broodmares will have produced a foal or have been bred in the 2021 breeding season or after, as reported by The Jockey Club, and need to have had one lifetime start or published work. They may not have had prior shows or competitions. To learn more about the division, eligibility requirements, and the Thoroughbred Makeover, please visit TheRRP.org.



Treo Eile Partners with the Irish Pony Club

We are very excited to partner with the Irish Pony Club to reward the participation of Thoroughbreds across the different disciplines. Our inaugural sponsorship at the Eventing Championships last year saw Killinick member Lilymai Berry and the ex point-to-pointer Skylanna Scatman win the Into Intermediate class and our Training Bursary. More and more we are coming across members riding racehorses that have transitioned to a second career within the Irish Pony Club, which highlights their versatility and suitability. We would like to wish all Irish Pony Club members a safe and successful summer season ahead:



IPC Dressage:

July 26-28 – IPC Festival – Overall Highest Placed Thoroughbred in the pure dressage section – €100 Training Bursary

IPC Eventing:

Championship Qualifiers League – final details to follow – Training Bursaries 1st-3rd, (Winning rosette at each qualifier)

August 26-27 Eventing Championships – Overall Highest Placed Thoroughbred – €100 Training Bursary

IPC Showjumping:

July 26-28 – IPC Festival – Overall Highest Placed Thoroughbred in the pure Showjumping section – €100 Training Bursary

September 3 – IPC Showjumping Classic Final – Overall Highest Placed Thoroughbred – €100 Training Bursary



New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing (NZTR) – Welfare Strategy Update

NZTR's focus and commitment to Thoroughbred welfare has been further reinforced by the publication of the 2022 NZTR Thoroughbred Welfare Strategy Update. This document details NZTR's commitment to continually improving and upholding high standards of welfare for our Thoroughbreds and has been prepared under the review of the NZTR Board, and in consultation with industry stakeholders and animal welfare interested representatives that attended the 2022 Thoroughbred Welfare Forum.

This updated Thoroughbred welfare strategy defines initiatives and objectives that will be undertaken in the two years to July 2024, and is structured in the following parts:

- Welfare initiatives relating to horses in breeding, racing, and training.
- Rehoming and showcasing Thoroughbreds in their 'second careers' including engaging with the community of owners of 'off the track Thoroughbreds'.
- Data gathering and reporting, including the comprehensive traceability of Thoroughbreds in breeding and racing.

NZTR recognises the progress of scientific knowledge and the evolution of public thought are key factors in the endurance of Thoroughbred racing's Social Licence. Another critical focus is therefore developing and maintaining increasingly detailed and transparent reports and communications for stakeholders, government and public. This requires progressive development of additional key welfare related metrics that will enable future goal setting and monitoring.

NZTR is not accountable alone in the successful execution of this strategy. This commitment is also conferred on breeders, trainers, jockeys, owners and all other participants involved in Thoroughbred training, racing and breeding, each of whom must share that same aspiration, or on a more base level, must proactively meet all traceability obligations under the Rules of Racing, and also meet or exceed the expectations set in the NZTR Thoroughbred Welfare Guidelines.

NZTR does however hold itself accountable to its participants and to public to ensure that its Thoroughbred Welfare strategy is planned and consulted upon with thoughtfulness and undertaken with good effect.

NZTR's accountability, on behalf of the industry and participants, extends to ensuring that relevant government agencies and animal welfare organisations remain appropriately and regularly apprised of its initiatives and by providing accurate relevant data.



RoR announces 'Horses For Courses' equine ambassador programme

Retraining of Racehorses (RoR) is delighted to announce an exciting new initiative to showcase the care given and opportunities open to former racehorses once their racing days come to an end. The RoR Horses For Courses programme will launch with The Jockey Club and a number of independent racecourses announcing their official equine ambassadors who will be appearing at selected racedays during the upcoming racing season.

In total, five Jockey Club racecourses, namely Aintree, Carlisle, Exeter, Haydock Park and Sandown Park along with Ascot, Chester, Goodwood and Wetherby have already sourced their equine ambassadors with first appearances on course set for this Spring. Market Rasen, Musselburgh, Plumpton and Wincanton racecourses have also confirmed their participation and will announce their ambassadors later in the year.

Throughout the season, each course will use their communications channels to actively promote their ambassador's story and the horse will serve as an important link between the racecourse and their local community. As well as giving racegoers the chance to interact more closely with horses, the ambassadors will provide the opportunity for courses to educate racegoers about racehorses and their lives after racing.



Kick Up launched in Australia

Last October, Kick Up launched to speak on behalf of the racing industry. It was started by the team at Kick Collective.

As its [website](#) explains:

We are a group of young, passionate, racing industry enthusiasts – and most of us did not grow up in the industry.

Horse racing has an incredible army of ambassadors, so we distill accurate, fact-checked information pulled in from validated sources and present it palatably so you can use it. We want the racing industry network to be armed with content that fights back against untruths.

We invite you to steal our stuff – plagiarise with pride. The conversation is currently dominated by the negative perspectives projected by activists and we need to shift the balance of dialogue.

The aim of Kick Up is to present accurate horse racing information on controversial topics in an engaging, educational and interesting format.

We are providing insight to the smart, digitally savvy youngster who is open-minded enough to consider a balanced perspective before taking a position.

Scientific papers have provided a lot of the background information utilised in our content. Facts and figures are drawn from racing authority publications where possible and additional depth sought through veterinary journals.

Ultimately, we work everyday with people who live their lives breeding, training and helping Thoroughbreds be at their best.



40th Asian Racing Conference to be held in Japan in 2024

The 40th Asian Racing Conference (ARC) will be held in its inaugural host country in 2024 with the Japan Racing Association (JRA), in conjunction with the Asian Racing Federation (ARF), to stage the conference in Sapporo on the island of Hokkaido.

The host for the 2024 event was announced during the 39th ARC in Melbourne, Australia, with Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges, ARF Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Hong Kong Jockey Club, describing the return to Japan as especially appropriate.

“The 40th ARC is a milestone for the ARF-convened conferences, which have evolved to be the leading global conference in the racing world and fittingly it returns for the fifth time to Japan where the first ARC was held in Tokyo in 1960,” Engelbrecht-Bresges said.

The first seed of the ARF was planted in 1960 with the Tokyo conference led by Count Todamasa Sakai, then President of the JRA, and Mr U Chit Khine, of the Rangoon Turf Club.

“Since the very first conference was held in 1960, the ARCs have developed into an important international forum for the sharing of ideas between some of the most influential leaders in global racing and sport,” Engelbrecht-Bresges said.

Masayuki Goto, President and CEO of the JRA, said: “On behalf of the Japanese racing industry, I would like to extend my deep thanks to the ARF for selecting Sapporo as the host of the next Conference.

“It is fitting that the next conference will be held on the island of Hokkaido, as horses and horse culture have played a major role in Hokkaido's history of pioneering the land.”

Hokkaido is Japan's largest thoroughbred breeding area, with more than 95% of its thoroughbreds competing on the international stage.



Stand Up For Racing Introduced in Europe



This April, the Stand Up For Racing initiative was introduced in Europe. Similar to Kick Up in Australia, Stand Up For Racing aims to stand up for the racing and breeding industry in Europe and correct false information about horse racing. The group, [which is on Twitter](#), developed momentum around the lead up to the Grand National in England.

Those behind Stand Up For Racing are asking European racing and breeding industry organisations to send in statistics and graphics as they work to flood social media with accurate figures surrounding horse racing.

It is also calling on industry members to invite the public into yards and farms to see how Thoroughbreds are treated.

The group is also recruiting horse racing industry members to join its media representative team. The latest announced additions to the group include renowned broadcaster Nick Luck as well as jockeys Patrick Mullins and Tom Scudamore.

Aftercare stories

Aftercare conversations encompass many dimensions, however some of the most compelling and heartwarming stories emanate from passionate people using retired Thoroughbreds to assist people in need.

IFAR forums have provided a worldwide platform for organisations to share their stories and remind us of the remarkable versatility and gentleness of the Thoroughbred. Please see the below stories from around the globe.

Florida Won, Canada

Woodbine Communications

Amy Bostock is always in a sunshine state of mind when she speaks of Florida Won. Bred in Kentucky by Gainesway, the handsome son of Birdstone was consigned by his breeder to the 2012 Keeneland September Yearling Sale where he sold for \$385,000. Over a 45-race career, Florida Won went hoof-to-hoof with top-notch competition, coming out on top 10 times and earning status as a multiple graded stakes winner.

After his final race, Florida Won was donated to LongRun Thoroughbred Retirement Society by owner Domenic DiLalla of Centennial Farms (Niagara) and trainer Ross Armata Jr., and then took up residence at the horse retirement and adoption organization's sprawling 100-acre Ontario property, home to over 50 retired Thoroughbreds. The woman who now calls him her own laughs at how the eye-catching chestnut lifetime earner of \$585,071 came into her life.

"It was a total fluke, really," recalled Bostock. "I don't think he was even on the LongRun website when I first went out to their farm. I was originally helping a friend of mine look for a horse for her riding school. Then I started thinking, 'If I'm out there looking anyway, I might as well look for one too.'"

Florida Won (now known as Felix) didn't exactly go out of his way to wow Bostock the first time they met.

"It sounds super corny, but it really was love at first sight," she recalled. "I didn't even ride him before we brought him home. He was nursing an abscess when I went to see him, and he just free lunged around the arena, looking like he didn't care about impressing me that much."

Still, there was something that drew Bostock to the horse. So much so, in fact, she decided to file adoption papers, even if Florida Won wasn't exactly what she was originally looking for. Now, rain or shine, summer or winter, Bostock and Florida Won are inseparable.

Delta Blues, Japan

Delta Blues, winner of the 2006 Melbourne Cup, retired from racing in 2009 to begin a second career as a showjumper at the Northern Horse Park in Hokkaido, Japan.

In November 2021, at the age of 20, he retired from all his duties and moved to Old Friends Japan in Hiruzen, Okayama, to live in retirement.

He is 22 this year and loves to run around the pastures with his friends.



"We actually just set our goal of going to the LongRun fundraising horse show in October and do their flat division. He's sound and his legs are clean, but there's no jumping in our future. I had no goals for him when I brought him home. I wanted a pleasure horse to ride around the farm, maybe putter around in the ring, and if I was really brave, maybe we'd go to a horse show."



IFAR'S Vision

- All horses are treated in a humane and ethical manner every day of their life.
- All suitable horses find a home after racing.
- Every industry participant, administrator, owner and breeder recognises and embraces their responsibility towards Thoroughbred aftercare.
- All racing jurisdictions have effective and well-funded aftercare, traceability and education programmes in place.
- Thoroughbreds are valued and sought-after athletes by the equestrian community.
- IFAR leads a highly-engaged and global community of horse professionals advocating for Thoroughbred aftercare.



Dates for the Diary 2023

Australia

6th-7th May - Rockhampton Equestrian Group Showjumping Autumn Classic

3rd-4th November - QLD Barrel Racing Association Champions OTT Feature Jackpot

France

26th-27th August - Retraining Racehorses Weekend, Deauville

9th September - Racehorse Retraining Day and Champions Parade, Chantilly

12th November - Champions Parade, Auteuil

Ireland

3rd September - Tattersalls Ireland / Treo Eile Showing Pathway Series Final, Royal Meath Show, Meath

Japan

16 December - Retired Racehorse Cup, sponsored by the Japan Racing Association

United Kingdom

10th May - Welsh Regional Dressage Championships, Monmouthshire

17th-18th June - Northern Regional Dressage Championships, Lancashire

7th July - RoR BE Novice Eventing Championship

22nd-26th August - The Jockey Club RoR National Championships, Aintree

United States

5th-8th October - T.I.P. Championships at Stable View, Aiken, South Carolina

10th-14th October - Retired Racehorse Project Thoroughbred Makeover, Lexington, Kentucky

11th-14th October - T.I.P. Western & Central Dressage Championships, Lexington, Kentucky

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Below you will find links to the websites of IFAR Steering Group Members



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How IFAR can support you

IFAR comprises members with significant knowledge and expertise and is ready to assist those seeking help. This assistance may be general advice or guidance or it may be tailored to specific issues relating to the welfare of Thoroughbred racehorses and how to develop aftercare provision in their countries, taking into account cultural differences.