



International Group of Specialist Racing Veterinarians

Newsletter April 2011

Editor's Note

This edition of the newsletter contains updates on two events of enormous significance to IGSRV members – the Asian Screening Limits Conference, and the meeting of the IFHA Welfare Committee that were held recently in Hong Kong. Thanks to Tim Morris and Brian Stewart for their reports. In this issue, we also welcome new IGSRV members and have the first Middle East report submitted by the new IGSRV representative, David Sykes. Special thanks go to Kanichi Kusano, who despite the recent tragic events in Japan has found time to report on the JRA's approach to the important issue of retired racehorses. As ever, please feel free to contact me with any comments or any material you would like to submit.

Best wishes, Peter Knight

Chairman's Report - Conference Update

There has been good progress on the Conference (www.icrav2012.com), and we wanted to provide an update. The location and dates are set, Sheraton Society Hill (www.sheratonsocietyhillhotel.com), September 15th – 22nd. The

hotel is in Old City, Philadelphia and a casual walking distance to several landmarks; Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, the Constitution Center and Penn's Landing to name a few.

The hotel rate for conference delegates will remain the same for an additional three days, both before and after the ICRAV dates. For those traveling considerable distances, this will be an excellent opportunity to extend your stay and take advantage of this location for touring.

September is a very pleasant time of year with warm days and cooler evenings, great for touring, shopping, enjoying a classic "Philly Cheese Steak" and strolling along the Delaware River. Of course, you can't come to Philadelphia without climbing the iconic steps of the Museum of Art and getting a photo with the Rocky Balboa statute.



For sports enthusiasts, Philadelphia is home for two major professional teams, the Eagles (American football) and Phillies (baseball). You may want to take in a home game during your stay. We will provide the team schedules when available for that week.

We are planning a tour and picnic at Penn Vet's New Bolton Center, tentatively for Wednesday afternoon.

The New Bolton Center Campus, which opened in 1952, is located in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania on 700 pastoral acres in Chester County. The campus offers some of the finest veterinary services available anywhere in the country for horses, cattle, camelids, pigs, goats, sheep and other large animals.



Partial day trips could include visits to beautiful Longwood Gardens, and the Pennsylvania Dutch country. You will find more information at www.longwoodgardens.org and www.padutchcountry.com. Our social activities committee will be investigating these options and several others over the next few months.

We hope to include day excursions by train or bus to Washington D.C. and New York City. For those who have never visited these cities, and even those who have, we highly recommend it. The monuments, museums, and historical sites of Washington are captivating, and one day will only give you a taste. The attractions of NYC are too many to mention here, but there is something for everyone. The day trips will provide an introduction, and likely many will choose to stay beyond the Conference for more in depth visits.

I suppose I should have given the social events last, but there are so many options convenient to the Conference location, this deserved some attention. We will be providing more detail over the next few months to help you plan your stay.

The scientific program is shaping up nicely, with the opening joint session devoted to welfare. It promises to be a stimulating session, with several presentations to provide perspective and a panel discussion to follow. We are fortunate to have speakers representing the AAEP, the IFHA Welfare Committee, and a prominent racing journalist from the USA. The theme for the opening session will help establish the tone for the remainder of the week. In addition, the veterinary program will include sessions on injury prevention, reporting, epidemiology, and analysis on different track surfaces. We are working on a standardbred session as well. There will be presentations and roundtables on such topics as horseshoes, racing in extreme heat, disease control (Glanders), best practices for regulatory veterinarians, drug testing strategies and intelligence/security issues, GPS technology and media training. We are very pleased that many of these areas already have speakers identified and committed.

The Conference may seem like a long time from now, but from past experience, these months will fly by. We are anticipating an excellent attendance, with many family members accompanying to take advantage of the valuable opportunities. If not already on your calendar, it's time to start discussing ICRAV 2012 with

family and colleagues. We will keep you posted with new developments.

Looking forward to seeing you in Philadelphia.

Best regards,

Ted

W.T. Hill, VMD
Chairman, IGSRV



IFHA Horse Welfare Committee Report

Prof Tim Morris

The IFHA Horse Welfare Committee met in person for the first time in March in Hong Kong.

Its terms of reference can be summarised as:

- Promote best practice, harmonisation and information exchange across Racing nations in all matters as they relate to the welfare of the horse, including establishing general guidance on and standards for the care and safety of horses

- Raise awareness amongst participants and third parties of horse welfare and establish permanent contact with welfare organisations;
- Work with the International Movements of Horses Committee and the Advisory Committee on Prohibited Substances and Practices

Its members are: Prof. Tim MORRIS (UK), Mr. Mike ZIEGLER (US), Dr Sadao YOKOTA (JPN), Dr. Craig SUANN (AU), Dr. Paul-Marie GADOT (FR) Dr. Brian STEWART (HK) and ex-officio; Dr. W Theodore HILL (IGSRV), Dr. Roland DEVOLZ (IFHA), Mr. Aki AKITANI (IFHA)

The key output of the committee was agreement on IFHA PRINCIPLES FOR RACEHORSE WELFARE:

Introduction

The IFHA, in its role to promote good regulation and best practices internationally across horseracing, recognises the central role played by the horse itself and so the importance of its welfare. The Federation, recognising the diversity of cultural political and legislative and other perspectives that underpin approaches to animal welfare around the world, has therefore adopted a number of broad principles of racehorse welfare that would be implemented by the Federation's members into detailed local outputs to assure racehorse welfare:

Principles

1. Cruelty to racehorses is not tolerated by horseracing Authorities.

2. Horseracing Authorities by implementing, publishing, monitoring and enforcing appropriate policies, Rules and by other activities, in as much as this is in the direct or indirect control of these Authorities, should assure that the participants in horseracing themselves meet their responsibilities to provide suitable care for the racehorse before, during and also after racing.
3. Reasonable steps should be taken to prevent unnecessary pain and distress of racehorses by ensuring adequate care, a suitable diet, the ability to exhibit normal behaviour, appropriate housing, controlling practices and therapies used in racing and training, and by protection from injury and disease.
4. In the context of these responsibilities of participants in horseracing for racehorse care it is recognised that properly conducted euthanasia can be a humane option for racehorses; for example for individual horses with severe acute or severe chronic injuries, or where care would be inadequate, as so pain and distress is likely to be the result.
5. Whilst horseracing carries risks, reasonable steps should be taken to prevent avoidable risks and research ways of reducing the risks that are currently unavoidable, and to share this information between horseracing authorities and participants in horseracing.

These five principles have been reviewed by the IFHA Executive Committee and are now being incorporated into the International Agreement. The detailed articles of this agreement are also being updated to address Prohibited Practices.

The committee also discussed a range of other matters including:

- Use of whips – key outputs were agreement that with appropriate design and rules its use is humane, and coordination of an international research programme on whip design.
- Horses after racing – key output a best practice document
- Transport – coordination within IFHA on-going

An Australian Indulgence



Current IFHA Number 1 ranked horse – Black Caviar – after winning at Randwick on 9 April. Photo by Dr Natasha Ellis.

Conference for Establishing Asian Screening Limits - 21 and 22 March 2011 Report by Brian Stewart

A total of 26 delegates representing 12 ARF countries (Australia, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, New Zealand, Qatar, Singapore, South Africa, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates) and 8 observers (members of the IFHA Advisory Council on Prohibited Substances and Practices or IFHA Horse Welfare Committee) from France, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States of America attended the two-day Conference hosted by the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) and co-chaired by Dr Brian Stewart, Head of Veterinary Regulation and International Liaison of HKJC and Dr Terence Wan, the Senior Racing Chemist of HKJC.

Asian Screening Limits (ASLs) for controlling the use of 24 equine medications were established, while those for 6 other medications could not be set and had to be deferred. Nearly all ASLs in urine were adopted by consensus. The only exception was the ASL for clenbuterol, which had to be decided by voting. In addition to ASLs in urine, an ASL in plasma was established for phenylbutazone.

Membership of the Drug Control Committee (DCC) of the Asian Racing Federation (ARF) was finalised at the Conference – Dr Rob de Kock (Chairman), Dr Schalk de Kock, Dr Craig Suann, Dr John Vine, Dr Brian Stewart, Dr Terence Wan and Dr Sadao Yokota. The DCC will follow up on the results established at the Conference. Both Dr Stewart and Dr Wan have been

invited to serve on the DCC.

The Conference was considered very successful in harmonising the sensitivity of analyses used in the screening of official samples for the presence of common equine medications across many Asian countries.

The ASL 2011 Conference was followed by a meeting of the IFHA Advisory Council on Prohibited Substances and Practices (ACPSP). The ACPSP decided immediately to recommend International Screening Limits (ISLs) to the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA) for selective and voluntary adoption by individual countries. ISLs for controlling a total of 13 common medications were established swiftly. Possible ISLs for another 16 equine medications would be discussed within the next few months in the hope that additional ISLs can be recommended for adoption.

Brian has kindly provided the powerpoint presentation used to open proceedings. It is reproduced below in text form.

Format to Establish the *Asian Screening Limits (ASLs)*

Terence S. M. Wan, Kenneth K. H. Lam, Brain D. Stewart and Jenny K. Y.

Wong The Hong Kong Jockey Club

ASL 2011 Conference, 21-22 Mar 2011, Hong Kong

Please keep the discussions during this 2-day conference CONFIDENTIAL.

- However, with participants from 12 ARF countries and 4 non-ARF countries, we the conference organiser CANNOT guarantee confidentiality be maintained permanently.
- Therefore, confidential SCREENING LIMITS must not be disclosed at this conference.
- Voluntary disclosure by owners of anything confidential will be entirely at their OWN RISK!

Background

Clause 18 (Pt. 5), Article 6 of the IABRW: “The aim of signatory countries is that their laboratories should: control the detection of legitimate therapeutic substances through the application of **internationally harmonised screening limits** which have been recommended by the IFHA’s Advisory Council on Prohibited Substances and Practices and **selectively adopted** by the relevant signatory countries.” [current signatories to this Clause -- 52 including 16 ARF countries; ARF non-signatories to Clause 18 -- Japan, Macau, Malaysia and Singapore]

- IFHA’s Advisory Council on Prohibited Substances and Practices: “It is an unachievable goal to pursue **global harmonisation** without the screening limits being **in the public domain.**” [Mar 2010]

To achieve global harmonisation -- screening limits MUST be **published** for selective and voluntary adoption by countries with vastly different racing cultures, veterinary practices, lab resources, rules, and legal environments.

- But the current EHSLC position is non-publication of their screening limits.
- Can we, participants from both Asian and non- Asian countries, discuss and establish published Global Screening Limits (GSLs) at this conference??
- Further, if some published GSLs happen to be the same as the corresponding EHSLC confidential screening limits, will the EHSLC feel that they are being forced into publication?
 - Therefore, realistic objective of this conference -- to establish regional **Asian** Screening Limits (**ASLs**) efficiently for voluntary and selective adoption by individual countries.

Benefits of Having ASLs

Once ASLs are set, the establishment of UNIFIED DETECTION TIMES (UDTs) after treatment will be faster and cheaper (no need for quantitative elimination curves)

- **INDUSTRY** -- Efficient publication of UDTs much desired by the racing industry → reduce inadvertent or even inconsequential violations, minimise bad publicity of numerous medication-related violations, and facilitate the internationalisation of racing.
- **REGULATORS** -- Harmonised detection sensitivity → medication violations much more difficult to defend.
- **PUBLIC** -- Level playing field & consistency improve public confidence in racing.

Concerns?

Not scientifically determined? But risk assessment (non- therapeutic, non-systemic and unknown effects; abuse potential; accidental exposure;

inadvertent violations; etc) and risk management (decision to harmonise and a balance between integrity and welfare) can NEVER be completely scientific or objective. [Screening Limits agreed internationally are totally legitimate even when no science is involved!]

- Level not entirely appropriate? But level playing field (or perception of fairness) is far more important. And since veterinary treatments evolve all the time, Screening Limits can be FINE-TUNED in light of new findings/treatments as long as advance notice is given before implementation. [Even IFHA International Thresholds can be, and have been, changed!]

Approach Endorsed by ARF Ex Co

Use available data and the collective experience of racing chemists and regulatory veterinarians to efficiently adopt SAME LEVELS of detection sensitivity (ASLs).

- At ASL 2011: Each medication to be discussed in turn. Based on current lab capability and practices, knowledge of pharmacokinetics & drug effects, and risk considerations, the ASL for each medication is to be adopted by CONSENSUS.
- In case consensus cannot be reached, as a last resort some ASLs may be determined by VOTING (one vote per participating ARF country).
- Decision for those medications with insufficient data or a major disagreement in opinions may be DEFERRED.

Desired Outcome of ASL 2011

Asian Screening Limits (ASLs) established for controlling at least 20 common equine medications;

- Formation of an ARF Drug Control Committee (chaired by Mr Rob de Kock) to maintain the adopted ASLs, arrange necessary research to establish and publish Unified Detection Times, and to work collaboratively on other drug control issues.

- Summary of decisions and discussions at ASL 2011 to be reported to the Asian Racing Federation Executive Council for endorsement at their Dubai meeting (25 Mar 2011).

Endorsed ASLs to be published on the ARF website by ~ 1 May 2011 (with explanatory notes).

- ARF member countries will be asked to consider adopting the published ASLs, on a medication by medication and country by country basis, by ~ 1 Aug 2011.

- The list of ASLs with signatory countries to be published on the ARF website from ~ 1 Sep 2011 (effective 90 days from publication).

Based on the adopted ASLs, the Drug Control Committee (DCC) to establish and publish UNIFIED DETECTION TIMES (maximum observed DTs for a number of treated horses based on the adopted ASLs) efficiently for the normal use of these equine medications -- coordinating necessary administration trials to be conducted.

- DCC to establish PROTOCOLS for UDT determination (number of horses and labs, etc). However, precise quantification of longitudinal samples not required -
- simply SCREEN all samples at ASL!!

- With the UDT established for urine ASLs, corresponding PLASMA ASLs can easily be determined from administration trials by quantifying only plasma samples at or near the UDT.

Further Work of the ARF DCC

DCC to append and review the list of ASLs periodically (meeting during ARC or ICRAV) based on suggestions and new research findings.

- Adoption of new or revised ASLs will again be on a medication by medication and country by country basis.
- DCC to work collaboratively on other drug control issues.

Example: Asian Screening Limits for equine therapeutics

Medication	ASL	Signatory Countries	Normal Treatment	Unified DT (max observed)
Phenylbutazone	X ng/ml in base-hydrolysed urine; Y ng/ml in plasma	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H	Product, Dose, Oral Frequency, Studied by A	5 days
			Product, Dose, IV singly, 8 horses studied by C & D	4 days

How are ASLs Defined?

Clear Definition: unless indicated otherwise, ASL is the free and conjugated concentration of a specific analyte in equine urine; or the free concentration of a specific analyte in equine plasma.

- The analyte (parent drug or a particular metabolite) must be clearly IDENTIFIED, and must have its REFERENCE STANDARD available.
- ASLs are NOT applicable to concurrent detection of a DIURETIC (for urinary ASL) or a pharmacologically RELATED MEDICATION.
- Urine and plasma ASLs for the same medication are to be applied INDEPENDENTLY.

How to Implement and Enforce ASLs

ASLs are merely standardised sensitivity limits which can be applied during SCREENING. These are NOT International Thresholds!

- No requirement to change the Rules -- what's prohibited are still the substances and NOT their levels.
- If ASL exceeded in screening, proceed to qualitative confirmation (accurate quantification of the level found NOT required for reporting).
- However, NO RESTRICTION for any authority to do much more (e.g., quantitative estimate or semi-quantitative determination).
- Unified Detection Times (associated with ASLs) must not be confused with Withdrawal Times.

Unified Detection Times for the *Normal* Use of Equine Therapeutics

Assist practitioners to formulate their own pre-race Withdrawal Times (horse, treatment & risk dependent):

Withdrawal time = Unified Detection Times + Safety margin

- Unified Detection Times defined as Max. Detection Time observed with ASL from limited no. of healthy & unexercised horses treated with a normal recommended dose
- Safety margin to account for variability of the horse & the treatment, and to minimise risk

New IGSRV Members 2010 - 11

Greg Baldwin	Harness Racing Queensland (Australia)
Graeme Cooke	Federation Equestre Internationale (Switzerland)
Tom David	Louisiana State Racing Commission (USA)
Gregory Hargreaves	Harness Racing Victoria (Australia)
Timothy Morris	British Horseracing Authority (UK)
Dale Wheeler	National Horseracing Authority of Southern Africa (South Africa)
Peter Curl	British Horseracing Authority (U.K.)
Patricia Marquis	Division of Pari-Mutual Wagering – Florida (USA)
Mary Scollay	Kentucky Horse Racing Commission (USA)
David Sykes	Emirates Racing Authority (UAE)

Asian Report - Japan Racing Association Program for Supporting Retired Racehorses

Fumiaki Mizobe, Kanichi Kusano (Japan Racing Association)

Recently, there has been increasing public concern about the treatment of retired racehorses, and many racing jurisdictions are investigating approaches to dealing with this issue. There is unlikely to be single approach that is uniformly successful, given the cultural, legal and religious diversity of racing nations. Fortunately, this concern has not yet struck the Japanese racing industry, but we can easily imagine that it will become important in the near future. The JRA launched its support system for the retired racehorses in 1996.

In this Newsletter, we will introduce the program and identify the current problems of the system.

Policy

Since its establishment, JRA policy has been designed to meet the various expectations of horse racing fans. The JRA understands that fans have expectations about how horses, particularly retired champions, should be treated. In accordance with this notion and the growing concerns toward appropriate care and suitable second life for retired racehorses, the JRA's 'supporting system for retired racehorses' was first introduced in 1996.

How it works

1) Definitions of honoured retired racehorses

Retired racehorses which fulfill the following conditions should be certified as honor racehorses, receiving subsidy of 30,000 JPY per month.

- Winner of a Japanese grade race
- Retired from any other usage but a exhibition horse
- Being taken care of in a farm where fans can meet the horse

2) Qualification Process

The supporting system for retired racehorses is directly managed by the JRA-affiliated organization, Bloodhorse Training Center (BTC). This organization was originally established to achieve goals, such as enlightening breeders on the importance of rearing. Today the BTC also plays a central role in the management of retired racehorses in Japan.

Every year, the BTC accepts applications for support from owners of retired horses. The horses are carefully judged based on the definitions above. First,

retired racehorses that can receive subsidies must be Japanese Grade Race winners that are fully retired from breeding activities or from being used as riding horses. Horses registered as racehorses, stallions, broodmares or riding horses are excluded. In addition, the horses must be kept at farms where fans can meet them directly. It is thought that providing fans with the opportunity to meet famous horses is important and should be supported by funding.

3) Verification Process

The BTC also follows up horses that are supported under the scheme.

- The BTC visits the farms where newly supported horses are kept and checks their identification feeding and general care.
- The information is renewed every 3 years by an on-site investigation.

4) Source of funding

Fundamentally, the system for retired racehorses does not depend on a monetary fund, but it depends on contributions or donations. BTC collects the donations from JRA, Japan Owners Association, and other JRA-affiliated companies. The payment of subsidy to the horse owners is administrated by BTC. In 2009, BTC paid 77,760,000 JPY to 216 retired horses' owners.

Eligible Horses

Since the launch of this system, 338 horses have benefitted from it. Table 1 shows the yearly trend of the payment and the number of horses regarded as eligible. As the graph shows, increasing numbers of horses have received the subsidy recently, resulting in increased outlays. However, because of the recession, the total amount of money available from donations has decreased. A compensating program for donations, which is known as 5-year successive

program for funding retired graded horses (Tokushinkin), will expire by the end of 2011, increasing financial pressure on the BTC.

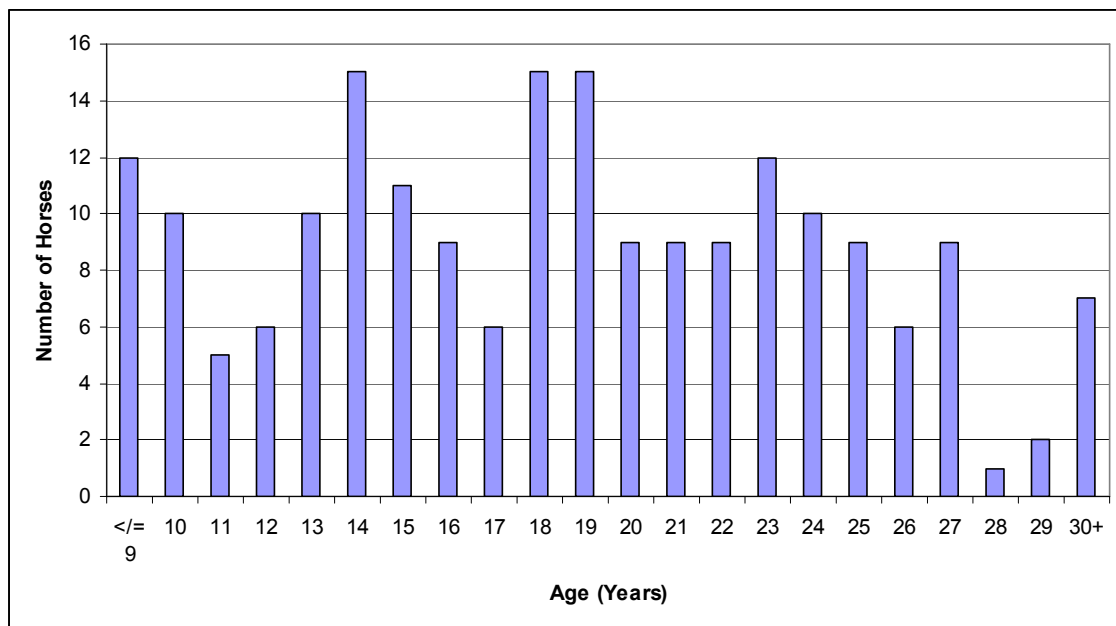
Table 1. Numbers of Eligible Horses

	Newly Qualified Horses	Horses removed from program	Qualified horses at 1 Jan
1997	29	0	29
1998	20	1	48
1999	16	3	61
2000	16	8	69
2001	16	6	79
2002	14	12	81
2003	22	11	92
2004	24	9	107
2005	37	3	141
2006	24	12	153
2007	24	12	165
2008	38	18	185
2009	29	15	199
2010	29	12	216

Ages of Eligible Horses

Figure 1 shows the number of horses of various ages receiving the subsidy. Many horses retire from being stallions, broodmares or riding horses between the ages of 14 and 20, and therefore make up the bulk of the subsidized horses. Furthermore, the early retirement of stallions or broodmares or riding horses, which is the current trend in Japan, will put more financial pressure on the BTC. In addition, considering the present population and statistic data of average life span of these horses, the number of eligible horses will keep increasing for a while.

Figure 1 Age distribution of horses being subsidised



Possible Merits of the System

- Important for welfare of retired horses.
- Eligible retired horses can receive substantial subsidy.
- Eligible horses are available to play a role as exhibition horses for fans.
- Fulfilling fans' mind may contribute to the cultivation of newer fans.

Possible Flaws of the System

- Eligible retired horses are limited; good system only for good horses.
- Verification process is somewhat troublesome.
- Source of money is still limited.

Conclusion

We are now facing some difficulty in just continuing the system. Some kind of revision, such as a reduction of subsidy and/or horse age regulations may be

necessary in the near future. Although a continuation of the soon to expire subsidiary scheme would be helpful, this issue is currently in dispute.

In the long term, finding new sources of funding is essential, which must be achieved by inspiring more and more people - horse owners, trainers, jockeys and fans - to contribute to the support of retired horses. This is important not just to maintain the current system, but to expand support for more retired horses.

With the global recession, the system needs some revision, but we strongly believe that this system can be the first important step for addressing the welfare issue in Japan. We hope this introduction to the Japanese system helps to create a global understanding of present Japanese status of this issue.

Middle East Report

Dr David Sykes has succeeded Eliot Forbes as IGSRV's Middle Eastern representative.

David graduated from Melbourne University in 1978, and spent 24 years Equine and small animal practice on the Mid North Coast of New South Wales, during which time he acted as an official NSW Racing Board Veterinarian. He then spent 2 years as practice manager for Corporate Veterinary Specialist Centre, Sydney NSW; 2 years as Quarantine Veterinary Officer in Dubai and has spent the last year as Racing Steward for ERA.

Glanders in Bahrain

Background

April 2010 2 horses imported from Syria and Kuwait into Bahrain tested positive to Glanders, there were reported to be no clinical signs from in contact animals 22 August , Bahrain declared the outbreak was resolved as of 31st May as there were no new cases.

November 2010, a horse was post mortemed showing clinical signs of Glanders and tested positive to Glanders. There have been clinical cases since then, with the last case reported in February 2011.

The Bahraini Government is committed to eradicating this disease and have put in place protocols for identifying and sampling all horses in the country. They have set up isolation and quarantine practices and have instigated a no movement policy between the North and the South of the country. All cases so far have occurred in stables in the Northern parts of Bahrain.

It has become clear that Camels can be infected and show clinical signs of Glanders, so there is now restricted movement and ongoing testing for this species.

With the recent civil unrest in the country, the difficulty in testing, the possible involvement of camels and the long period from infection to clinical symptoms, this disease is likely to be present for quite some time before it is fully eradicated.

South Africa and African Horse Sickness.

On 4th March the EU placed an import ban on all horses from South Africa.

This is due to cases of AHS occurring within 30 kms of the free zone and with increased vector activity likely to spread closer to the export quarantine station. The ban will be a huge blow to the South African Horse industry, however there has been developed a new PCR test for AHS which is in the validation phase and together with the possibility of pre-export quarantining horses in Mauritius, some movement may be possible in the future.

Other than that the Dubai Racing Club had its World Cup meeting on the 26th March with some \$26 million US in prize money on offer for the day. It was a very successful race day with the Meydan racecourse holding some 81,000 racegoers. Victoire Pisa won the World Cup race which was a wonderful result for the Japanese people after their recent traumas.