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# Letters

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## WE WERE MADE SO WELCOME

Sir — I must respond to Michael Wright (letters, 22 October), who was seemingly being ignored by his local hunts. My experience has been exactly the opposite, thanks to my local pack, the North Staffs.

Last year, I contacted one of the masters to ask if my friend and I could join him out on a day's autumn hunting. I explained that we would need looking after, as my friend's horse was extremely green and mine extremely old, but hopefully keen!

Joint-master Tim Warren met us en route to the meet to ensure that we arrived at the right place. Everyone was very welcoming and made sure we had a fantastic day. My great little horse thought he had died and gone to heaven and a kind lady gave me some very tactful biting advice.

We went again this year and, even though I would love to do more on my little 15-hander, at the grand old age of 27, his head is still willing, but the body just isn't quite up to those jumps any more.

I will hopefully be going again in the not too distant future when I am suitably mounted. As for my old 'un, he buzzed for weeks after and will hopefully be at the children's meet with his young recruit.

**Vanetta Jervis**  
Staffs

## WELL DONE TO 'OUR' CHARLOTTE

Sir — Regarding your article reporting on the Pony Club A test passes (news, 15 October), I was delighted that you made special mention of Charlotte Pearson Wood, who passed with honours.

She is, in fact, a member of the Romney Marsh hunt branch,

## Letter of the week

### I'M AN OWNER — BUT THE FEI MADE THE RIGHT DECISION

Sir — I have just learnt from *H&H* (news, 24 September) that both Britain and Belgium have been excluded from the 2010 Meydan FEI Nations Cup.

I am the owner of Murka's Pom D'Ami and the sponsor of Murka's Pall Mall, two horses which have competed in six out of the eight rounds of the competition. I agree wholeheartedly with Ben Maher, who said at the time: "I'm so disgusted that I heard the news from *Horse & Hound* and not from someone in authority."

We need to take some real action to reform British show jumping to retain and attract new owners and sponsors to keep their horses in Britain.

There is no recognition for riders, horses and owners participating on losing teams, even if they themselves perform well. Given conditions at some of the shows, some horses were not in a position to compete, let alone win or be placed in the following grand prix. This means a decreased opportunity for prize-money and points for those participating in Team GB.

A format of 10, let alone 11 countries for the Nations Cup is untenable. It limits the number of horses that a rider is able to ride, which affects the development of horses for the future. It is too long and, above all, boring to watch.

Britain stands to lose owners not because of relegation to the Promotional League, but because of inaction. Rather than ranting at the International Equestrian Federation (FEI), which I believe has made an extremely brave but correct decision, we should be looking at ourselves. Let's learn to understand how to attract owners and sponsors and develop a strong, disciplined pool of horse-and-rider combinations for the future of British show jumping.

Maybe then we will be able to claim a rightful place in the Meydan Nations Cup and not a questionable one.

**Oлга White**  
Upham, Southants

### The writer of the letter of the week wins a bottle of Champagne Taittinger



although I am sure the Old Berkeley hunt (South) would be very happy to have her as a member.

Well done, Charlotte we are all very proud of you.

**Hattie Cripps DC**  
Sandhurst, Kent

### 'BERTIE' FULFILS BREEDER'S DREAM

Sir — As the breeder of The Philanderer, I would like to congratulate Jayne Webber and Carol Bardo on their supreme title at Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) (special report, 15 October).

It was a last-minute decision to go and I raced up to Birmingham from Hampshire with my daughter to watch "Bertie" in the evening performance. It was truly magical to have seen him

win and I cannot describe how proud we are of him.

His dam, Titania's Dream, was my foundation mare and she really did do it all. She hunted, evented, was shown and then bred outstanding foals, of which he was the last.

Well done to the special horse who reminds me so much of his mother who resides peacefully buried in our field.

I am sure that without the excellent riding and care given by Jayne, The Philanderer would not be where he is today.

**Anna Macey**  
Hants

### REST PERIODS FOR HGV DRIVERS

Sir — Regarding a reader's enquiry about tachograph hours, rules and

regulations concerning the drivers of lorries over 7.5 tonnes (Ask *H&H*, 22 October), weekly rest periods are indeed 45hr.

However, they can be reduced to a minimum of 24hr, not 21-24hr given in the solicitor's reply. He also omitted the need to compensate for the reduction by the third week.

Having worked in the haulage industry for over 21 years, I am familiar with the need to comply with the regulations accurately, as the fines imposed for tachograph offences can be anything up to £2,500.

**S Bradley**  
Bonsall, Derbys

► See our *Plain English guide to transport law*, page 75



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## WE MUST ALL FIGHT TO FINISH THE ACT

Sir — I must congratulate Otis Ferry on his article (hunting, 22 October). I sincerely hope that his words struck a chord with every reader.

As a fellow master, I appreciate Otis's sentiments fully for we cannot continue under this ridiculous Hunting Act indefinitely.

The Act has been proven to be a complete farce, it has failed to benefit a single fox and now every hunt supporter must make sure that it is consigned to history.

We have eight months to win our fight and repeal the ban for the sake of future generations. It's time for the hunting community to have its day, to seek our revenge on a government that has, at every opportunity, tried to harm rural Britain.

To see those Labour MPs' faces the morning after the election will make every hour we spend helping Vote-OK worth it!

**Ross Willmington MFH**  
Branscombe, Devon  
**Catherine Austen, H&H hunting editor, replies: I agree, this is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to gain much-needed repeal. All of us must contact our local hunts and see what we can do to help. You won't be expected to knock on people's doors or argue hunting's case — unless you want to. An hour's leaflet-dropping, envelope-stuffing or telephone-manning should be within everyone's capabilities.**

## KEEP VOTING FOR SEA THE STARS

Sir — I must congratulate H&H on starting a campaign and petition to allow Sea The Stars to be nominated (at least) for the BBC Sports Personality of the Year in

## Top 5 H&H forum topics this week

- 1 In defence of rollkur
- 2 The truth about barefoot
- 3 Part loaning a competition horse?
- 4 What happened to Oli at Pau?
- 5 Pony Club mums rant

Join in at [www.horseandhound.co.uk/forums](http://www.horseandhound.co.uk/forums)

December (news, 22 October).

It saddens me to think we have to bombard the sporting press to get the acknowledgement. If the colt had been a footballer or cricketer, his recognition would have been headline news.

I hope that the BBC showcases the feat of this great racehorse in its award show and that Sea The Stars will be headlining the 90min programme.

Keep emailing your votes to the BBC.

**Fiona Witty**  
Hunmanby, Yorks

## WALK THE COURSE FOR YOUR HORSE

Sir — We recently fence judged at a BE100 and novice event. The course was beautifully presented, but the novice class had a lot of fallers. We were shocked at how many riders walking the course were not focused on the job in hand, particularly the professionals.

One of these riders had a serious fall at a previous fence. Was this because she was too casual about the lower level of the course? Some riders were even busy texting on their mobile phone as they walked the course — one of these eliminated himself at our fence.

It is not just the rider's safety to consider when walking the course — the horse has not seen the fences and if he is to stand any chance of getting round safely, you must give him clear instructions. You cannot do this if you do not know the course and view it the way the horse will see it.

The BE100 was ridden beautifully — maybe the less-experienced riders took more care in walking their course?

**Claire Pemberton**  
By email

## MAKE THIS WARNING OBVIOUS

Sir — The beginner's guide (hunting special, 22 October) was much needed advice to newcomers out hunting.

When I was first out with the pack, I knew nothing of rules and just followed everyone else and hoped for the best.

But after many seasons, I still think that the rule of red ribbon/tape to warn of horses that kick should be made more obvious to other riders.

One day, I was kicked by another rider's horse, which was wearing just a small red ribbon in its tail that was not very obvious. I was left with a broken leg and was not able to work for 12 weeks.

The red-ribboned tails should be made more obvious and a verbal warning given at the meet to prevent more injuries to riders and their horses.

**Georgina Lyons**  
Holsworthy, Devon

## Something to say?

Send letters to the Editor to:  
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# ELLEN WHITAKER

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

The heroine of HOYS talks to H&H about life, being part of show jumping's First Family and, of course, horses

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