



Issue 11

May 2025



IN THE NEWS

Ninth IFAR Held in Lexington, Kentucky

The ninth IFAR conference took place from April 24-26 in Lexington, Kentucky, and welcomed guests from 13 countries representing more than 65 organizations.

The first day of the three-day event featured a traditional conference at Spy Coast Farm's Equine Education Center, while the rest of IFAR 2025

included on-site visits to four aftercare organizations in the area as well as a social outing to the Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event.

The video replays from IFAR 2025 are now available on the [IFAR website](https://www.ifar.org/). The videos can also be found on [IFAR's YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqJ8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K8K).

"We are pleased to make the video replays available for those who were unable to attend the latest IFAR conference," said IFAR Chair Dr. Eliot Forbes. "This year's conference featured an exceptional lineup—Olympians, veterinarians, aftercare pioneers, researchers, and leaders from

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Welcome to the 11th edition of Global Aftercare

Introduction by IFAR Chair Dr. Eliot Forbes

What does the future of racing look like if we put the horse at the centre of every decision? At IFAR 2025, that question wasn't just posed — it was explored, challenged, and brought to life.

In the last week of April this year, I had the privilege and honour, as Chair of the International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses, to open the 2025 IFAR Conference in Lexington, Kentucky. It was a full circle moment.

Lexington was where our journey began in 2015 — when Godolphin first brought together a global cohort of aftercare advocates. Ten years on, we returned to the Bluegrass not just to reflect on how far we've come, but to ask ourselves where we go next.

The 2025 conference was our first stand-alone IFAR event, and the response was both humbling and energising. We welcomed over 130 delegates from 13 countries, each bringing their own perspectives, challenges, and innovations in aftercare and welfare. Together, we explored not only the science and systems of equine welfare, but also the values that drive change.

Our conference wasn't just a single-day session of presentations. It was an immersive, experience-rich programme designed to showcase aftercare in context. Delegates participated in four site visits and a highlight tour of the Kentucky Three-Day Event — an exemplar of Thoroughbred versatility, athleticism, and post-racing potential.

Our keynote speaker, Boyd Martin, stood as a living testament to the value and ability of the Thoroughbred beyond the track. As an Olympian and lifelong advocate for the breed, Boyd's reflections were both pragmatic and inspiring. He reminded us that the life of a racehorse doesn't end at retirement — it evolves.

The conversations we hosted in Lexington were grounded in a shared reality: racing is facing existential challenges, and many of them centre around welfare and trust.

The social license to operate — once assumed — must now be actively earned and constantly reaffirmed. Incidents on race day, whip use, traceability gaps, and inadequate retirement pathways are no longer seen as operational issues. They're ethical litmus tests in the eyes of the public. And they shape how — or even whether — our sport is accepted by the communities in



which we operate. But there's good news: these challenges are solvable.

Innovations in technology, welfare science, and behavioural psychology are giving us new tools and new truths. There is increasing recognition of the critical importance of traceability, and with sophisticated data technologies and an enhanced resolve across the industry, we are beginning to strengthen both the accuracy and scope of how we track horses through their entire lives. Wearables are reducing catastrophic injury risk. Positive reinforcement training is boosting both equine welfare and performance. We're in an age where the science is not only available — it's actionable.

So where do we go from here? Here is my wish — and my challenge — for every racing jurisdiction around the world: That we become truly horse-centred.

I'm not talking about PR campaigns or bronze statues. I'm talking about a mindset and operating model where the horse is the lens through which every decision is made — from breeding to retirement, from regulation to retraining.

Imagine if we built our industry from the ground up with equine welfare science at its core.

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Welcome to the 11th edition of Global Aftercare

What would change?

- Our breeding priorities would broaden to give greater consideration to traits like soundness, adaptability and temperament — alongside speed and pedigree.
- Our training environments would be shaped with the behavioural and emotional needs of the horse in mind. We would see more emphasis on space, social interaction, and enrichment — allowing horses to express natural behaviours safely and positively.
- Our rules of racing would reflect societal expectations. We'd have track designs that reduce injury risk and whip rules informed by both science and ethics.
- Most critically, our business model would account for the entire life of the horse, not just its commercial peak.

Welfare today is no longer just about avoiding harm. It's about enabling horses to thrive. That means ensuring freedom, connection and stimulation. Horses perform better when their psychological and emotional needs are met. When we provide routine, enrichment, and positive reinforcement, we don't just get happier horses — we get better athletes. Horses who recover faster, cope better under pressure, and stay sounder longer. We also build a more empathetic, skilled, and resilient workforce — one that's deeply connected to the animals in their care.

And this doesn't end when horses leave the track. Aftercare isn't just about finding a new job or home. It's about a continuum of care, informed by data and grounded in responsibility. Equally, we must recognise that lasting change in racing doesn't come from telling people what to do. It comes from sharing what works.

Human behaviour change is central to how we drive reform. We can't tow the industry forward like a barge. We must light the way like a lighthouse — to quote Coach George Raveling — by illuminating what's possible and making people want to walk the path themselves.

That's what IFAR strives to do. We connect, we convene, we share, and we lead — always with respect for local contexts, but without compromising on the universal principle of horse-first thinking.

Some still view aftercare as someone else's job. But there is no ethical way to justify that position. Owners are the economic beneficiaries of the racing phase of a horse's life. With that benefit comes a moral obligation:

to prepare, support, and transition that horse into a new vocation when it's time to leave the track.

Some argue that deepening our commitment to aftercare is costly. That it adds complexity. But the truth is, embedding aftercare and welfare into the heart of the industry isn't just an ethical imperative—it's a strategic one.

A horse-centred model protects our social license. It attracts new participants and fans. It enhances the longevity and marketability of the Thoroughbred well beyond its racing years.

It also aligns with the rising expectations of society, regulators, and sponsors—who increasingly demand authentic, transparent, and measurable welfare commitments.

Aftercare is an investment in the future of our sport.

In my vision of a horse-centred industry:

- Every horse is traceable — from birth to final chapter.
- Every stakeholder is accountable — from breeder to trainer to owner.
- Every aftercare system is embedded in racing's business model, not bolted on.
- Every decision-maker — in the boardroom, the training yard, the grandstand and the regulator's office — considers the horse first.

And the role of IFAR will continue to be central — as a catalyst, a convener, and a champion for the values that define a more sustainable, ethical and trusted racing industry. As more jurisdictions adopt these principles, our collective voice will only grow stronger.

The 2025 IFAR Conference reminded me of what's possible when committed people come together with a shared purpose.

We don't need perfect systems. We need people with courage and conviction. We don't need all the answers today. We need the curiosity and humility to keep asking better questions.

Let this be the year we shift from conversation to action. Let aftercare become not just a checkbox on our plans, but a cornerstone of who we are.

Because in the end, a horse-centred industry isn't idealistic. It's a decision.

And it starts with us.

IN THE NEWS

IFAR 2025 cont.

across the racing and equestrian community—whose insights aren't just relevant, but essential, for anyone committed to the responsible aftercare of racehorses.

“Nearly a decade on, we are proud — proud of our progress, our global partnerships, our shared voice — but this is just the start. With regards to aftercare, we're not just reacting anymore. We're driving change with leadership. The science of welfare — learning behavior, enrichment, the pursuit of positive welfare outcomes — is now part of the everyday conversation on welfare. Happy horses make better athletes. Better partners. Better ambassadors for our sport.”

The all-day conference, which focused on aftercare organizations, featured six panels addressing important topics in aftercare with experts from around the world. Aftercare professional Jen Roytz served as the moderator, while four-time Olympian Boyd Martin was the keynote speaker.

Martin, who delivered the keynote address via video, began riding at a young age in his native country of Australia. He made his debut at the CCI5*-L with a win at the 2003 Australian International Three-Day Event riding the Thoroughbred gelding True Blue Toozac.

In 2007, Martin moved to the United States to further his career as an eventing professional, serving as the assistant trainer to Olympian Phillip Dutton for two years before starting his own business. He began riding for the U.S. in 2009 and is a four-time Olympian, having represented the U.S. in London 2012, Rio de Janeiro 2016, Tokyo 2020, and Paris 2024. Martin's mount in Rio was Blackfoot Mystery, an off-the-track Thoroughbred, and he has partnered with other such notable Thoroughbreds as Neville Bardos and Ying Yang Yo.

“For me, Thoroughbreds are the king of all breeds,” said Martin. “They are ideal for so many purposes after they finish their racing careers. I have had so many wonderful Thoroughbreds that have changed



Olympian Boyd Martin was the keynote speaker

my career. It is our duty as horse lovers to make sure that we give Thoroughbreds a second chance of having a second career. This topic is so essential.”

The first panel was Sustainable Business Practices in Aftercare, and it examined running sustainable and effective not-for-profits, including succession planning and preparedness for emergencies. Erin Halliwell, the executive director of Thoroughbred Charities of America (TCA), and John Nicholson, the president and chief executive officer of Old Friends, took part.

The next panel, Engaging Equestrian Communities, covered strengthening connections between Thoroughbred aftercare and the equestrian world across disciplines and regions. It featured Lindsay Greenway, membership and handicap director of the United States Polo Association (USPA); Dr. Kenji Korosue, chief manager of the Equestrian Affairs Division of the Equine Department of the Japan Racing Association (JRA); and Natasha Rose, executive manager, Equestrian Affairs Projects of the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC). The panel was sponsored by Brook Ledge Horse Transportation.

Challenges in Aftercare: On-Track to Second Career completed the morning sessions by addressing challenges horses face transitioning from racing to second careers. Speakers included Tom Persechino, senior director of Equine Welfare for the American

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IFAR 2025 cont.

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA); Kenki Sato, Japanese Olympian and Buddhist monk; Dr. Bryan Walldridge, professor at Mississippi State University and veterinarian for Old Friends; and Ashley Watts, owner Liftoff Equestrian, which houses and trains horses for Canter Kentucky. The panel was sponsored by Equiscope Performance.

The afternoon sessions began with Post-Racing Veterinary Evaluations, which explored best practices in post-racing assessments to identify horses suited for second careers, including those with less visible vulnerabilities. Anna Ford, the Thoroughbred Program director for New Vocations Racehorse Adoption, and Dr. David Catlow, managing director of Retraining of Racehorses (RoR), were joined by veterinarians Dr. Jeff Berk and Dr. Valerie Hyde. Rood & Riddle Equine Hospital sponsored the panel.

The next panel, Raising Awareness through Events, took a deep look at leveraging horse shows and other events to raise funds and awareness for Thoroughbred aftercare globally. Panelists included Caoimhe Doherty, co-founder and director of Treo Eile; Kim Duffy, Racing Queensland's senior animal care manager; and Kirsten Green, executive director of the Retired Racehorse Project (RRP). It was sponsored by Brook Ledge Horse Transportation.

The conference's final panel, Connections Through Thoroughbreds, focused on sourcing and preparing horses for therapeutic services. Stacie Clark Rogers, operations consultant for the Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance (TAA); Dan "Boone" McCanna, co-founder of Down the Stretch Ranch; Niki Purdom of the Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation (TRF);

Frank Taylor of Taylor Made Farm and Stable Recovery; and Ellie Toothaker, equine manager for Central Kentucky Riding for Hope (CKRH), took part. The panel was sponsored by the TAA.

Biographies for all speakers are available [HERE](#).

Following the conclusion of the panels, IFAR delegates departed for New Vocations to attend its Open Barn & BBQ event. The next day, three additional aftercare organizations hosted IFAR: Central Kentucky Riding for Hope (CKRH), Old Friends, the Secretariat Center. The final day featured a social gathering during the cross-country portion of the Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event, one of the world's premier equestrian 5* events. Artist, a New Zealand-bred Thoroughbred ridden by Monica Spencer, finished in the Top 10, as did all three of Martin's horses.

The Japan Racing Association (JRA), which has entered into a multi-year sponsorship agreement to support the activities of IFAR, was the presenting sponsor of the 2025 IFAR Conference. The Jockey Club (US) and the NTA were lunch sponsors, ReRun was the breakfast sponsor, and Godolphin was the transportation sponsor.

Additionally, Godolphin hosted IFAR attendees who arrived early at its Jonabell Farm the day before the conference began. It also partnered with Keeneland to provide a chance to see morning training and attend the races at the track. Dr. Stuart Brown, Keeneland's Equine Safety Director, met with IFAR attendees during the morning tour.

IFAR has previously conducted forums in conjunction with the 40th Asian Racing Conference (ARC) in Sapporo, Japan in August 2024; the 39th ARC in Melbourne, Australia in February 2023; 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. Virtual conferences were held in 2021 and 2022.



IN THE NEWS

IFAR 2025 in Pictures



Six panels covered important topics in aftercare



More than 65 organizations from 13 countries took part



A demonstration at the
New Vocations Open Barn & BBQ



Therapeutic Thoroughbreds
at Central Kentucky Riding for Hope



Rain couldn't dampen spirits at the Secretariat Center



Old Friends founder Michael Blown greeting IFAR attendees

News from around the globe



Equineline Reveals New OTTB Profile to Promote Thoroughbreds in Second Careers

The Jockey Club announced in March its new Off-Track Thoroughbred Profile, the first equineline.com report centered on Thoroughbreds in their second careers.

The report, 90T, provides information customized to off-track Thoroughbred owners and those shopping for a Thoroughbred. Based on feedback received from off-track Thoroughbred owners, the report contains a bespoke summary of the horse's race record, including comments, owners, and trainers for each race; the last 10 workouts; a list of the horse's siblings; auction history; and, if applicable, the subject mare's produce record.

To encourage the promotion of Thoroughbreds in their second career, this report is shareable through SMS messaging and email and across multiple platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and X. Equineline product 90T is available for purchase for any registered Thoroughbred at equineline.com.

The report will be available for free to all off-track Thoroughbreds with a T.I.P. number as a benefit to those participating in The Jockey Club Thoroughbred Incentive Program (T.I.P.). OTTB Profiles for existing T.I.P. numbers can be accessed through the associated account; new T.I.P. numbers will have access to the associated OTTB Profile in the account 30 days after application.



"Helping Thoroughbreds thrive in a second career and communicating their value and talent outside of the industry should be a priority of everyone in our sport," said Kristin Werner, deputy general counsel and director of Industry Initiatives, The Jockey Club. "We want the OTTB Profile to be the ultimate information source for equestrians seeking their next Thoroughbred, and we hope owners of the nearly 40,000 Thoroughbreds registered in the T.I.P. system will enjoy this information and share it with others."

The OTTB Profile provides off-track Thoroughbred owners the opportunity to view race videos for an additional charge. An Equineline account with a payment method on file is required to purchase race video views.



Thoroughbred Talent on show at Stepping Stones to Success League

This spring, Treo Eile was once again proud to support the Stepping Stones to Success League at Wexford Equestrian, a renowned hub for young horse development and performance competition. This exciting league offered a valuable platform for retrained racehorses to shine in a professional and competitive environment, reinforcing Treo Eile's mission to showcase the potential of Thoroughbreds beyond the track.

The league spanned five qualifiers and a final, welcoming a range of talented combinations. Among them, Cian McGee and his exceptional Thoroughbred partner Carlton Gardens, a son of Sea the Stars, stood out with an undeniable dominance, winning four of the five qualifiers and securing the overall League Champion title.

Emily Murphy's consistent performances across multiple Treo Eile-supported Thoroughbred Leagues have not gone unnoticed. In addition to her strong runner-up finish at Wexford Equestrian, Emily also secured a top-three overall placing in the Western Region Starter Series, and was the overall winner of the Killossery Arena Eventing League earlier this year. At Killossery,

she also claimed the Highest-Placed Open Rider Award, further showcasing her connection and skill with retrained racehorses.

Events like these demonstrate just how adaptable and athletic the Thoroughbred breed is across multiple equestrian disciplines. For more updates, league highlights, and upcoming events, visit www.treoeile.com.





Clinics a cornerstone of New Zealand welfare strategy

Courtesy of New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing

The “Know Your Thoroughbred” education clinics are an integral part of New Zealand Thoroughbred Racing’s (NZTR) welfare strategy.

Funded by the industry’s 1% Welfare Levy to provide a safe and supportive environment for riders who have opted for a thoroughbred as their sport horse to build on their horsemanship, knowledge and partnership with their horse. The clinics also provide education on the racing and breeding industry and the many career opportunities it presents.

“Our team has put a lot of planning and resources into the development of these clinics,” NZTR’s head of Welfare and Sustainability, Justine Sclater said. “The vision is to provide a supportive environment for riders to come and learn more about their Thoroughbred. As well as ridden coaching, lessons in a variety of disciplines and handling advice, riders get the opportunity to learn the back story of each horse – their pedigree, race performance and so on. This is an aspect that has proven popular with each horse’s new owner.

“Thoroughbreds make up a significant part of the equestrian community and the clinics have a real positive effect as they make the transition from racehorse to sport horse. We’re trying to incentivise Thoroughbred ownership in the equestrian community and part of that is supporting riders to lay good foundations early on in their partnership with their horse.”

A key contributor to the success of each clinic is the person standing in the arena offering guidance. Each clinic is hosted by professional horse people who have extensive experience working with thoroughbreds and nurturing their talent. They are generally held over two days providing a multiday outing for the horses and riders to experience a new environment.

NZTR have recently recruited international eventers Donna and Elise Edwards-Smith as Welfare Ambassadors and the well-known duo have been a driving force behind the Know Your Thoroughbred clinics.



Anne Hjorth (Owner) on Longchamp – Royal Agricultural Show Overall Series Winner at Horse of the Year 2025. Pictured with (L-R) Kristin Boyce (NZTR), Robyn Rogers (Breeder), Justine Sclater (NZTR), and Tracey Oakes (NZTR). Anne attended a Know Your Thoroughbred Clinic with Longchamp.

“We were keen on doing these clinics because we love the versatility of thoroughbreds,” Donna Edwards-Smith told Sport Nations’s Rural Roundup. “We absolutely love the idea of moving Thoroughbreds forward and getting them out in the competitive world after racing. They learn so fast, and for us personally, in our sport of eventing we thrive on quick-footed and quick-twitch horses, which is essentially the Thoroughbred. They are forward-thinking, willing horses.”

This season there have been clinics held in the Waikato, Manawatu, Canterbury and Southland regions and by the end of June over 200 individual horse and rider combinations would have attended. This season there have been clinics held in the Waikato, Manawatu, Canterbury and Southland regions and by the end of June over 200 individual horse and rider combinations would have attended.

“Our clinics recognise the versatility of our Thoroughbreds,” Sclater explained. “Each one has a slightly different focus and they have covered eventing, showing, dressage, showjumping, and horsemanship. I think what makes them special is that riders get to explore their horse’s history and we’re onsite to help identify horses via microchip, talk about their breeding and fill in the gaps we can when it comes to the path a horse has taken to get to the present point. I think it really builds an appreciation for how wonderful thoroughbreds are and I enjoy hearing about riders connect with breeders, trainers or owners who are genuinely interested in hearing where the horse is today.”

Lana Korsten, an NZTR Acknowledged Retrainer under her LK Sporthorses banner, is one participant to make the most of the opportunity the Know Your Thoroughbred Clinic offers.

“I’ve always evented, though when I was younger and rode ponies they didn’t have the stamina or endurance on the cross-country,” Korsten said. “My first hack was a Thoroughbred, and since then, I’ve just kept with them. I find they are so willing, they will always try their best with anything and everything. I had a couple of really nice Thoroughbreds along the way including LK Super Deluxe, a gelding by Super Easy who I sold on. From there, I got in touch with trainers and started rehoming, then got on board with NZTR.

“The clinic I took part in was really good. I think out of all of the horses, I probably had the greenest one and it was a lot for him to take in, but he handled himself really well. Donna and Elise thought there was a lot of potential in the horse, which was really nice to hear, as he was one I picked out to produce and keep for myself. All of the horses there handled it really well, it was a very supportive environment and Donna and Elise have a lot of experience and knowledge. They were able to provide tips and feedback for every single horse, giving everyone something to walk away with and work on.”



Former IFAR Chair Announced as NEF Sir Colin Spedding Award Winner

In March, Di Arbuthnot, the former Chair of the International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR) and former Chief Executive of the charity Retraining of Racehorses (RoR), was announced as the winner of the Sir Colin Spedding Award at the National Equine Forum (NEF). The award was given in recognition of Di's dedication to racehorse welfare.

Through her leadership of the charity Retraining of Racehorses (RoR) for over 20 years, Di provided a pathway for Thoroughbreds to have a meaningful life after racing. Di went on to set up and chair IFAR. Due to Di's foresight, dedication and ability to persuade, thousands of racehorses have secured comfortable and fulfilling lives post training, and tens of thousands now face assured futures.

Di Arbuthnot said: "I am thrilled to receive this prestigious award, and I would like to thank the National Equine Forum. It was a privilege, 25 years ago, to become part of a charity that has helped many Thoroughbreds have another career.

"Bringing awareness of their adaptability and their successes has helped change the way those both



HRH The Princess Royal and Di Arbuthnot

inside and outside of the industry look at the life of a Thoroughbred. It would not have been possible without the commitment and foresight of the chairmen and trustees of RoR, particularly in those early days, as well as the dedication and hard work of a small team; I am delighted to accept this award on their behalf."



Retired Racehorse Project Celebrates Thoroughbreds at Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event

The Retired Racehorse Project (RRP) once again had a presence at the Defender Kentucky Three-Day Event on April 24-27 in Lexington, Kentucky, dovetailing with the IFAR 2025 Conference held the same week.

The competition at provided an excellent opportunity for the organization to showcase and celebrate Thoroughbreds on the international stage at one of the highest-profile equestrian sporting events of the year, and chronicled the scores and placings of the participating Thoroughbreds on its website. It also hosted educational opportunities throughout the week

Additionally, the RRP participated in the trade fair with its retail booth of logowear and accessories; shoppers also participated in the "We Love Thoroughbreds" banner and for a small donation, filled out a sticker to honor a special Thoroughbred in their lives. The banner was full by the end of the weekend!



Study Underway About Safety Nets to Support At-Risk Thoroughbreds in Australia

Are you a Thoroughbred owner, worker, racegoer or punter in Australia? Researchers at The University of Sydney are recruiting for a 15-20min online survey. The survey asks what you think about different options to support at-risk Thoroughbreds in Australia.

The survey is for you if:

- You're a Thoroughbred owner or
- You work with Thoroughbreds, or
- You've attended or bet on Thoroughbred races at least three times in the past 10 years.

Interested? You must be at least 18 years old and in Australia. If you participate, your identity is strictly confidential. You can opt-in to a follow-up interview to learn more about your survey responses.

Learn more [HERE](#).



Life After Racing Featuring Noame Ayad and Hell Boy Chatho

This interview was featured in the #RaceAndCare newsletter published by the French Federation of Horse Racing. Every two months, the newsletter shares updates and in-depth articles on equine welfare within the racing industry. Each edition includes a special feature highlighting the journey of a retired racehorse — a chance to spotlight the horses, their new careers, and the people who support their transition.

How do you learn to live with a retired Thoroughbred, especially one you didn't choose, and despite some preconceived ideas? Noame Ayad, 21, crossed paths with Hell Boy Chatho in 2021. Over the last three years, the duo have learned a lot and become inseparable.

Q: Can you tell us about your background with horses?

A: I started riding ponies when I was five years old, and I've never stopped since. I'm now 21. I had my first pony 11 years ago. She's a Connemara named Quality, and we're just a year apart in age. I have a fairly classic equestrian career and I'm passionate about ponies. I worked for a breeder of trotters and gallopers after my scientific baccalauréat, because I didn't want to study. I knew nothing about Thoroughbreds and didn't even know how to care for them. I learned everything: from breeding and foaling, to breaking in young horses. Then, in 2023, I set up my own sport pony farm. I chose to have another job alongside it because I want to take the time to find good homes for my foals. I also compete in amateur show jumping with Hell Boy Chatho, my retired Thoroughbred. We're now proud ambassadors of the #RaceAndCare program, which supports the racehorses welfare and their aftercare.

Q: Tell us about how you met?

A: Hell Boy Chatho only raced once. He wasn't devoid of quality and he didn't have any health problems either, but he just couldn't manage his effort. On the track, he would take the lead and pull away. His breeder-owner didn't want to insist and made the wise decision to stop his racing career. Hell Boy was 4 years old at the time. It was May 2021, and I was working for this gentleman, who decided to entrust Hell Boy to me. He spent two months in the meadow to relax, and then I started riding him in September. It was a real challenge for me! I was riding a small Selle Français, and I had some prejudices about racehorses. I thought they weren't made for sport, that they were delicate and complicated. In short, nothing was meant for us to meet.

Q: How did your relationship develop?

A: At first, I was afraid of him because he would tense up quickly when he didn't understand an exercise. He would pull the reins out of my hands and gallop across roads. But at the same time, he did everything he could to make me like him. I realized he was just overwhelmed by his emotions. I worked on his retraining throughout the winter of 2021, treating him like any other young show jumping horse. In 2022, we began competing in young horse circuits. He was perfect. It was the first time I had that many clear rounds with such a young horse in a single season. And above all, I felt safe. We even made it to the Fontainebleau Finals, coming out with a clear round. We had exceeded all our objectives!

Q: When did you become his owner?

A: Following his results, his owner decided to sell

him. I didn't think he'd get offers within two weeks. Hell Boy was about to leave, I was present for the vet check, and I left in tears. That same evening, I made a counteroffer to buy him. We grew up and trained together. I knew he needed someone who would be there for him every day. And that wasn't the life he would have had with the person who wanted to buy him.

Q: How did your adventure continue?

A: I set up my own sport pony breed business at home, and Hell Boy joined us. Unfortunately, his old demons resurfaced. In addition to the usual care provided by the vet, physiotherapist, and masseur, I called in several professionals from different fields: animal communication, bioresonance, and energy healing. I felt that Hell Boy's malaise was internal. I also decided to break my prejudices about where my horses lived by putting Hell Boy in a paddock with a friend. This change helped him release tension. He now has access to both a box stall and meadow, with unlimited hay. This lifestyle has completely transformed him!

Q: What has Hell Boy brought you?

A: He's completely changed my approach to horses. I've learned to explain things clearly, to treat each horse as an individual, and to celebrate even the smallest wins. Hell Boy pushes me to be the best version of myself because he can't handle rider errors. Today, we've established a routine and a lifestyle that suit him. He's gone from a horse that couldn't go out alone to one I can take to competitions in peace and quiet. I've had great experiences with many horses, but Hell Boy gives me so much and does everything he can to make me happy.

Q: What would you say to someone considering adopting a retired racehorse?

A: A lot of people ask me about retired horses. I always tell them they're amazing, but that the transition can take time. To talk about Thoroughbreds, which I know better than trotters, I would say that above all, they're sensitive and can be delicate. That's why I don't recommend placing them in the hands of beginners. It takes solid riding skills, knowledge, and/or being supported by professionals who really understand Thoroughbreds.



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 2025

Australia

21st June - OTTWA Encouragement Clinic

5th July - OTTWA Classic Clinic

19th July - OTTWA Training Day

France

29th May - Ambassadeur Lion d'Angers & JRCC Lyon

1st June - Ambassadeur Chantilly

21st June - JRCC Marseille & JRCC Compiègne

Ireland

20th July - AIRC Show Jumping Championships

17th August - AIRC Dressage Championships

Great Britain

24th May - RoR's Lincomb Camp

27th July - Burgham International Horse Trials

19th-25th August - RoR National Championships

7th September - RoR Racing to Cricket

United States

27th-31st August - American Eventing Championships

2nd-5th October - T.I.P. Championships

8th-11th October - Thoroughbred Makeover & National Symposium

Follow us on our social media platforms



Interested in becoming an IFAR Member or Supporter?

- Membership costs US\$2,000/year (additional contributions are welcomed)
- Includes an opportunity to participate on committees, when vacancies are available, as well as full voting and nomination rights and the opportunity to display IFAR's logo.
- Membership requests reviewed on a quarterly basis
- Those unable to contribute financially should consider becoming an IFAR Supporter, which is free (but does not include membership rights)
- Click [HERE](#) to access the membership application form and charter

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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.