



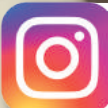
FORGE

FORGE IS THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH FARRIERS AND BLACKSMITHS ASSOCIATION



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Farriers appointed to FRC Council

Farriers elected to FRC Council
(three-year appointment)
Tom Smith FWCF GradDipELR
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Toby B. Daniels DipHE DipWCF
Derek T. Gardner AWCf

BFBA farrier on FRC council

Simon Moore FWCF
Daniel Harman AWCf GradDipELR

WCF farrier on FRC Council

Robin P. May AWCf

The January 2024 issue of
Forge Knowledge contains
the article:

● **Constructing and forge
brazing an aluminium shoe:
a step-by-step guide**
By Brad Greenham AWCf

● **Research round up** In this
issue the summary looks at the
effects of eggbar and suspensory
remedial shoes on the dynamics
of the fetlock joint and on stride
length, and compares them with the barefoot horse
or more commonly used open-heel shoes.



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**Contributions in the form of articles, reports, letters and photographs
are welcomed.**

President's address

Every year goes by and I always get asked by clients if I have any New Year's resolutions. Truth is I never end up sticking to them and by March I'm back to square one on 6 cups of tea or coffee a day and often needing my daily 4pm chocolate dose!!

However, we do all let this opportunity go by to give ourselves that chance to draw a line in the sand about certain things that are important to us. So, I have now decided to come up with some rules to help protect and safeguard myself and my health for 2024. Feel free to take some inspiration from them (OR can hold me to account if you see me relenting on any!!)

No bad payers: Life's too short to be continually chasing debt. I am fortunate to have an amazing bookkeeper that does my business debt collecting (so that way I can always be good cop!) but still we have certain clients that are continuously slow to pay. So, now we are asking for invoices to be paid up front. Now, they only need to check once: if they have paid for the appointment up front they get shod, if not they don't. They soon get the message and it's also a bit embarrassing when their horse is not able to be shod. Saves time and money!

Not tolerating rudeness: This can be from horses, clients or other professionals. A good friend of mine said years ago "Remember life is too short to drink bad wine or deal with rude horses or people". I nodded, but as I have got older I now understand what he meant. Farriery is one of the hardest things to do physically and mentally. With clients then reluctant to be there to help me out with rude horses, it is now something I am not willing to put my body or reputation on the line for. So, I'm just not doing them!

We also know those personality types that we don't get on with - studies show that within 2 seconds of meeting someone subconsciously we have decided if we like them! I now realise that sometimes whatever I do it won't please everyone. So I make the tactical decision that now, I will always set out my ground rules and objectives at the start. Sometimes it's best to step back when things aren't right for you. Whilst this may seem harsh (and financially it can be a loss), sometimes dealing with toxic or rude people can drag you down.

Value my health more: I am ring fencing my health. After 20 years of shoeing (thousands of horses and making thousands of shoes) I ache and some days it's a real struggle. I forever used to prioritise my clients over my doctor or dentist or physio appointments because I thought I 'needed to keep them happy'. Truth is, the only one to lose was me! I realise now that without my health and physical wellbeing there really isn't anything you can do. By not looking after yourself to fit that extra pair of shoes might seem ok, but the long term loss to you is significant.

Take time out for me: This is always a tricky one for farriers, as time off does take huge planning and effort before and after. In our ever increasing world of emails, WhatsApps and social media we never get to switch off from work and have time out. Farriers are problem solvers - if we added up how many questions a day we have to answer it would be frightening. No wonder we get burnt out! I have now

scheduled in regular days every month to either have time in the forge or time out with family and friends. It doesn't even have to be a total switch off - coming to FOCUS for the full weekend, or going to a convention abroad can get you your CPD points but also give you time away with friends to enjoy the job.

Social media: I have (like many of us) wasted too much time on social media and whilst it offers that short amount of escapism it can also lead to procrastination, as well being detrimental to our mental health. Everyone on social media is always winning, right? Not true!! It's a hugely powerful tool if used for the right reasons but it does throw up some daemons if left unchecked. It also gives everyone, regardless of IQ or qualification, a platform to shout on. We're all aware of the horrific trimming pages that spout utter rubbish, but also sometimes arguing with them not only increases their platform but also gives more petrol to their flame. It's also easy to get pulled into being angry, which can have consequences for us with our professional code of conduct. Used correctly it gives us all a window to showcase what we all do well, and why we are the best hoof care provider for our clients and their horses.

Be more positive: When a golfer has a bad play over a hole, sulking into the next three shots often won't help their game. Leaving the bad shot or score on the last hole is the only way to make sure it doesn't mess up the rest of their game. Sometimes it's easy to end up being more 'half-empty', as then anything falling short doesn't feel so bad. The truth is, however, we then become fixed and dour in our outlook and mindset. This then not only adversely affects ourselves and our clients but also our family and friends. It's hard to be positive when you are tired or things have gone wrong, but it's also easier to get over things and move forward when you can smile and shrug it off knowing that tomorrow is going to be a better day. Think healthy and positive - simply making that effort to smile and be happy does help me to leave the day's troubles behind, and not go home or to work with anything hanging over me.

So, that's me - what do we have in store for the BFBA? Last year we saw a monumental shift in the industry, with so much support for the BFBA Focus and it becoming the biggest Farriery event in the world.

This year, we have some new and exciting opportunities and projects in the pipeline. The EC and I are working hard to have our lease extended on the forge at Stoneleigh and are also looking at gaining our charity status, which will help the association (as well as its branches and members) out enormously. There are new branches opening, and many new projects coming soon! We also have a new editor for our Forge Magazine in Sarah Shephard, who you will see has already done an amazing job of this issue! Hopefully we will also see the apprentices in 44S be able to sit their EPA (End Point Assessment) and gain their qualification and entrance to the Register. We have also a new treasurer in Aaron Myall being elected at the end of last year, some vacancies come forward in the CPD committee and also spaces available on the Blacksmith Committee. If you would be interested and available to join in and help then please do let us know.

Take care, safe shoeing and good luck for 2024!

Ben

**Ben Benson, AWCF, Master Farrier, ATF
BFBA President**



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42nd International Team Horseshoeing Championships 2023

By Danny Bennett, Chief Steward

The International Farriery Competition was held on Friday 27th and Saturday 28th of October 2023. This year, the competition has relocated from the back of Hall 2 to the front, where the Focus event was being held on Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th October 2023.

With the Chief Steward of many years, Mark Watson being away this year and not being able to find a new replacement after 6 months of searching, it was left to myself to step up to the plate.

The "International" is something I am personally invested in and has been a part of my life for many years as a competitor and member of the BFBA craft committee. Having seen some of the great Chief Stewards over the years such as Mark Watson, Malcom Tribe and the Legend himself David Gulley, I knew I had very large boots to fill.

Preparation started many months before planning and preparing the huge logistical operation, which had to be executed during the morning before the competition once the venue had been built and completed before the afternoon open practice session commenced.



Load-in was prepped Tues/Wed before event by Jim Balfour (craft committee chairman), Brian Mullins and Byron Bennett. This meant that on Thursday Morning, the Purple Army could transport the equipment to the event venue via forklift and trailer. The forge was up and running before the 2pm practice start, which was an amazing effort by all taking part.

This year the open team competition was attended by 12 international teams and 8 apprentice teams. 2023 saw the return after many years to the inclusive competitors meeting held in the host hotel on the Thursday on the eve of the competition, where the workstation draws took place and the competitors and managers got to go through the rules, format and ask questions to this year's judges.

The event ran very smoothly, with much positive feedback from competitors and spectators alike. This year, the competition started on the Friday, the second day being the Saturday which was the first day of Focus.

There was then a "spare" day for competitors to enjoy the second day of Focus with the Prize Giving dinner being held on the Saturday evening. The judges this year were Ben Mangan (USA) and Andrew Casserly (ENG). James Hayter (ENG) was the apprentice judge.

Throughout the competition the top 4 teams of USA, Scotland, England and last year's winners Ireland, battled it out for the top spot with team USA getting the podium in class 1 Team Gas Forging.

This competition is about consistency across all 3 classes, and it was England taking the overall Championships. Closely behind them was Team USA, this year's runners up. Could 2024 be the year Team USA take the overall? It will be a long time coming and having watched their progression over the years it will be well earned.

The apprentice competition this year saw the most teams we have had to date. England took top honours with Shamus Mangan USA winning the individual competition

Moving forward to next year Mark Watson and myself will be co-Chief Stewarding the event which will allow us to share the load and bring further big improvement and progression to this already amazing competition.

One big improvement already planned for 2024 is that the competition will be live streamed online, so look out for details.

A huge congratulations to everyone who took part!

Thanks to the Purple Army:

The heart and soul of this competition is the Purple Army. To ensure the smooth running of the gas forging and the shoeing an army of volunteers is required, including, scoring team, Sweepers, Judges scribes, Specimen stewards, Fire Marshall, Equine Welfare Officer, Veterinary and not forgetting Jamie Hughes the fire lighter and translator extraordinaire.

The Purple Army has seen action at the International since 2015 and some members come and go but there has been many who have not missed a year. Next year we hope to award over 5 years' service with a BFBA Bronze medal. We are forever grateful for the time, effort, and enthusiasm.

Anyone wanting to join us for next year please contact Head Office.

Jed Hallam, Ruth Hallam, Helen Bennett, Nick Cooper, Che Broadly, Mark Humphres, Mark White, James Todd, Byron Bennett, Brian Mullins, Chris Johnson, Elle May-Buckland, Steffi Kersten, Siobhan Dillon, Greham Fleet, John Bolton, Jackie Hickman, Adam Bradley, Jamie Hughes, Steve Griffin, Matt Sole, Kirsty McGregor and Brian Saunders.



Results:

Apprentice Individual Champion

1st: Shamus Mangán, USA
 2nd: Billy Makin, England
 3rd: Ben McCredie, Scotland
 4th: Theo Williams, England
 5th: Wesley Auker, USA

Apprentice Team Champions

1st: Team England
 2nd: Team Scotland
 3rd: Team USA
 4th: Team Wales
 5th: Team Sweden

Apprentice Best Specimen Shoe

Ty Zehms, USA

Class 1 - International Team Gas Shoemaking

1st: Team USA
 2nd: Team Ireland
 3rd: Team England
 4th: Team Scotland
 5th: Team Wales

Class 2: International Team Horseshoeing

1st: Team England
 2nd: Team Scotland
 3rd: Team USA
 4th: Team Ireland
 5th: Team Wales

Class 2: Best Specimen Shoe

Steven Beane and Liam Collins, England

Class 2: Best Shod Foot

Matthew Randles, England

Class 2: Best Individual

Liam Collins, England

Class 2: Best Dressed Foot

Will O'Shaugnessy (Ireland), Matthew Randles (England)
 and George Rogerson (England)

Class 3: Best Specimen Shoe

Tom Petersen, USA

Class 3: Best Shod Foot

Grant Watt, Scotland

Class 3: International Team Horseshoeing

1st: Team Ireland
 2nd: Team England
 3rd: Team USA
 4th: Team Scotland
 5th: Team Wales

Class 3: Best Individual

Grant Watt, Scotland

Class 3: Best Dressed Foot

Daniel Jones, USA

Class 4: International Reserve Team Member

1st: Sawyer Spradling, USA
 2nd: David Lynch, Ireland
 3rd: Alexander Cyr, Canada
 4th: Lena Guggisberg, Switzerland
 5th: Tom Anderson, Wales

Best Overall Team Horseshoeing (Classes 2 and 3)

1st: Team England
 2nd: Team Scotland
 3rd: Team USA
 4th: Team Ireland
 5th: Team Wales

Best Overall Team Horseshoeing (Classes 2 and 3) - Best Shod Foot

Liam Collins

Overall Individual Championship (Classes 1, 2 and 3)

1st: Tom Petersen, USA
 2nd: Lewis Balfour, Scotland
 3rd: David Varini, Scotland
 4th: Paul Robinson, Ireland and Steven Beane, England

BFBA INTERNATIONAL TEAM HORSESHOEING CHAMPIONSHIP 2023

1st: Team England
 2nd: Team USA
 3rd: Team Ireland
 4th: Team Scotland
 5th: Team Wales

BEST DRESSED FOOT

Liam Collins, England and Daniel Jones, USA

BEST SHOD FOOT

Liam Collins, England

EFFA AGM 2023 Update

By Chris Linssner, EFFA Registrar

The annual EFFA AGM had finally come back to the UK. It had been twelve years since its last visit and it was a great chance for the BFBA to host the event and show their stuff.

The EFFA Board had been working with the BFBA EC all year and decided to give the delegates a longer weekend by adding it to the Farriers Focus and International competition.

The AGM normally starts with a social day where hosts can show off a bit of culture and heritage, and with Warwick on the doorstep we were spoilt for options. This social day is important as it's where the Board can chat with the delegates in facetime and get a real vibe about what is happening where. No matter how many zoom meetings we have, there is nothing like getting face to face with someone.

Abby Bunyard, the main BFBA representative for EFFA, had chosen the Leicester Hospital in Warwick and what a wonderfully historic building this is. Steeped in history and has been a home to servicemen for centuries, and we were shown around by two very humorous octogenarians who live within the hospital buildings.

What visit to England could be complete without a good romp around a castle - and where is there a finer castle than Warwick! As it was Halloween week there were special events running through the castle and grounds.

As a horse came past, thirty farriers bent to look at its hooves completely missing the headless horseman who was riding it around the grounds. I guess farriers will be farriers, wherever they're from!

There is also a working Trebuchet that was interesting if a little underwhelming. I was hoping they would fling something like a Fiat 500 but it turned out to be a metal ball on a parachute. Fascinating technology, though.



Judy and David Gully FWCF and Sandy and Miles Williamson-Noble.



David Gully FWCF and Miles Williamson-Noble, the two Hall of Fame nominees

At this year's AGM we had 44 delegates gathered from 20 associations and 15 countries and Ben Benson opened the meeting for the BFBA.

This year we have a change of Treasurer as Marianne Gulbrand from Denmark, who has been at the financial helm for nine years is seriously ill in hospital and has had to let the position go. The board and delegates wish her the best for a speedy recovery.

The registrar's report showed visits to three associations this year. The SHF of Sweden had a re-accreditation at the BYS school in Skara. The school is on the site of the Axvalla race track where trotters are raced three days a week. In Skara is the oldest veterinary school in Sweden and possibly Europe and it's well worth a visit if you are ever in the neighbourhood as there are some fascinating farriery and veterinary displays.

The second visit was to Poland Farriers Association at the Folwark Toporzysko school recently set up. There was a mock exam and full accreditation was achieved a month later.

Also having a Mock exam this year were the Slovenian Farriers Association at the Podkovska Akademija Slovenije, in the town of Gorica pri Slivnici near Ljubljana. Their exam is to be in November. It is an honour for me to be with these young associations helping them achieve something that we in the UK take for granted. There are always people involved who do an awful lot of work for no pay but with a large helping of enthusiasm. I salute you all.

Next year is a big catchup year for the accreditation Board with no less than five visits and one repeat visit.

We have a new secretary in the form of Mr Michael Knap from Sweden who has agreed to join the board. He is very open to questions so if you feel the need to talk to him, his email is in the front of the Forge magazine.



Ben Benson, BFBA president, David Gully, Miles Williamson-Noble and John Ravanelli, EFFA president.

For some years the suggestion of a new higher examination, The Master EuroFarrier (MEF) to be a natural step up from the Certified EuroFarrier (CEF) has been bantered about, and this will happen probably about the end of next year. Miles Williamson-Noble wrote the standards for this exam and it needs a team to go over the finer details to make it a working proposition. A new set of examiners will be needed to examine at a higher level.

A couple of years ago our illustrious UK registrar with his "whistle blowing policy" put a short hold on the Edward Martin Cultural Exchange programme. That has been resolved but one of the benefits to come from that debacle is that a European cultural Exchange has been started, mainly by the instigation of Alex Wursch and Hans Meier of Switzerland, so every year two recently qualified farriers can apply to visit farriers across Europe. If you are interested, then contact the EFFA secretary for contact details.

One of the groups EFFA is affiliated to is the European Horse Network (EHN). This is a group who lobby the EC in Brussels about all matters to do with equine welfare and has the ear of a horse owning Euro MP. Our own President John Ravanelli is the EFFA representative to this group and has been asked to prepare a paper on the state of horseshoeing within Europe and the relevance of the CEF and soon to be MEF. This is huge in terms of getting the information to the right people. It has been tried before by Miles but this is a second chance. The equine industry across Europe is a major employer and the monies generated are enormous. Look up the Equine Horse Network to see their achievements.

In Spain 2024 the EFFA Eurochamps will take place in Vic near Barcelona by the Catalan Farriers Association. A team of four from the UK is welcome to apply to go but they must be members of the BFBA and in the interests of fair play, one member from each of the four nations would be a preferable team. Look out for the invitations when the date is finally set for the end of next year.

There was a report or a yearly round-up of the member associations from the delegates and it's inspiring to see so many of them having competitions and forge-ins. Steven Beane has been busy this year. One of the most unusual competitions I have heard of is in Holland, where the competition is shoeing a horse with machine shoes, answering questions on the day to day running of a business and health and safety questions. I haven't described it very well, but it's a great concept for a competition.

The EFFA Hall of Fame was started two years ago and this year two very deserving nominations were made. John Ravanelli proposed Miles Williamson-Noble for his services to EFFA and the writing of the CEF and MEF standards and Denis Leveillard proposed Mr David Gully for his lifelong commitment to farriery and teaching across Europe. There were standing ovations for the pair after John read out the nominations and a very emotive presentation followed.

If you have any nominations for well deserving farriers/ vets or horse owners who you think have selflessly raised the welfare of horses across Europe and fit the bill for the EFFA European Hall of Fame, then write to the secretary for a form and put their name forward.

Next year's EFFA AGM is programmed to be run by the Unione Nazionale Operatori Mascalcia (UNOM) and will be in southern Italy.

CPD Event: Shoeing the Ex-Racehorse - How to Develop from Racetrack to Sport Horse

Join us in Buckinghamshire for a very informative evening which will invoke a wider understanding into the ever-growing popularity of these horses and how we, as an industry can best help and support not only the horses, but also the riders/owners taking on these horses.

We will be looking at the full transition of the Thoroughbred from the racetrack to high end level sport horse with soundness, both mentally and physically as a key focus throughout the evening.

Taking a 'Whole team' approach we will be joined by professionals from all aspects of horse care. From feed specialist, to veterinary care, trainers and farrier we will take a look at how we develop these horses throughout their retraining years focusing on how training, nutrition and the 'home team' take the whole horse' view into transforming these horses.

The horses and case studies shown will take you straight from the racehorse trainer through to ex racehorses competing at the highest level of dressage, looking at the problems/concerns that you may encounter along the way and how this affects the overall horse. Seeing how 'ex racehorse ailments' i.e. ulceration and kissing spine, will affect the foot fall/placement and how this affects the horse long term and how to find ways forward/ through

We will look at barefoot horses, horses shod in front, all round and case studies where in correct balance, flat feet and performance requirements are addressed/worked through as a whole team.



Location:

Thoroughbred Dressage, Padbury, Bucks, MK18 2BN

Clinicians:

Andy Hayes BVetMed MRCVS – Towcester Equine Partner

Claire Akers Msc Performance Horse Nutritionist – Dengie Horse Feeds

Phil 'The Farrier' Pearce – DipWCF

Tickets:

BFBA Member: £15

Non-BFBA Member: £20

Pizza, tea and coffee will be provided.

Scan the QR code to book or visit: forgeandfarrier.co.uk/event/shoeing-the-ex-racehorse-how-to-develop-from-racetrack-to-sport-horse/



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BFBA National Championships

The annual BFBA National Championships took place on 25th November at the Defence Animal Training Regiment, Melton Mowbray.

This year's winners are as follows:

BFBA National Championships: Open Class

National Champion: Matt Randles

2nd: Liam Collins

3rd: Steven Beane

4th: Jack Casserly

5th: George Rogerson



BFBA National Championships: Apprentice Class

National Apprentice Champion: Rosie Dobson

2nd: Lydia Dey

3rd: Brandon Joyner

4th: Alex Willis

5th: Matthew Bradley

Apprentice Class - Best Specimen

Winner: Rosie Dobson



With thanks to our judges:

Mr A Ferrie

Mr G Goldby

Mr R Jones (Apprentice Judge)

Prizes:

2023 National Champion - £500 cash, the New Century Cup and BFBA Silver Medal

2023 Apprentice Champion - £100 cash, J&A Ferrie WCF Shield and WCF Bronze Medal

The BFBA Championships take place annually.

This year, the Open Class was open to all current year BFBA members who had a 1st, 2nd or 3rd placing in Open National and County competition in the past five years.

The Apprentice Class was open to those who were officially recorded as a 1st, 2nd, 3rd or 4th year apprentice with the FRC.

More details on the BFBA website.

The British Farriers and Blacksmiths Association (BFBA) exists to represent, and be the voice of, the professional farrier whilst supporting and enabling our farriery and blacksmithing members throughout their career.



Established 1904



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BFBA Derbyshire Branch Charity Fun Competition 2023

By Martha Cooling DipWCF, BFBA Derbyshire Branch Secretary

On the 18th of November the Derbyshire branch of the BFBA held a fun Christmas competition.

The format was teams of four working together against a four hour rolling clock. The tasks were to shoe a full set on a horse, cubbing style, to make a throwing knife and throwing axe (both made from used rasps), and make a specimen shoe. The specimen shoe was to be made by two team members tied together (one team member being the hammer and one being the tongs.)

The teams were drawn on the morning of the competition, making it as fair and fun as possible!

It was great to see all that took part working together, some of whom had worked together before and some who hadn't.

I can safely say that everyone who took part, as well as those watching, had a great day, and much fun was had by all!



First Place - Team Two (Phoebe Colton, Leon Bentham, Richard Newbert and Andrew Cooling)



Second Place - Team Four (Ed Gardner, Tom Pigford, Connor McLain and Josh Firth)

Our judges, Christopher Greenwood AWCF and James Ashforth AWCF, not only had the job to mark the shoeing work and specimen shoe, but also to mark the craftsmanship of the knife and axe to help teams bump up their scores.

Winners

Best Dressed Foot: Team Four (Tom Pigford)

Best Knife: Team One (James Holliday)

Best Axe: Team Two (Leon Bentham)



Hitting the target!

Thanks to sponsors:

HorseShoe hub: A selection of shoes, rasps and nails
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Shoeing Lab: Two pairs of squish pads
Atlantic Equine Ltd: Knives, hats and mugs
Bradders Nursery: Christmas trees

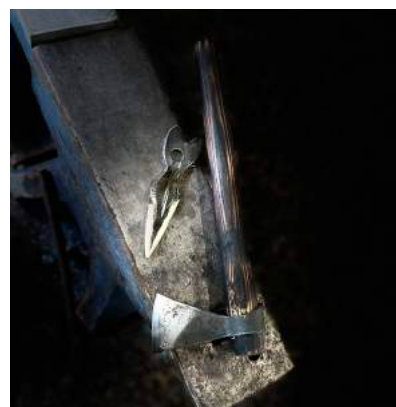


The BFBA Derbyshire branch would like to thank all those that took part and created the four teams that competed on the day. As always we would not be able to hold these types of events without you all.

We had some fantastic sponsors that sent us some great prizes for the competition, and also for a raffle we held to raise extra funds for the Farriers Foundation.

In doing so we raised a total of £500 for the charity, which made it all the more worthwhile holding this fun competition!

Pictures from the Competition:



Third Place - Team One (Oliver Arnold, Alex Mercer, Harrison Willats and James Holliday)



Fourth Place - Team Three (Will Heslop, Dorian Madin, Matthew Curran and Jonny Schuller)

Creating a Feather Damascus Knife: A Step-by-step Process

By Lewis Knaggs DipWCF

Lewis Knaggs is a farrier from Kent, who started knife making 4 or 5 years ago. Lewis is self taught - mainly from watching YouTube videos! While his first creations were quite basic, Lewis then started to attempt different Damascus patterns. At first, he was happy to achieve any visible pattern at all, but more recently Lewis has been honing his pattern welding steel craft with some very impressive results. Here, he talks through the stages of a Damascus feather pattern knife with an integrated bolster handle that he made recently:

Step One:

Start with 20 layers of alternating 15N20 and EN42, metal inert gas (MIG) welding the ends prior to forge welding.



Step Two:

Once forge welded, draw out the steel and create an octogen. Next, turn the steel 90 degrees and flatten on one side to distort the layers to create a "W" pattern. Divide the flattened steel into equal numbered portions that can be re-stacked to create a higher layer count within the feather. Here, I have cut the steel into 8 equal parts to create a 160-layer count.



Step Three:

Tack weld the pieces together, so that they can be forge welded and drawn out. I repeated step two and three twice, to form a layer count of 1280 for my knife.



Step Four:

Once the steel has been welded to a solid block, split with a blunt chisel through the centre of the block so that it cuts whilst dragging the steel through. This will create the feather pattern in the knife.

I stopped at this point through the steel (pictured), so I could close the steel and re-weld it together easily.



Step Five:

Grind the side to 180 grit, to then test etch in ferric chloride acid diluted in distilled water to reveal the pattern. This block was large enough to make two knives from.



Step Six:

Start to create a knife shape. I welded my steel onto a handle to prevent the need for tongs at this stage.



Step Seven:

Once the knife blade has been roughly created, use a grinder to isolate the material for the tang.



Step Eight:

Forge the tang.



Step Nine:

Start the grinding process at 36 grit, gradually increasing up to 2000 grit. Drill a hole in the tang, for a pin to secure the handle to the blade. Next, heat treat to a non-magnetic heat (>773 degrees Celsius.) Cool in vegetable oil for quenching, then anneal the steel in the oven (>150 degrees Celsius) to reduce brittleness and create more flexibility in the knife.



Step Ten:

Create the handle.



Step Eleven:

Pin, glue and shape the handle. I used G-flex glue, and a multi-tool 2-72 grinder for shaping.



Step Twelve:

Acid etch in ferric chloride acid, diluted in distilled water (1:4) for three 5 minute cycles, cleaning the knife in between with 2000 grit sandpaper.



Step Thirteen:

Coffee etch with a 1:2 ratio of coffee to water, to darken the 15N20 layers. For this knife, I coffee etched for six hours.



Step Fourteen:

Air dry the blade and apply a light wax or oil to enhance the pattern.



Damascus Knife Making Workshops

With Leszek Sikoń, Artisan Blacksmith

Inspired by Lewis Knagg on the previous page? Learn how to make your own knife in a workshop with Leszek Sikoń.

Originally from Poland, Leszek came to the UK 14 years ago and trained as a blacksmith at Hereford College of Arts.

Since then, Leszek has produced a series of superb artisan tools and knives, using age-old skills to produce modern objects of desire. Leszek's inspiration comes from the history and the traditional methods, getting to grips with hammer, tongs and fire.

Leszek now runs workshops in his forge workshop space in Brundish in the heart of Suffolk.

Join Leszek on one of his upcoming 2024 workshops:

Wednesday 21 February

Friday 23 February

Wednesday 13 March

Friday 15 March

Wednesday 17 April

Friday 19 April



Book online:

www.lsikonblacksmith.com/allworkshops

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Monday 12 February 2024

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10.15am: Lectures start

1.30pm: First race

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WCF Awards 2023

Congratulations to the successful farriers!



Royal Windsor Horse Show: 14 May

Service Team Jumping Class: Best Shod Award

Farrier: Oliver Arnold DipWCF

Judge: Robin May AWCF

Horse: Ghaicorrie Verdi (RAF team B)

Owner: Corporal Nicole Thackray

Devon County Farriery Competition: 18-20 May

Judge: Steven Beane FWCF

Silver medal: Matthew Randles DipWCF

Apprentice bronze medals:

1st/2nd Year: Freddie Ravenscroft

3rd/4th Year: Alex Willis

Northumberland County Show: 27 May

Best Shod Horse Award

Farrier: Daniel Lowson DipWCF

Judge: Graeme Moran DipWCF

Horse: Jack of Hearts (Open Hunter class)

Owner: Kate Gofton

Hopetoun Driving Trials: 28 May

Best Shod Award

Farriers: Paul Robinson AWCF & David Varini AWCF

Judge: Kevin Balfour DipWCF

Horses: Felix and Bobby (Open Pony Pairs class)

Owner: Ian & Ann Gilbert

Suffolk Show: 31 May - 1 June

Best Shod Award

Farrier: Elliot Ticquet DipWCF

Judge: Danny Mallender AWCF

Horse: Thames Oak Delilah (Heavy Horse section)

Owner: Natasha Ingram

Best Shod Award

Farrier: Will Taylor DipWCF

Judge: Steve Arnold AWCF

Horse: Goosey Gander (Ridden Hunter)

Owner: Mrs Shervington

Medal Winners

Judge: Chris McCabe AWCF

Silver medal: Sam Rust DipWCF & Harvey Andrews DipWCF, Ben Coy AWCF and Tom Farmer AWCF

Bronze medal: James Povey DipWCF

Royal Bath and West: 1-3 June

Medal Winners

Silver medal: Alex Collier DipWCF (Hunter Shoeing)

Silver medal: Matt Randles DipWCF (Cob Shoeing)

Apprentice bronze 1st/2nd Year: Freddie Ravenscroft

Apprentice bronze 3rd/4th Year: Alex Willis

Judge: Andrew Casserly FWCF

Best Shod Pony Award

Farrier: Ollie May DipWCF

Judge: Andy Reader-Smith AWCF

Pony: Fuzz

Owner: Mim Metcalfe

British Driving: 25 June

Best Shod Award

Farrier: Joe Smith Nicols DipWCF

Judge: Robin May AWCF

Horse: Trixies Duchess (Coster class)

Owner: F. Moore and S. Watts

Kent County Show Farriery Competition: 7-9 July

Farrier: Gavin Golby AWCF

Silver medal: Andrew Casserly FWCF

Bronze medal: Andrew Casserly FWCF

Mid Devon Show: 22 July

Best Shod Horse Award

Farrier: Dan Rabin DipWCF

Judge: Nigel Perrot DipWCF

Horse: Thorpe Hill Surprise (Heavy Horse)

Owner: Chris and Lisa Horle

Royal Welsh Show: 26 July

Medal Winners

Silver and Bronze medals: Ryan McDonald DipWCF

Farrier Apprentices:

1st/2nd Year: Connor Thomas

3rd/4th Year: Brandon Joiner

Judge: Russell Jones DipWCF

Royal International Horse Show: 26-30 July

Best Shod Award

Farrier: Ben & Andrew Elkington DipWCFs

Judge: Adrian Devereux AWCF

Horse: Bowland Jasper (Hunter Weight class)

Owner: Kay Sinclair-James

Essex Heavy Horse Show: 6 August

Best Shod Horse Award

Farrier: Ryan Evans DipWCF

Judge: Phil Dunmall FWCF

Horse: Cumeragh House Condor

Owner: Billy Young

BDS Essex and North London Summer Show: 20 August 2023

Farrier: Charlie Wigg DipWCF

Judge: Phil Dunmall FWCF

Horse: Billy Bouy (pleasure driving class)

Owner: Danny Stevens

Melplash Show: 24 August 2023

Farrier: Danny Roberts DipWCF

Judge: Nigel Perrott DipWCF Hons

Horse: Woodhouse Twenty-four Carrot (Shire)

Owner: Danny Roberts DipWCF

Moreton-in-Marsh Show: 2 September

Medal Winners

Judge: Jay Tovey FWCF

Silver medal: Sarah Mary Brown FWCF

Apprentice bronze 1st/2nd Year: Caymon Besey

Apprentice bronze 3rd/4th Year: Billy Machin

Best Shod Award

Farrier: Gareth Thomas DipWCF

Judge: Gavin Golby AWCF

Horse: Rosegold of Mourne (Heavyweight Hunter)

Owner: Teresa Jones

Alresford Show: 2 September

Farrier: Tom Caygill DipWCF

Judge: Phillip Perryman AWCF

Horse: Test Valley Rio (Lightweight Hunter)

Owner: Sophie Edwards

Chatsworth Country Fair: 1-3 September

Apprentice bronze medals:

1st/2nd Year: Rhys Cantrill

3rd/4th Year: Harrison Willats

Judge: Wayne Preece FWCF

Silver medals:

James Holliday DipWCF (Hunter Shoeing)

Christopher Hole AWCF (Roadster Shoeing)

Bronze medal: Christopher Hole AWCF (Open Shoemaking)

BSHA National Championships: 7 September

Best Shod Horse Award

Farrier: Dain Atherton DipWCF

Judge: Robin May AWCF

Horse: Bloomfield Greystones (Middleweight Hunter)

Owner: Rose Bailey

Burghley Horse Trials: 8 September

Best Shod Award

Farrier: Russel Deering DipWCF of Lexington, Kentucky

Judge: Stephen Britten AWCF

Horse: FE Lifestyle 5*

Owner: Jennie Brannigan, PA, USA

Romsey Show: 9 September

Judge: Stephen Hill FWCF

Bronze medal: Nick Cooper AWCF

Apprentice bronze: Ethan Rolfe

Flintham Ploughing Match: 28 September

Best Shod Horse Award

Farrier: Ashley Norris DipWCF

Judge: Alex Mercer AWCF

Horse: Toberpatrick Summer

Owner: Tatty Marwick

Horse of the Year Show: 6 October

Best Shod Horse Award

Farrier: Daniel Garlick DipWCF

Judge: Richard Spence AWCF

Horse: Alfie Connor (Middleweight Hunter)

Owner: Lyssa Sheppard

National Masters and Apprentice Competition: 7 October

1st/2nd Year bronze Master: Mr J Benfield DipWCF

Apprentice bronze 1st/2nd Year: Mr L Pezzato

3rd/4th Year silver Master: Mr J Bryan DipWCF

Apprentice bronze 3rd/4th Year: Mr J Bryan

Judges: Stephen Hill FWCF and Will O'Shaughnessy AWCF

Hose 50th Competition: 14 October

Judge: Gary Darlow AFCL

Silver medal: Matthew Randles DipWCF

Apprentice bronze 1st/2nd Year: Ethan Rolfe

Apprentice bronze 3rd/4th Year: Rosie Dobson

Sofforth Farriery Competition: 21 October

Judge: Ian Allison DipWCF

Silver medal: Joe Bryan DipWCF

Apprentice bronze 1st/2nd Year: Charlotte Forster

Apprentice bronze 3rd/4th Year: Lydia Dey

Apprentice bronze Therapeutic: Rosie Dobson

Sculptor and Master Blacksmith forges relationship with specialist school

A sculptor and Master Blacksmith who struggled with traditional education has created a stunning sculpture for Autism Unlimited's Portfield School.

International artist Andy Hopper, based in Parley, Christchurch, has three decades of experience in working with metals and specialises in hot forging and the forming of stainless steel and bronze.

Portfield School, also based in Parley, provides specialist education for autistic students aged four-19 and is operated by the leading charity Autism Unlimited.

The sculpture Andy has created for Portfield School, *Aqueous II*, has been created from forged stainless steel. Andy describes it as: "a homage to the element of water."

"Water is the only element which can be all three states of matter - liquid, solid and gas. It is unique and the lifeblood of our beautiful Earth," he explained.

"I was extremely honoured when I was asked to create a sculpture for the students of Portfield School.

"It has been said that I may be neuro diverse. I don't know if I am. I have never pursued a diagnosis. But it would perhaps explain the different way I look at and perceive the world."

Although he was an incredibly creative child, formal education did not suit Andy. He always knew he was an artist and after very naturally falling into becoming a blacksmith, he later found that his grandfather was also a Master Blacksmith.

"My fascination with metal started at the age of four when I asked my mother to buy me the largest chromed ball-bearing she could find," he explained.

"I later discovered that the forging process fascinated me, the movement and manipulation of hot metal becomes poetry when approached correctly."

He continued: "I use an armoury of equipment to heat and manipulate this very stubborn material, and I engage and emotionally connect with every step of the process and the finished piece.

"It may sound strange, but I see form as an energetic sound. I feel the work as I move forwards with it. It is a form of meditation for me, and I believe it gives me a direct connection with The Creator."

Siún Cranny, CEO of Autism Unlimited said: "Andy is an inspiration whose story resonates with the journeys of many of our students at Portfield School.

"His mission is to create artworks that elevate our experience, are physically beautiful and will stand the test of time - and he has certainly achieved that in *Aqueous II*.

"Many of our students are fascinated by the play of light, the feel and the natural sounds of the sculpture and we look forward to their enjoying what is a unique sensory experience for years to come."



Aqueous II, which is forged in stainless steel and is a homage to water



Andy Hopper installing his sculpture Aqueous II at Portfield School



Andy Hopper, Sculptor and Master Blacksmith

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The Hoofprint Calculator: Equestrian Environmental Sustainability at a new level

Agria UK, one of the world's leading animal insurers, is taking environmental sustainability to a new level with the introduction of its bespoke 'Hoofprint Calculator' - a carbon footprint calculator which allows you to work out the environmental impact of your horse and offset it if you wish. The calculator is free to access and is believed to be the first such free service online for horses.

"Agria has always believed that supporting horse owners goes far beyond helping them at a time of crisis," says Agria UK's CEO Vicki Wentworth. "We also help customers access the best welfare advice, share insights from experts and top names, and help them to enjoy their horses in the happiest and most sustainable way.

"Agria is already the UK's first carbon positive pet insurer - meaning we put back in to the environment more than we take out - but we realised riders had no easy way of measuring the environmental impact of their equestrian activities. This calculator changes that, and above all we hope that using it helps riders and owners look harder at sustainability and find new ways of doing things in a more environmentally friendly way."

The Hoofprint Calculator asks riders a range of questions including what they feed their horse, how much they travel, how they reach their yard each day and so on. A range of tips to help you be more sustainable are emailed over upon completion, to help riders to reduce their horse's impact through every day eco-friendly actions.

It's also possible to offset your horse's 'carbon hoofprint' by supporting verified emission reduction initiatives which costs from £7 per tonne of carbon emissions (CO₂e). A typical horse creates two tonnes of carbon a year, more if they travel extensively to compete etc.

Agria has calculated the CO₂e for one horse belonging to each of their sponsored riders, Ros Canter, Joe Stockdale, Gareth Hughes and Natasha Baker, offsetting their corresponding CO₂e tonnage by contributing to key climate projects.

These provide efficient cooking stoves for schools in Uganda, and supports the creation of clean, renewable energy through wind farming in India. Both reduce carbon emissions while benefitting local communities. Further, for every tonne of carbon emission via the calculator, a tree is planted in reforestation projects.

Ros Canter, Joe Stockdale, Gareth Hughes and Natasha Baker are all proud owners of Eco Offset Certificates for a leading horse on their team, showing the number of carbon credits invested in verified projects to contribute a real and active reduction in CO₂e emissions.

Visit agriacarboncalculator.co.uk to calculate a horse's carbon hoofprint for free.

New Muscle Wastage Scoring Guide Aims to Help Horse Health

A new equine muscle wastage scoring guide, co-developed by the SPILLERS™ brand, aims to help horse owners identify muscle wastage.

The guide is based on the Muscle Atrophy Scoring System (MASS)* published by the University of Kentucky in collaboration with the makers of SPILLERS. Using diagrams, descriptions, and scores, it enables owners to identify muscle atrophy or 'wastage' in three key areas – the neck, the back, and the hindquarters. It is suitable for all adult horses, but the SPILLERS brand hopes it will be especially valuable as a health monitoring tool for senior horses and ponies.

In the guide, the neck, back and hindquarters are each assessed separately using one of two scales (A or B, depending on the individual's body condition) and given a score of 1-4. A score of 1 indicates no muscle wastage whereas a score of 4 indicates severe muscle wastage.

"Ideally horse owners and carers should monitor their horse or pony's muscle score on a monthly basis," said Sarah Nelson, Product Manager at Mars Horsecare, home of the SPILLERS brand.. "This tool may be useful in enabling them to notice gradual muscle deterioration, that may indicate a condition that can be addressed."

In the January 2024 issue of *Forge Knowledge*

Forge Knowledge is a member-only benefit offering an opportunity for gaining CPD.

Remedial shoes are often prescribed by veterinarians and fited by farriers to support the limbs during rehabilitation of lame horses. As part of his studies towards the BSc in Farriery, Hugh Vowles DipWCF, DipHE, BSc (Hons) set out to evaluate the effects of two remedial shoes - eggbar and suspensory shoes - on the dynamics of the fetlock joint and on stride length and to compare them with the dynamics seen in the barefoot horse and with more commonly used open-heel shoes.

Also in the January issue of *Forge Knowledge* is a step-by-step guide from Brad Greenham AWCf on getting the best results when forge brazing an aluminium bar shoe. Candidates for the AWCf exam are required to make a display board of therapeutic shoes. This board must comprise six mandatory shoes and an additional four to six shoes of the candidate's choice. One of these shoes must be forged from a material other than steel, such as aluminium. However, aluminium can be a tricky material to handle. Brad discusses its advantages and disadvantages, and how to work with the material to construct a shoe.



Apprentices are entitled to FREE BFBA membership. They can get their own copy of *Forge Knowledge* and *Forge* by emailing membership@bfba.co.uk

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Mettle on metal

Southsea's artisan blacksmith

In our digitised world of computers and machines, it's refreshing to find 'job done' in the traditional artisan way. Hidden in a quiet corner of Southsea, blacksmith Peter Clutterbuck and colleagues turn raw metal into works of art.

To the rear of 38 Osborne Road, approached through a quiet walk-through from Clifton Road, The Forge is where Peter Clutterbuck and friends have been transforming metals into masterpieces since 1970.

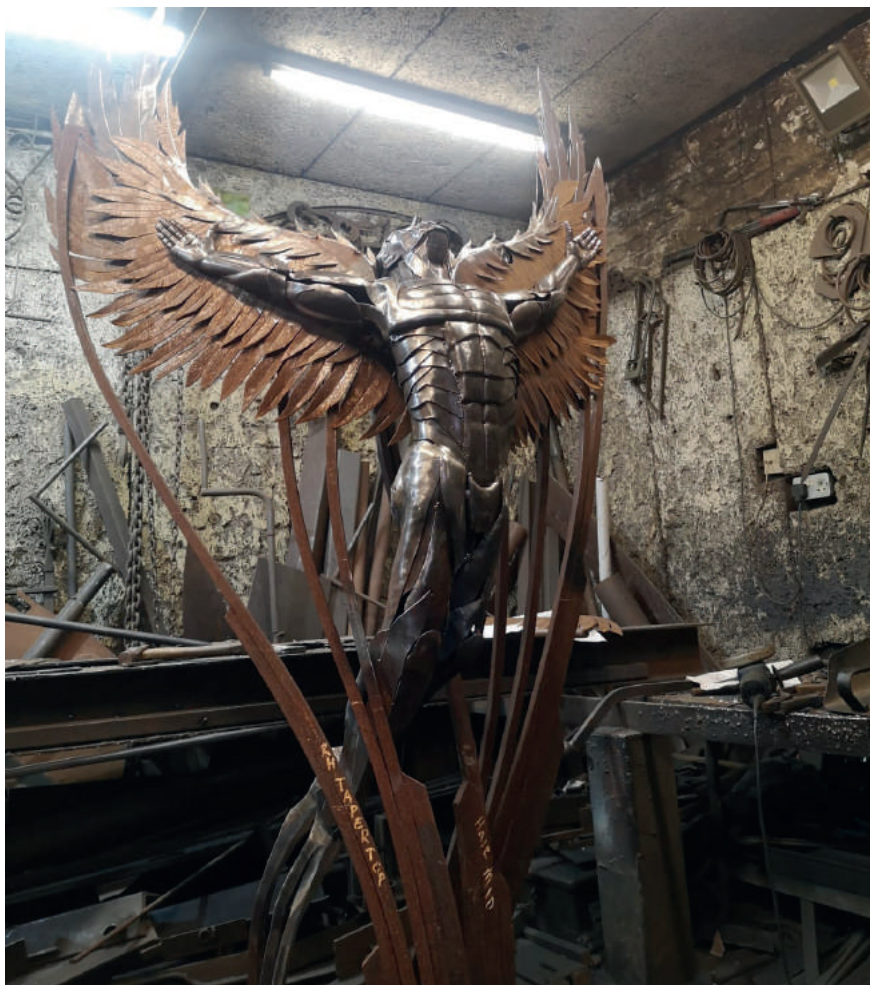
Having graduated from Portsmouth School of Art with a Diploma in Sculpture and Design, Pete became enthused with the idea of metal artwork. Before launching into business, he took time off to venture abroad. He visited Greece, Turkey, North Africa, Afghanistan and India, countries where, as he openly admits, his eyes were always open in admiration for the work of local artisans: 'I always looked for intriguing pieces of craftwork to cross-refer or use in any future projects. Hence my motto, 'Waste not, want not'.'

Ever intent on making sculptures, he developed a kindred and everlasting love for blacksmithing. The decision was taken to rent what was an old horse stable and to turn it into the smithy, The Forge: 'I'd never thought of making a career out of blacksmithing. I was just following my passion, to do something I was passionate about'.

Peter and his blacksmith colleague - John Duffield and Patrick Mannerings - work full-time at The Forge. Mild steel - like malleable play dough to them - iron, bronze and wood are the raw materials for their works of art. The procedure of giving shape to those materials starts with the sketch drawn by friend Nigel Searle, who has been working with Pete's team 'since the dawn of time'. All team members prefer traditional methods over latter-day procedures. To help clients visualise what they may have in mind, there's always inspiration to be found on The Forge website. The website hosts photographs of some of the company's amazing works to date.

At home in their compact workshop with the heat of the furnace, everything is immediately to hand for the metal masters to forge ahead with their creations. 'This is such a handy place,' says Patrick.

Anything created takes time with the largest and most expensive commanding six-figure sums.



Such was the case with the Daedalus, a 6 metre-high by 3.5 metre-wide sculpture of a mythical character currently located near the Peel Common roundabout in Gosport. That work took five years, held up at various points in committee.

But hammering away at the anvil is not Pete's only way to ease the stresses of daily life. He's keen on cricket, be that as a spectator or player: left-handed batsman, right-handed medium-pace bowler: 'a bit of a "golden arm", some say', Pete adds shyly. 'Cricket's not an easy game to play,' he admits. 'But, being something completely different from my work, it's a way of escaping from the daily routine'.

He always looks forward to the annual dinner of his cricket club where the trophies are all Clutterbuck creations.



Is a Digital App the Way Forward for Reliable Assessment of Hoof Balance?

The following article has been adapted from the paper “Reliability Test of an Application for the Assessment of Hoof Balance” by Yogi Sharp. With the monitoring of hoof proportions becoming common practice in the farriery profession, the study tested the reliability of a digital application for measuring hoof balance.

Changes in equine hoof proportions occur as a natural effect of hoof growth, affecting the alignment of the horse's digit; by changes in the direction and magnitude of forces acting upon it; or anecdotally being a result of the restriction of natural function of the hoof caused by the fitting of shoes.

Hoof proportions are also influenced by farriery intervention, which has been shown to be inconsistent between individual farriers.

These changes in hoof proportions can alter intra hoof biomechanical function, affecting strains within the capsule and biomechanics, explaining a link between hoof proportions and lameness, catastrophic injury, and navicular syndrome in the front feet.

The association between poor hoof proportions creating a “long toe, low heel” conformation and navicular syndrome is caused by an increased strain in the deep digital flexor tendon, which is transferred onto the distal sesamoid.

In the hind limb, the same long toe, low heel hoof conformation has been shown to affect limb posture and is linked to pathologies above the digit into the limb.

These links express the importance of regular assessment of hoof proportions to maintain soundness in horses.

Ideal hoof proportions have been outlined to optimise biomechanical function and minimise the risk of lameness. These include a straight hoof pastern axis, which is affected by heel to toe height ratios (which should ideally not exceed 3:1), and heel to toe angle difference which is suggested as ideally below five degrees.

Ideal proportions of equal, 50/50, heel support to toe support of the hoof around the centre of rotation of the distal interphalangeal joint, is widely accepted as optimum for biomechanical efficiency and reduced strain on the deep digital flexor tendon during breakover.

With ideal hoof proportions and the associations between hoof proportions, lameness and injury being outlined, the importance of documenting hoof balance is suggested as good practice within the farriery industry to quantify changes in shape during training, and to assess the effects of farriery intervention.

However, although it has been recognised that digital photography of the hoof is a reliable tool for assessing hoof balance, assessment in general practice remains largely a subjective visual evaluation, possibly limiting the ability to recognise insidious changes in hoof proportions until they become pathological.

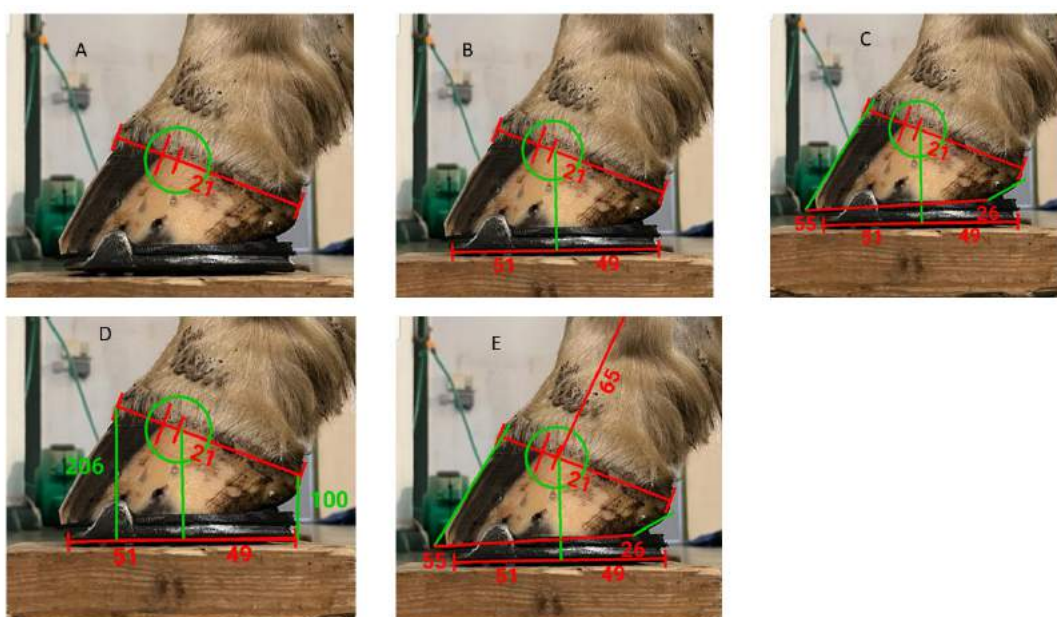


Fig.1 Lateral digital photo of a hoof positioned for accurate assessment (White et al. 2008) with the templates for external hoof proportion measurements from HoofmApp. A is center of rotation template and coronet angle. B shows toe versus heel base of support template added. C shows Heel and toe angles added. D shows pastern angle added.

Objective measurements from photographs of hooves are used extensively in equine research. Studies have used digital cameras with the photos transferred into a computer, with image software then utilised to take linear and angular measurements.

While this methodology has been shown to be accurate and repeatable for research purposes, this technique is time consuming and costly, possibly leading to a reduction of utilisation in everyday practice. This could explain why research has shown recognition of poor hoof proportions has historically been low, with long toe, low heel conformation still being suggested as the most common.

Recently, a template for locating the centre of rotation of the distal interphalangeal joint has been tested within HoofmApp (2.0), a smartphone application specifically designed for hoof balance assessment from a photograph or radiograph.

The templates within the application are positioned according to certain reference points and to each other to tell the user the angles and proportions of the digit. Sharp (2021) reported the template position of the centre of rotation of the distal interphalangeal joint from a lateral photo, showed statistical equivalence of the HoofmApp assessment with the radiographic anatomical location (Figure 1).

However, this study only tested the intra-observer repeatability of one of the templates. To evaluate this application as a reliable tool for hoof balance assessment, the inter-observer reliability of all its templates is needed.

Methods of the Study

In order to evaluate the reliability of the application, five lateral photographs of equine cadaver feet were selected to show different hoof conformations.

The five photos were sent to 10 volunteer observers, a random selection of farriers, owners, and practitioners, over the age of 18, invited through the author's Facebook

page, who already had the application on their phones. Sample size was calculated using G* Power, one way analysis of variance test with a large effect size due to the high intra-observer reliability from the pilot study (Sharp 2021).

One observer did not complete the measurements. Three observers were asked to measure twice.

Participants received a link to a 10-minute video recording of basic training on using the templates. They were given a link to a shared folder to access the five photographs and asked to add the templates (Figure 1) to a folder individually accessible to them when measuring external proportions had been completed.

Data taken from the HoofmApp templates, placed by the observers were, coronet angle (CA), heel support percentage (HS) and heel (HA) and dorsal wall angles (DW). This data was put into SPSS to test for inter and intra-observer reliability.

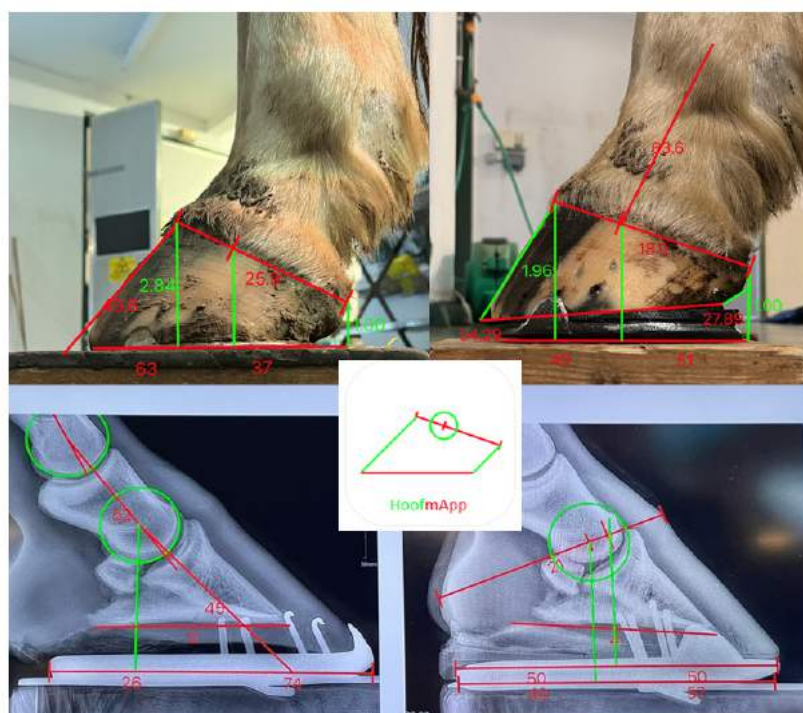
Results

The data were assumed to be of a non-parametric distribution due to sample size, therefore a Friedman two-way ANOVA was used to test for differences between the 9 observers. There was no significant difference between the measurements of each observer ($F(8) = 6.779$; $p=0.561$).

The intra-class correlation coefficient was above .9 for both the upper and lower bound, showing statistically excellent inter-observer reliability.

The minimum and maximum ranges for the individual measurements were Heel angle 7/16, Coronet angle 4/7, Dorsal wall angle 2/6, heel support percentage 3/9.

A Wilcoxon rank test was used to test the intra-observer reliability of the three observers who repeated measurements and showed no significant difference ($p 1.000$).



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Evaluation of the Study

Studies have shown us that even small changes in hoof proportions, affecting palmar angle, can have significant effect on moment arms and strains on internal structures of the hoof capsule (Moleman et al. 2006). As little as 1° difference can equate to 6% less strain on the navicular (Eliashar 2012). Therefore, when measuring hoof capsule proportions, the importance of precision in record keeping is highlighted.

The results of this study showed that statistically, there was excellent reliability in measuring hoof proportions using HoofmApp. However, when looking at the range of measurements, clinically these differences would be significant. With a p value of 1 for intra-rater reliability, the results show that if the same observer uses HoofmApp, their measurements are completely reliable and repeatable except by chance.

However, there is a wide range of measurements with random untrained observers. The smallest range was present when measuring dorsal wall angle, with the largest range being heel angle measurements. This could be accounted for by the fact it was noted that the discrepancies in heel angle measurements increased with more acute heel angles. This was especially if the frog and bulbs of the hoof were more visible and there was minimal contrast between the wall and bulb colour, meaning the beginning and end of the heel became more difficult to visualise, whereas the dorsal wall angle is much more clearly defined (Figure 2).

The differences in coronet angle could be due to differences in curvature and an ill-defined difference between the end of the hairline and beginning of the heel bulb. This measurement would in turn affect heel support percentages, as well as differences of opinion on where to measure the end of the toe when it is rounded.

This contrasts with the findings of White et al. (2008) which found a standard deviation of <0.1 for all measurements. This difference could be a result of the methods used to obtain the heel angles.

White et al. (2008) attached ball bearings with double sided adhesive tape to the palmar aspect of the lateral heel at the level of the coronary band and at the palmar most weightbearing surface, clearly demarcating a line to take the angle measurement from. In practice this would be impractical considering these points were determined using a scalpel blade pushed under the lateral wall in a dorsal direction between the lateral wall and the shoe, whilst the horse was fully weightbearing.

This study suggests that when the observer has established their own datum points for taking angle measurements from, this is repeatable using HoofmApp, and is therefore a useful tool for a single observer to monitor and document changes in hoof proportions.

However, without standardised anatomical datum points established, and taught within the equestrian community, this repeatability is lost between observers, affecting the ability of the application to be more useful between professionals.

Further research could help to establish these datum points and test their reliability on lateral photographs without invasive marking of the heel, with dissemination of those findings increasing the inter-professional usability of HoofmApp.

Conclusion

HoofmApp is an accurate tool for measuring hoof proportions with a high intra-rater reliability. However, due to a lack of established anatomical datum points within research there remains subjectivity in the placement of the templates affecting inter-observer reliability. Further research should look to test reliable methods for establishing datum points to measure from when using applications to assess external hoof balance from lateral photographs.

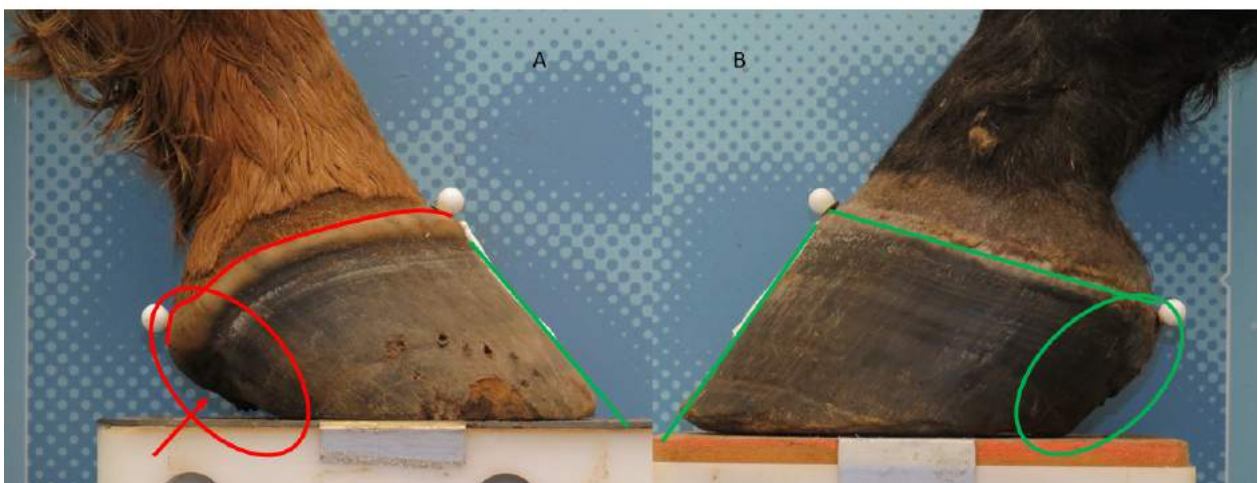


Figure 2. A showing a lower heel angle with visible frog and bulb very similar in color to the shadowed heel wall. B showing a more upright heel with a larger area of heel to measure and minimal soft tissue structures visible to obstruct view.

End-point assessment update

The latest press release from The Worshipful Company of Farriers - 18 December 2023

The Farriers Registration Council (FRC) recently withdrew their approval for the Worshipful Company of Farriers (WCF) to run the Farriery Examination End Point Assessment (EPA) for the Level 3 Farrier (STO172), Apprenticeship Standard, which every apprentice takes to become a registered farrier. As stated on the Council's notice published on 5th October 2023, the regulators withdrawal also affects potential Approved Training Farriers (ATF's) being able to access the AWCF examination to becoming an ATF.

The WCF views this very seriously and has already taken steps to address the FRC concerns.

The latest set of exams have been delayed until early January 2024. These will be run by VetSkill Ltd with the full support of the WCF who have supplied both qualified WCF examiners and questions from our Examinations Board. We wish all the candidates well.

The WCF intend to grant the post-nominal Dip WCF to successful candidates who will undertake their EPA exams being delivered by VetSkill in January 2024.

Once the WCF has addressed all the FRC concerns, the Worshipful Company of Farriers will be reapplying for approval in the first part of 2024. We wish to thank all registered farriers in the UK for their overwhelming support in our quest to continue running farriery examinations in the UK.

The Worshipful Company of Farriers examinations are the most respected in the world. Due to the high esteem in which our exams are held, teams of examiners are regularly sent to countries including the USA, Australia, Denmark, Sweden, South Africa and Northern Ireland.

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In memory: Richard 'James' Darlington

10 February 1956 - 13 August 2023

In the September issue of Forge magazine, we shared the sad news of the passing of James Darlington, a farrier from Merriott in Somerset. We have since received the kind permission from James' family to share this obituary, originally published in Horse and Hound.

James Darlington, who has died at the age of 67, was one of Somerset's most widely known and much-loved characters. He was best described as a countryman and skilled horseman. He was an amateur rider, professional jump jockey and then farrier, and throughout his life he loved his driving horses and horse-drawn vehicles.

James was born in Harpenden in Hertfordshire in 1956. In that same year, equipped with a car, caravan and two ex-army tents, his family took to the road.

This excursion took them to the Lake District, then to Dorset where James' father had secured a job. Clearly, these early experiences had a profound influence on what was to become James' chief delight: travelling the open road with horse and wagon.

An early photograph of James shows a befreckled 3-year-old astride a hobby horse. He appears to be completely in charge; as later he tended to be, irrespective of the nature of the steed.

The arrival of the family at South Cadbury in Somerset allowed James to move on to the real thing. As the sole horse-loving member of the family, James soon found the like-minded in the Pony Club.

Around this time he also decided to acquire a horse and trap, and quietly and resolutely went out and got it. This approach was to become characteristic of James in building the life he envisaged, repeating itself in acquiring his beloved house, yard, land and wagons, but also when achieving his aims of becoming jockey and farrier.

What James really wanted to do was race. He started finding mounts for local point-to-point races, leading in 1975 to his first placed ride. His successes at amateur steeplechases were such that by the time he was 18, he knew he wanted to race professionally. His first amateur win was on 2nd March 1977 then, two days later, under rules at Haydock. It was a winning year and a brilliant start to James' racing career, which continued until 1983. He recognized that that big fall was out there waiting for him, and so he decided to become a farrier.

James found himself a master in Ivor Winters at Beltichburne, south of Dublin. Once a journeyman farrier, he returned home to Somerset to find a shoeing patch of his own.

His preference was for shoeing lighter animals which led to his specialising in shoeing race horses: an obvious choice for an ex-jockey, where his understanding of race horses and the racing world allowed him to contribute to many famous successes. It was also a choice that would help preserve the farrier's back. This stratagem worked, because James never stopped shoeing thereafter.

For his entire career, James shod horses for the British Triathlon team. Next to the thoroughbreds he preferred shoeing ponies and of course the big cob, with a preference for the odd-coloured horses who would become his companions. Many people will remember his first big horse called Scammell, hitherto used for pulling a Steptoe & Son tradesman's cart. A further mention should be given to James' other cobs; Jack, Domino, Sam, William and Clyde, and most recently Gunner.

James was accomplished, quiet, kind, courageous and funny. He was a real family man, who was as important to his children as he was to his parents, his brothers, his nephews and nieces, the myriad of small near or distant cousins of various generations and his many friends and way-side acquaintances. He leaves behind his daughter Niamh, his son William and his grandson Nolan.



NAF Five Star PROFEET 2023 Farrier of the Year

The NAF Five Star PROFEET Farrier of the Year award recognises the farrier who, through his or her knowledge, has made a difference to horses' performance, wellbeing or both this year. The winner of the NAF Five Star PROFEET Farrier of the Year has been announced as:

Matt Strawson of Louth, Lincolnshire

A farrier for 13 years, Matt has been around horses his whole life but found the work of a farrier fascinating.

'There is no better feeling than helping a lame horse, solving and fixing a problem, and creating comfort. I shoe a lot of competition horses and seeing them do well gives me ultimate job satisfaction,' says Matt, who says there is always more to learn.

A satisfied client says: 'Matt is a fantastic farrier. His skills are second to none and people always ask who my farrier is when they see my horse's feet. He is a perfectionist with the horses' comfort at the forefront of his mind. His work ethic is beyond the norm – nothing is too much trouble and he will move heaven and earth to be there if a horse needs him. He's never let us down and the difference he makes to my horses is fantastic.'

- ◆ Shortlisted for the award were **Dale Greenwood**, **James Greig**, and **Nathan Salter**.
- ◆ Previous winners of this prestigious award include the late **Brendan Murray**, **Chris Bailey**, **Jim Balfour**, **Paul Woodall** and **Daniel Bennett**.



A New Master of the Guild

Congratulations to Don Mallett AWCBL WCB, the newly appointed Master of the Blacksmiths Guild.

The Blacksmiths Guild has welcomed Don Mallett as the new Master of the Guild, taking over from Merv Allen FWCB who served in the position for four years.

Don is ex-Royal Engineers, having served a long and distinguished career in the military. Don is a trained blacksmith, farrier and fabricator. He currently teaches blacksmithing to the REME at the Metalsmiths Training Centre at MOD Lyneham, and has been a guild member for the past 9 years. In this time, Don has been a very supportive and active member of the Guild, with his involvement in the Dorchester and North Summerseat shows, promoting the Army competition at the New Forest show. Promoting the Guild at this year's Farrier Focus and instigating the return of the International Blacksmiths Competition, to name but a few.

We'd also like to congratulate Don on his new appointment and also take this opportunity to acknowledge the excellent work of outgoing Master, Merv Allen FWCB. Thank you both for your continuing hard work and commitment to the Guild.





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Hello from the new editor

I'm the new editor of Forge magazine - welcome to my first issue.

I'm really looking forward to working with the BFBA and learning more about the organisation and the industry. As a horse owner myself I've always had an appreciation for the work of my own farrier, but having now spent a few months familiarising myself with the work of the BFBA I'm even more interested in the profession.



Thanks to all of you who have been so welcoming so far, and to everyone who has written for the magazine this issue - it's been a great one to have started on!

I'd also like to thank Gill Harris, the previous editor, for her support in getting started. Gill edited the magazine for almost 22 years and has left some rather impressive footsteps to follow.

Sarah Shephard

NEW PRODUCTS



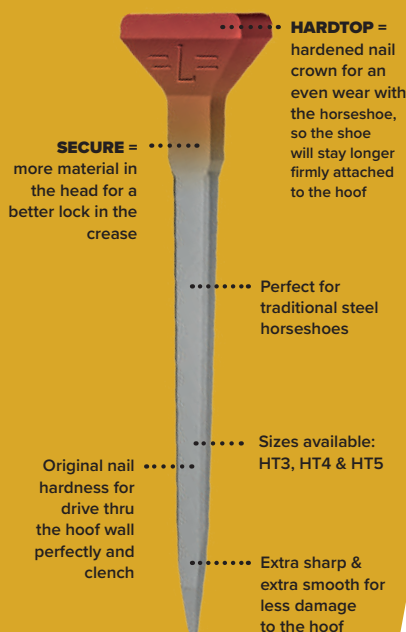
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- Use under pad
- Shock absorbing, protective, supportive
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- Weight-bearing in 2 minutes
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What is it like to be a Farrier's Wife?

Written by Susie Fennell, wife of Nigel Fennell

Published on Facebook

What is it like to be a farrier's wife?

Some people think it's quite an easy life!

Is it easy when he's forging til late at night?

So all the shoes on your horse fit just right!

Is it easy when he leaves for work right at sunrise?

And you don't see him again until the day light dies!

Is it easy when he's away for another clinic?

But understand it's essential, it's not 'another gimmick'!

Education and learning becomes his eternal quest;

All so that you and your horse can get the very best!

Is it easy when he gets called any time, any day?

To come fix a shoe your horse lost in its field during play!

Is it easy to see him so painful and so sore?

His back and hips so crooked, he has to sleep on the floor.

Is it easy that when your horse comes in looking lame;

That he is the first person that you seem to blame!

Is it easy to watch as some people take him for granted?

And their lack of knowledge and understanding means that he gets slanted!

Is it easy when you give him a challenging case;

He's trying to figure it out, but you constantly chase!

You sack him off and say to others he wasn't your 'best bet'!

Yet the horse still has everyone stumped, including your own vet!

That lost shoe that you called him out to put back on;

You believe should be free and that the charge is a con!

Your belief he should come and do that and should be on his own dime;

Shows a lack of respect and value for his service and his time.

Is it easy to watch him breaking just so he gets it right?

To see that every cent he earns always has to be a fight.

Is it easy when your horse just doesn't stand?

And all you do to correct it is give a gentle hand!

That thousand pound animal millimetres from my husband's head;

One more awkward move - my husband could be dead!

But is it easy to see the pride that he always takes;

To keep your horse sound and comfortable in each step it makes.

It's easy for me to see the hours of dedication;

Because being a farrier is so much more than just an occupation!

I am very proud of who he is and what he's achieved in the trade he serves;

And so it's my honour and pleasure to give him the love and support he deserves.

So is it easy to be just a farrier's wife?

No it's not, but it is a privilege and I wouldn't change it for my life!

National Equine Forum Photography Competition Winner Announced

The National Equine Forum (NEF) has announced the winner of its annual photography competition; Lorna Elliot's captivating headshot of her Fell pony Greenholme Grey Bobby II will feature on the programme cover for the 32nd National Equine Forum, which takes place on Thursday 7 March 2024.

Talented amateur equine photographers from around the world submitted 34 equine images, ranging from stylish black and white shots to some striking colour images and quirky equine poses. Entries were received from Bulgaria and the USA, as well as from the UK.

"This is the second year we have run the photography competition and once again we received some beautiful and creative entries," said NEF Convener Georgina Crossman. "It's never easy to produce a shortlist, let alone pick a winner but on this occasion the committee was unanimous. We especially liked Lorna's use of the spectacular sunset to highlight the windswept, natural look of one of the UK's iconic native pony breeds."

Lorna, who is from the Scottish Borders not only has the pleasure of seeing her beloved Bobby on the cover of the NEF 2024 programme, but she will also receive a special food hamper as her prize.

Lorna said: *"Wow! I'm absolutely astounded! I can't believe my picture has been chosen. Thank you so much. I love taking photographs when I get the chance, which isn't very often as I work long hours."*

"I was finishing up at work as the sun was setting and I thought the colour of the sky was just amazing, so I went home via my pony's field to see if I could get some nice pictures. My pony Greenholme Grey Bobby II, who is an 11-year-old Fell pony, was very cooperative, which is unusual as he can be a bit of an antisocial character at times!"

"I am over the moon that my photo has been chosen and feel extremely proud as it really was a spur of the moment idea as you don't have much time to catch a good sunset."



The Hoof of the Horse Podcast with Simon J Curtis collaborates with the Hoofcare Essentials Foundation

Simon said, "I couldn't be happier about my new association with the Hoofcare Essentials Foundation, a non-profit who supports the farrier industry. They have organised many well-known brands to sponsor every episode, past and future.

"Nothing really changes, we still have absolute editorial control over The Hoof of the Horse Podcast. I just see it as a validation of our status within the craft of hoofcare. It means that we can continue to record interviews with prominent people in our industry and share them for free. We hope that you continue to enjoy them."

The HEF Board of Directors includes Dave Farley, who has been featured on the podcast (ep. 65.) Learn more about the HEF and their partners on hoofcareessentials.com.

Search for "The Hoof of the Horse Podcast" on your podcast app to listen.

VETERINARY TREATMENT WIPES OUT A TYPE OF DUNG BEETLE IN THE UK



Darren Mann, an entomologist specialising in dung beetles, told an audience at the British Cattle Veterinary Association congress in Telford on 20 October that *Eupleurus subterraneus*, a type of dung beetle, had not been seen in the UK for decades and was presumed extinct.

He blamed the demise of the dung beetle on wormers and other types of anti-parasitic products, as well as insecticides used in agriculture, and described it as a "wake-up call" for responsible use of veterinary products.

Household Cavalry Pairs Shoeing Competition

Friday 23 and Saturday 24 February 2024

The Forge, Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment (HCMR) would like to invite you to partake in their annual farriery competition, Cavalry Pairs.

The competition will be held on Friday 23 and Saturday 24 February 2024 at the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment's base at Hyde Park Barracks.

This year marks the 23rd anniversary of this competition, which provides the opportunity for qualified and apprentice farriers from across the globe to compete against the British Army.

More information and entry forms available from: <https://bit.ly/CavPairs24>



CPD with Yorkshire Farriers Education and Demonstration Association (YFEDA)

Friday 9th February 2024
Yorkshire Showground

Join Mustad and NWT Horseshoes alongside YFEDA for a great CPD clinic in Yorkshire!

The clinic is with:
Steven Beane FWCF

- Dive into shoe modifications
- Shoeing facing soft tissue injuries
- Get insights on what it takes to be an examiner

Danny Elliot DipWCF

- Incorporate modern materials into your shoeing techniques
- Hoofcast demonstration

Book via Whatsapp to Adam Fox on 07778 376053.



The Brooke Global Farrier Project

Seven Ethiopian farriers that are being trained through the Brooke Global Farrier Project have each received a Jim Blurton buffer that was purchased at Farrier Focus from the Farriers Foundation.

Currently horses in Ethiopia are shod in rubber shoes made from old tyres and nailed on with carpentry nails. With the training from the Brooke Global Farrier Project, they have learnt to make tongs, stamps and pritchels.

With these skills in hand they are making shoes which they are now learning how to apply correctly.

Laminitis risk exists for lean animals

It's not only obese ponies who are at a high risk of laminitis. A newly published study has confirmed that lean animals can also be at high risk, meaning that obesity may not be a reliable indicator of poor metabolic health and associated laminitis risk.

The study Relationships between total adiponectin concentrations and obesity in native-breed ponies in England* was conducted in association with the SPILLERS™ brand, via the WALTHAM™ Equine Studies Group.

This work supports earlier research which showed that severe insulin dysregulation can also be found in lean ponies. Collectively, the work therefore confirms that lean ponies can also be at higher risk of metabolic disease and associated laminitis.



The study investigated the levels of adiponectin in 734 ponies of different body condition score. Adiponectin is a hormone coming from fat deposits, which can be measured in the blood and is thought to improve sensitivity to insulin. Previous work by SPILLERS™ has shown that low blood concentrations of adiponectin reflect an increased risk of laminitis. Decreased concentrations of the hormone have been found in association with obesity, but this new work has shown that decreased levels can also be found commonly in lean, native-breed ponies.

"This study together with our previous work has provided us with the important take-home message that you cannot presume that just because your horse or pony is lean or of ideal bodyweight it is automatically at reduced risk," said Sarah Nelson, Product Manager at Mars Horsecare, home of the SPILLERS brand. "They may still have insulin dysregulation and/or low adiponectin concentrations and so be at an increased risk of laminitis. If you are concerned it is important to speak to your vet and have your horse or pony tested. It's also advisable to contact your nutrition advisor to ensure you provide the best diet to manage your individual."

Another valuable initial observation from the study was the significant difference in total adiponectin concentrations between ponies of different body shapes. The middle-heavy body shape was associated with higher total adiponectin concentrations than both other shapes, suggesting this fat accumulation pattern may be less detrimental in ponies. This is similar to research in humans that has shown increased thigh fat or a 'pear' shape may be protective against insulin resistance compared to increased visceral fat or 'apple' shape. However, more work is needed to investigate these initial findings.

"Understanding the modifiable factors that are associated with total adiponectin concentrations may help to identify targets for preventive or therapeutic intervention, with the goal of reducing the development of endocrinopathic laminitis in at-risk horses and ponies," said Marine Barnabé, who led the study.



Vet practice champions working with farriers

Warwickshire-based equine and farm veterinary practice 608 Equine and Farm held a foot balance clinic in November 2023, aiming to collaborate with farriers to try and avoid serious lameness issues resulting from incorrect balance.

The practice encouraged its clients to get a deeper look into the foot balance of their horses by offering X-rays of the horse's front and hind feet from different angles. Clients were then provided with the X-rays to send on to their farrier so they had the information they need to be able to balance their feet correctly.

The clinic was a success with much interest from current clients and farriers, with new clients travelling miles to join in. The practice is looking to repeat the clinic in early 2024.



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