

BASIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE HORSERACING INDUSTRY

Workbook



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INTRODUCTION

This workbook provides information you will require to gain a basic knowledge of the horseracing industry. It comprises three sections:

1. Basic History of the Thoroughbred
2. A Selection of Organisations within the British Horseracing Industry
3. Types of Horseracing.

ENTRY LEVEL 3 QUALIFICATION

You may be interested in taking a qualification about the basic knowledge of the horseracing industry.

This qualification forms part of a suite of qualifications that provide knowledge and understanding of how racing operates, including information about its structure, governance and administration.

Entry Level 3 recognises the knowledge of basic facts about subjects taught under guidance or supervision. Learning at this level is about basic key facts about horseracing, and forms the building block for further learning and study leading to Levels 1, 2 and 3.

This qualification is appropriate for someone considering entering the industry with no previous knowledge or experience of racing and breeding, and who wishes to gain a very basic knowledge of horseracing.

ASSESSMENT

Each unit can be assessed independently and is assessed internally by the centre.



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BASIC HISTORY OF THE THOROUGHBRED

The breed of horse called the Thoroughbred can be traced back to the 17th and 18th centuries.

The breed was started by taking mares (female horses) from this country and breeding them with Arabian stallions (male horses) brought in from the Middle East.

Three important Arabian stallions were brought from the Middle East to breed with the British mares. You can trace the pedigree (family tree) of all Thoroughbred horses today to one of these three stallions. They were called:

- the Byerley Turk (born in about 1680)
- the Darley Arabian (born in about 1700)
- the Godolphin Arabian (born in about 1724).

The most notable foal of the Darley Arabian was called Eclipse. He was born in 1764, the year of the great eclipse of the sun. Eclipse won 18 races. After he retired, he had a lot of foals. Three of his foals won the famous race the Derby. The skeleton of Eclipse can be seen at the National Horseracing Museum in Newmarket.

Nowadays, there are about 93,000 Thoroughbred foals born in the world every year.



HOW THOROUGHBREDS ARE IDENTIFIED

There are various methods used to be able to tell one Thoroughbred from another. All Thoroughbreds that are intended to race must be registered in the General Stud Book, which was first published in 1791 by James Weatherby and has been maintained and published by Weatherbys ever since. Each is issued with a passport, in which their details are written down or drawn so that they can be easily identified. A passport will have the following details:

COLOURS

Thoroughbred horses are usually all one colour, often with some individual white markings that help you to recognise them.

Although Thoroughbreds can be a range of colours, there are four common ones: grey, chestnut, bay and brown.



Grey

Grey horses have a black skin, and the coat will vary from dark grey through to white as the horse gets older.



Chestnut

A reddish or ginger coat colour with a mane and tail to match.



Bay

A bay is a brown horse that has a black mane and tail, and black lower legs.



Brown

The whole coat is brown, and the mane and tail too.

HAIR WHORLS

Most horses have some small areas on their coats where the hair grows in a different direction and forms a crest or curl, known as a whorl. These can be used to check which horse is which as they are individual to each horse. These would also be marked on the drawing in the horse's passport.

GENDER

This is to do with whether the horse is male or female.

Male horses

Colt	A male horse up to the age of five
Stallion	A male horse of five years or older, used for breeding
Gelding	A male horse that has been castrated (so cannot produce foals)

Female horses

Filly	A female horse up to the age of five
Mare	A female horse of five years or older

MICROCHIP

All horses must be identified by the insertion of a tiny microchip into the neck of a horse or foal. This is quick and easy to do for a vet, and does not hurt the horse. This microchip records all the horse's personal details. The information can be read using a hand-held scanner that reads the barcode on the microchip. This is a very safe and reliable way of checking the identification of a horse.

AGE

The official birthday of all Thoroughbreds born in the northern hemisphere is 1 January (even if they were actually born months later). This means that the foal officially becomes a yearling on 1 January following its birthday even if it is only six or seven months old. This is why people breed Thoroughbreds to be born early in the year, so that they are as well developed and strong as possible when they become yearlings and go on to race as two-year-olds.



WHITE MARKINGS

There are many variations of white markings that can be found on Thoroughbreds. They are individual to each horse and help us to identify which is which. All white markings are recorded by drawing them on to a diagram in the horse's passport.



Stocking

A white marking that extends from the edge of the hoof to the knee or hock.



Sock

A white marking that extends from the edge of the hoof to two thirds up the leg.



Star

A small white marking between the horse's eyes, but not extending down the nose.



White face

White covering the whole of the horse's face including the eyes, nose and nostrils.

**Pastern**

A white marking that extends a short distance from the edge of the hoof, covering the area called the pastern.

**Blaze**

White begins in the centre of the forehead and travels down the centre of the face; larger than a stripe.

**Stripe**

A long, thin white line down the centre of the face that does not cover the nostrils.

**Snip**

White mark located on the muzzle only. This horse has a star and a snip.

WELFARE AND CARE OF RACEHORSES

Leading organisations in British Horseracing have got together to increase awareness of the high standards of equine welfare in the sport through an initiative called 'The Horse Comes First'. This initiative aims to improve understanding of the care given to racehorses throughout and after their careers in racing.

The campaign is supported by the British Horseracing Authority, the Racecourse Association, Racehorse Owners Association, the Professional Jockeys Association, the National Trainers Federation, The Jockey Club, the National Association of Stable Staff and Arena Racing Company.

British Racing is among the world's best regulated animal activities. The 14,000 horses registered in training at any one time enjoy a quality of life virtually unsurpassed by any other domesticated animal. British Racing employs over 6,000 people to provide constant care and attention for these horses.

An increasing number of racehorses go on to successful second careers after retiring from the track. There are currently over 11,500 horses registered with Retraining of Racehorses (British Horseracing's official charity for the welfare of former racehorses) as active in other equine disciplines outside of racing, including Polo, Showing, Dressage and Eventing, as well as those horses happily engaged in hacking and exercising.

A SELECTION OF ORGANISATIONS WITHIN THE RACING INDUSTRY

There are many industry and member organisations that work together to support racing. Here are a few – you may enjoy looking for many others.



British Horseracing Authority (BHA)

The BHA is the regulatory and governing body of horseracing in Britain. The BHA makes sure that racing is run according to the rules.



British Racing School (BRS)

The BRS was founded in 1969 and moved to Newmarket in East Anglia in 1983. It runs training courses for people in racing such as stable staff, jockeys and racehorse trainers.



National Trainers Federation (NTF)

The NTF is the trade body for racehorse trainers. It gives information, advice and support to trainers on subjects such as employment of staff, insurance and law.



National Horseracing College (NRC)

The NHC is near Doncaster in the North of England. It was set up in 1984 and runs training courses for people in racing such as stable staff, jockeys and racehorse trainers.



National Stud (NS)

The NS is a working stud where foals are bred. It organises tours so that people can see the mares, foals and stallions. The NS also trains people who want to work on a stud.



National Association of Racing Staff (NARS)

NASS is the trade union for stable staff (racing grooms who work in trainers' yards and studs). It gives advice and help to all stable staff.



Professional Jockeys Association (PJA)

The PJA is the trade body for professional jockeys. It supports and helps professional jockeys both on and off the racecourse.



Racehorse Owners Association

The Racehorse Owners Association promotes the interests of racehorse owners in Great Britain and has a membership of over 7,500. It plays a central role in British racing politics and finance.



Thoroughbred Breeders' Association (TBA)

The TBA exists to support the breeding of quality bloodstock and is the only British association to represent breeders' interests both within Great Britain and the European Commission.



RCA

The Racecourse Association is the trade association for British racecourses. Its objectives are to work with racecourses to increase and develop new income streams; promote the highest professional standard in racecourse management, health and safety and veterinary best practice; promote interest within the racing industry; assist race courses to comply with regulations; provide information and support; and manage The Racegoers Club.

THE MAIN CHARITIES THAT SUPPORT PEOPLE AND HORSES IN THE RACING INDUSTRY



Injured Jockeys Fund (IJF)

Being a professional jockey can be a dangerous job, and the IJF was set up in 1964 to help jockeys and their families if they get seriously injured.



Racing Welfare

Racing Welfare is the main charity, other than the IJF, that provides help and support for people who work or used to work in the racing industry.



Retraining of Racehorses (RoR)

RoR is the official charity for the care and well-being of horses that have retired from racing. It raises money to help the retraining and rehoming of ex-racehorses, and runs training courses to help people learn how to look after and ride ex-racehorses.

TYPES OF HORSERACING

There are two types of horseracing in Britain:

1. Jump (National Hunt) – races where horses jump over obstacles. Steeple chasing is where the horses jump over large, hedge-like obstacles called steeple chase fences. Hurdling is where the horses jump over smaller, narrower wooden fences called hurdles. Steeple chasing and hurdling races take place on turf tracks (grass).
2. Flat – where horses don't jump any sort of obstacles. These races take place on turf tracks (grass) or all-weather tracks (artificial surface).

MAJOR JUMP (NATIONAL HUNT) RACES

GRAND NATIONAL

The Grand National is held at Aintree near Liverpool. It is a long race (four miles, two and a half furlongs) with 30 fences. It is probably the most famous jump race in the world. The race is popular among many people who do not normally watch horseracing at other times of the year. One of the most famous horses associated with the Grand National is Red Rum, who won it three times and was second twice.

CHELTENHAM GOLD CUP

The race takes place over steeple chase fences at Cheltenham racecourse during the Cheltenham Festival in March. Famous winners include Arkle, Golden Miller, Mill House and Kauto Star.

CHAMPION HURDLE

This race is for horses aged four years or older. It takes place over hurdles at Cheltenham racecourse at the Cheltenham Festival in March.

TRIUMPH HURDLE

This is another race that takes place at the Cheltenham Festival in March. It is for novice hurdlers aged four years old.

KING GEORGE VI CHASE

This is a steeple chase for horses aged four years or older. It is run at Kempton Park over a distance of about three miles, and there are 18 fences to be jumped. The race takes place on 26 December (Boxing Day). Desert Orchid won the race four times, but Kauto Star holds the record with five wins.

MAJOR FLAT RACES IN BRITISH HORSERACING

The five special races called the Classics are for three-year-old horses:

2,000 GUINEAS

This race is held in May at Newmarket for colts (male horses) and fillies (female horses). The race is one mile/1,600m long.

1,000 GUINEAS

This race is also held in May at Newmarket. It is for fillies only and is one mile/1,600m long.

OAKS

The Oaks is held in June at Epsom. It is for fillies only and run over a distance of one mile, four furlongs/2,400m.

DERBY

This famous race, run at Epsom in June, is for colts and fillies. It is also run over one mile, four furlongs/2,400m.

ST. LEGER

The St. Leger is held at Doncaster in September. It is for colts and fillies, and run over a distance of one mile, six furlongs and about 132 yards/2,900m.

The Triple Crown is won if one horse wins all three of the following:

- the 2,000 Guineas
- the Derby
- the St. Leger.

The last horse to win the Triple Crown was Nijinsky in 1970.

RACING FESTIVALS

A number of major race meetings throughout the year are often called festivals. They can be flat or jump (National Hunt) meetings. The main festival meetings are:

- Cheltenham Festival
- Aintree Grand National
- Newmarket Guineas meeting
- Epsom Derby meeting
- Royal Ascot
- York Ebor
- Glorious Goodwood
- Doncaster St. Leger meeting
- British Champions Day.

Overleaf is a map showing all racecourses in Britain.

Some racecourses are for flat racing only, some for jump (National Hunt) racing only. Some racecourses are for both flat and jump racing and so are called dual purpose.

RACECOURSE LOCATIONS



REVISION TEST

1. Which of the following stallions influenced the early pedigree of the Thoroughbred?
 - (a) Darley Arabian
 - (b) Red Rum
 - (c) Little Arab
2. Approximately how many Thoroughbred foals are born in the world every year?
 - (a) 5,000
 - (b) 90,000
 - (c) 4,000,000
3. Which stallion bred three winners of the Derby?
 - (a) Shaded Sun
 - (b) Moon Shadow
 - (c) Eclipse
4. Which organisation is responsible for registering all Thoroughbred foals?
 - (a) Weatherbys
 - (b) Racecourse Association
 - (c) Horserace Betting Levy Board
5. Which of the following organisations is responsible for governing horseracing in Great Britain?
 - (a) Racing Welfare
 - (b) Professional Jockeys Association
 - (c) British Horseracing Authority
6. Take a photograph of a horse you help to look after and describe its colour, gender, markings and age.
7. Find some photographs of horses in a race and find four different face or leg markings on them.

8. Find a racing charity and describe how it helps people or racehorses.

9. List two types of racing in Great Britain.

10. Name three famous National Hunt races.

11. Name three classic flat races.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS:

12. Put the colour of each horse next to the correct description:

The whole coat is brown and the mane and tail too

A ginger coat colour with matching mane and tail

A brown horse that has a black mane and tail

13. Fill in the blanks using the words in the box:

White face	Centre	Muzzle	Star	Stocking
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- (a) A is a small white marking between the horse's eyes.
- (b) A is a white marking on a horse's leg that extends from the edge of the hoof to the knee or hock.
- (c) A blaze is a white mark which begins in the centre of the forehead and travels down the of the horse's face.
- (d) A covers the whole of the horse's face, including eyes, nose and nostrils.
- (e) A snip is a white spot located on the .

14. Which go together? Put the correct letter in each box.

(a) Colt	Male horse of five years or older (used for breeding)	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Stallion	Male horse of up to five years	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Filly	Female horse up to the age of five	<input type="checkbox"/>
(d) Mare	Male horse which has been castrated	<input type="checkbox"/>
(e) Gelding	Female horse of five years or older	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. When a small area of a horse's coat grows in different directions it is known as a:

- (a) swirl
- (b) whorl
- (c) twirl
- (d) swivel

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