

# IFHA QUARTERLY

*The International Federation of Horseracing Authorities  
newsletter in partnership with the Japan Racing Association*



## IN THIS ISSUE

**EVJ PUBLISHES NEW  
SPECIAL COLLECTION  
ON RACEHORSE SAFETY  
PAGE 2**

**GOLDEN SIXTY SETTLES  
IN AT THE NORTHERN  
HORSE PARK  
PAGE 5**

**INTERNATIONAL  
JOCKEYS CONFERENCE  
SET FOR HONG KONG  
PAGE 7**

**NEW CONFERENCE TO  
DEBUT IN DECEMBER  
PAGE 9**

## IFHA Council on Anti-Illegal Betting & Related Financial Crime Expands

The International Federation of Racing Authorities (IFHA) announced that its Council on Anti-Illegal Betting & Related Financial Crime has expanded its membership to include four additional experts to support integrity in racing and other sports:

- Stefano Caneppele, Professor in Criminology and Deputy Director at the School of Criminal Justice of the University of Lausanne
- Dr Eliot Forbes, CEO, Racing Integrity Board, New Zealand; Chair of the International Forum for the Aftercare of Racehorses (IFAR)
- Jacqui Partridge, Head of Integrity, Cricket Australia
- Marc Van Gestel, Chief Stipendiary Steward, Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC)

# Equine Veterinary Journal Highlights Ongoing Work to Improve Racehorse Safety

The safety of racehorses is paramount, whether on or off the track, and it forms the basis of the Equine Veterinary Journal's (EVJ) new special collection on racehorse safety, sponsored by the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA).

The virtual collection provides free access to science-based and data-driven research presented at last year's IFHA summit, aimed at improving the welfare of racehorses globally.

A [free podcast](#) sits alongside the virtual issue, with compelling discussion between Jamie Stier (chair of IFHA horse welfare committee), Chris Riggs (director of the Hong Kong Jockey Club Equine Welfare Research Foundation and fracture workshop organiser of the IFHA Summit), and Celia Marr (editor of the EVJ and EASD workshop organiser of the IFHA Summit).

The IFHA Global Summit on Equine Safety & Technology held in Toronto in June 2024 brought together world-leading research scientists, clinicians, veterinarians, and racing regulators from around the globe to discuss how science and technology could best be used to help minimise the risk of fractures and exercise-associated sudden death in racehorses.

The EVJ's special collection, guest edited by Chris Riggs and edited by Celia Marr, contains four editorials based on the summit, together with 22 diverse and important papers from

world-leading researchers on how science and technology could be best used to help minimise the risk of fractures and exercise associated sudden death (EASD) in racehorses.

The introductory section sets the scene by identifying racing's concerns and what it expects from science, what veterinary scientists want from racing and the risk factors for fatality in jump racing.



Celia Marr was one of the editors of the special collection

Exercise-associated sudden death (defined as: 'a fatal collapse in a closely monitored and previously presumed clinically healthy horse that occurs during exercise or within approximately one hour after exercise') accounts for 10%–25% of racecourse deaths.

**Understanding exercise-associated sudden death** includes six papers incorporating the risk factors, the latest work on reducing the risk, post mortem findings, the heritability of sudden cardiac death, the morphological characteristics of the myocardial sleeves in the vena cava and the validation of an equine fitness tracker.

*Continued on page 3*

## EVJ collection cont.

Severe fractures are the cause of most other racecourse fatalities. Although the incidence of these injuries is relatively low, the impact on the welfare of individual animals and humans is profound. With most fractures in the racehorse occurring as an acute manifestation of a chronic repetitive overuse injury, there is significant potential for timely intervention and prevention.

**Predicting and preventing catastrophic fracture** comprises 17 papers comprehensively examining how current research can be advanced and translated into action. The section covers the development of realistic screening programmes to identify high-risk horses, including training practices, exercise history and diagnostic risk evaluation, ultimately to help predict and prevent catastrophic fractures.

“It is critical for racing that future research, and scientific and technological developments, translate into real benefits in equine safety,” said Marr. “This substantial special collection provides easy access to the latest international research; by understanding identifiable risks, we can help to mitigate them, advance welfare and enhance public perception of the sport to secure a safer future for racing.”

The EVJ special collection on racehorse safety can be found [here](#). The podcast can be downloaded [here](#).

Equine Veterinary Journal (EVJ) is owned by the British Equine Veterinary Association. EVJ is an unrivalled international equine veterinary science journal which strives to publish clinically orientated research. It was first published in 1968 and now appears bi-monthly.

# Equine Veterinary Journal



## Racehorse Safety Online Collection





<https://bit.ly/4kjRUPg>

### Selected articles covering:

- The IFHA Global Summit on Equine Safety & Technology
- Exercise associated sudden death
- Predicting and preventing catastrophic failures





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## Golden Sixty Thriving in Retirement at Northern Horse Park in Japan

Hong Kong legend Golden Sixty, who routinely featured in the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings throughout his career, retired last year. During his time on the track, he won 26 of 31 starts, including 10 Grade 1 races, and earned HK\$167,170,600 (about US\$21.5 million) for owner Stanley Chan. Following his retirement from racing, the decision was made to send Golden Sixty to Northern Horse Park in Japan.

To satisfy quarantine regulations, he first traveled from Hong Kong to Australia. After two months there, Golden Sixty arrived at Northern Horse Park in Hokkaido, Japan on Feb. 9. He spent three more months in quarantine before joining the regular stables in May.

Now, he is setting into his new life, and he has drawn the attention of many visitors. Misato Yoneya, Equestrian Section Manager at Northern Horse Park, answered some questions about the three-time Horse of the Year.

**Q: What was Golden Sixty's quarantine routine like?**

A: During the quarantine, we had to make sure he didn't come into contact with other horses. We also spent a lot of time carefully monitoring his health. To help maintain his condition, we gave him light exercise regularly.

**Q: What has his day-to-day been like since he cleared quarantine?**

A: Since clearing quarantine, he's been able to move into the main barn with the other horses, and we're finally able to let him meet his fans—which is exciting! He now has his own paddock, where he spends time every day with his good



Golden Sixty now calls Northern Horse Park home

friend John, a Quarter Horse. We also do some light riding sessions to keep him fit, always at a pace that suits him.

**Q: How has he adapted to his new home?**

A: When he first arrived in Hokkaido in February, everything was covered in snow. We clearly remember how wide-eyed he looked—it must have been his first time seeing snow, since he had grown up in Australia and lived in Hong Kong. At first, we hoped he would gradually adjust to the new environment, but he settled in so quickly that we realized there was no need to worry.

**Q: What are the plans for Golden Sixty?**

A: He's in great shape and has impressive physical ability, so we incorporate regular riding into his daily routine to help maintain both his physical condition and mental well-being. Our goal is to help him find a meaningful second career. Who knows—if he eventually starts competing, we imagine his fans will be absolutely thrilled. Above all, our mission is to continue sharing his healthy and happy life with his fans around the world.

*Continued on page 6*



## Golden Sixty cont.

**Q: What has struck you most about him?**

A: Before he arrived, we had heard detailed insights from Vincent Ho, the former jockey of Golden Sixty, about his personality. He told us Golden Sixty is a sensitive horse and could sometimes get upset, so the whole staff was a bit nervous at first. But he's a very intelligent horse, and as we took care of him while respecting his will, he gradually began to trust us. I believe he's come to realize here that he no longer needs to show his aggressive competitiveness. One moment I'll never forget is when he cautiously tried a Carrot Cookies (our original horse treat made at our park) for the first time. It seemed he really enjoyed it, savoring every bite.

**Q: Does Golden Sixty have a specific caregiver or do lots of staff work with him?**

A: Training is entrusted to dedicated, experienced staff to ensure as much consistency as possible and to minimize the horse's stress. Additionally, Vincent regularly provides us with information and advice about the horse, which we also find very helpful. While daily care is done

by all the staff, Golden Sixty captivates the team with the contrast between his gentlemanly personality and his adorable expressions.

**Q: How have visitors to Northern Horse Park received him?**

A: Even during the quarantine period, we frequently received inquiries about when people could see him. Now, his paddock is always surrounded by fans, which really shows just how popular he is. It's been wonderful to see such strong support. We are honored that Mr. Stanley Chan, the owner of Golden Sixty, chose Northern Horse Park as the place for his beloved horse to spend his retirement. From now on, we hope the horse can enjoy a peaceful life surrounded by the rich, seasonal nature of our park.

**Q: Northern Horse Park shared a video of Wind in Her Hair (dam of Deep Impact, Black Tide, etc.) and Golden Sixty together. What has it meant to the park to have two such legends?**

A: It was a moment none of us ever expected. Having the dam of horses who made history in Japanese racing and a star horse remembered in Hong Kong's racing history together here at Northern Horse Park fills our entire staff with pride. We feel honored to be able to show their many fans that these great horses are healthy and happy.

**Q: What would you most like people to know about Golden Sixty?**

A: When people hear he's the strongest horse in Hong Kong's history, they might imagine a rough or fierce personality. But he is a gentleman—intelligent and very charming, often showing the most adorable expressions. We'd love for everyone to come and meet Golden Sixty in person. We're very happy that Golden Sixty has helped create connections with people overseas. Going forward, Northern Horse Park will continue to support second careers for Thoroughbreds like him, so they can continue to shine even after retiring from racing.



Golden Sixty with his new friend John the Quarter Horse

## International Jockeys Conference set for Hong Kong

The International Conference for the Health, Safety and Welfare of Jockeys (ICHSWJ) will take place on 11-12 December in Hong Kong.

The conference, which is being organised by the Jockeys Health and Wellbeing Committee (JHWC) of the International Federation of Horseracing Authorities (IFHA), and is proudly supported by The Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC), will take place between the International Jockeys' Championship (IJC) and the Longines Hong Kong International Races (HKIR).

"Jockey health, safety and welfare are all non-negotiable aspects of our sport," said JHWC Chair Darragh O'Loughlin. "This year's conference will take a deep dive into a wide range of topics that play a crucial role in improving the lives of jockeys, while also facilitating meaningful networking opportunities between attendees from around the world."

The 2025 conference, themed Performance Medicine in Racing – Developing and Protecting the Jockey, will take an applied, evidence-based approach featuring impactful presentations followed by dynamic panel discussions with leading experts in the field.

Confirmed sessions for the 2025 ICHSWJ include:

- Inside the Mind of the Jockey: Performance, Wellbeing, and Lessons from the Field
- Fit to Ride: Physical Preparation and Rehabilitation for Jockey Performance
- Advancing Safety in the Saddle: Injury Surveillance, Prevention, and Protective Innovations



- From Turf to Recovery: The Concussion Journey in Horse Racing
- Minimum Riding Weights: Towards a More Individualised and Evidence-Based Approach
- On the Track: Live Outdoor Simulation of Raceday Medical Practice
- Beyond the Finish Line: Supporting Jockeys' Careers and Transition into Retirement
- Fuelling the Ride: Practical Insights and Evolving Strategies in Jockey Nutrition

Further details on topics and speakers will be released closer to the conference.

Opportunities for networking, fostering connections and collaborations, and sharing valuable resources will also be a key part of the event, and themed roundtable discussions will be held.

There will also be a dedicated poster presentation session themed "Developing and Protecting the Jockey," which will provide delegates with the opportunity to showcase research, applied practice, country updates and current projects.

*Continued on page 8*

## ICHSWJ cont.

To present in the poster session, interested parties should submit their name, country, and presentation overview to [ICHSWJ Poster Submission](#) by 30 September. Details will subsequently be provided to successful applicants.

The conference is open to all those who work with jockeys and are interested in further enhancing their health, safety and welfare. Media are also welcome.

The [registration form](#) to attend the conference is available on the ICHSWJ website. It includes information about accommodation options.

ICHSWJ registration also includes (optional) attendance at the following HKJC social events:

- Happy Valley races (featuring the IJC) entry and dinner – Wednesday, 10 December
- HKIR Gala Dinner – Friday, 12 December
- International Trackwork Breakfast – Saturday, 13 December
- HKIR entry and lunch – Sunday, 14 December

For all the latest information, please visit the [ICHSWJ website](#).

For any inquiries, please contact [ichswj@gmail.com](mailto:ichswj@gmail.com).

The ICHSWJ was last held in October 2023 in conjunction with the 57<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Horseracing Authorities and other associated meetings around the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe weekend.



Darragh O'Loughlin is the Chair of the Jockeys Health and Wellbeing Committee (JHWC), which organises the conference



## First Translational Conference Scheduled for December

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Equine Welfare Research Foundation is hosting its 1st Translational Conference “Applying Science to the Care of the Thoroughbred Racehorse” on 15-17 December.

This new conference will focus on the role of science in finding solutions to issues that threaten the safety and welfare of Thoroughbred racehorses and will create a unique opportunity for researchers to share new knowledge whilst building global collaborative relationships with the racing industry.

Chris Riggs, Director of the HKJC Equine Welfare Research Foundation, recently provided more information and answered questions about this new gathering.

“When the HKJC established the Equine Welfare Research Foundation in 2020, it expressed a commitment to ensuring that all knowledge gained from the research funded by the Foundation is shared with everyone who can use it to improve care of the horse,” said Riggs. “The conference is one way of ensuring that the Foundation lives up to this vision.”

Topics will include:

- Identifying key challenges to the welfare of the racehorse and prioritising research needs
- The impact scientific research has had on the safety and sustainability of other global sports
- Latest findings from studies relating to the prevention, or early diagnosis, of injuries and disease that commonly affect the racing Thoroughbred

- How to transform scientific findings into practical improvements
- Helping researchers to appreciate the research priorities of the industry

Novel interactive sessions will:

- Foster exchange between researchers and key racing officials from around the world to promote a shared understanding of critical issues and clarify perceived needs
- Share the latest research findings from international scientists
- Enable participants to build fresh global alliances in a “Sandpit” event, which will provide a dynamic environment to stimulate creative thinking and problem-solving and encourage the development of innovative, collaborative research proposals in real time
- Support and encourage Early Career Researchers in the field or racing by providing opportunities for them to engage directly with a wide range of different stakeholders and for them to receive mentorship from experienced research colleagues
- Provide relevant research funding bodies with an opportunity to present to potential applicants their criteria for successful applications

The conference will accept abstracts for oral and poster presentations on topics that relate to the safety, health and welfare of the Thoroughbred racehorse during and after their racing careers. The portal for submission will close on 31 July.

A Delphi study to identify and prioritise research needs will be initiated before the conference and continued throughout its duration. Financial bursaries will be available to support some attendees.

*Continued on page 10*

## New Conference cont.

To further explain the new conference, Riggs took part in a Q&A to give more details.

### **Q: What inspired the conference?**

A: We intend that the conference will give researchers whose work impacts the racehorse an opportunity to engage directly with the racing industry, to enhance the mutual understanding of needs and opportunities. The industry will have the chance to influence the future directions of research. Researchers will be able to explain what samples, data and other resources they need, in addition to funding, to undertake their work. We have built plenty of networking opportunities into the programme and there is an emphasis on working to “demystify” aspects of research that may baffle those working in the field and vice versa.

Also, we acknowledge that the global body of researchers working on the problems that racing faces is small, and we intend that the programme will actively encourage new collaborative links between groups and, thereby, help to advance the global research effort to achieve better outcomes for the horse. One session, to be held over a working breakfast, specifically aims to provide encouragement and guidance to researchers new to the field, and the opportunity for them to make contacts who can help build relevance and applied context to their work.

### **Q: How and why were conference topics chosen?**

A: Our Foundation and the conference will focus on horse welfare above all else. We recognize that severe injuries and manifestations of disease that occur while horses are racing, such as fractures and “heart-attacks”, are considered by many to be highest priority; not only do they have profound impact on the welfare of affected horses and, sometimes, their jockeys, but they



HKJC Equine Welfare Research Foundation Director Chris Riggs

are also very public and reflect poorly on the sport. However, mercifully these incidents are rare and while we will invest significant attention to them, we also intend to spend time on conditions that are more prevalent and yet less obvious. Much of this is focused on ensuring that horses complete their racing careers in the best possible physical shape so that they are fit and healthy and able to thrive in secondary careers after they retire from racing. A tool that would allow us to reliably quantify the “state of well-being” of a horse would be a powerful one. It could be used to determine which horses are “feeling well” and which “feeling less well”, and then used to interrogate circumstances to demonstrate the factors that have positive or negative impacts. If it can be demonstrated that at “happy” horses also perform better than “less happy horses”, this would provide an additional incentive for the industry to strive for the best possible “state of well-being” for the horses in its care.

### **Q: Why was bringing on international conference partners important?**

*Continued on page 11*

## New Conference cont.

A: We are delighted to have three of the other major global funders of equine research—the Grayson Jockey Club Research Foundation, the Horserace Betting Levy Board and the Japanese Racing Association—partnering with us at the conference. This will provide an opportunity to share knowledge with each other, and with those we hope to fund, and may lead to further collaboration to target specific high-priority needs.

The science behind many of the issues that impact racehorses is highly complex, requires significant investment to research and relies on the work of dedicated teams, built over years. The resources available globally are stretched and the industry cannot afford for resources to be wasted. Furthermore, while additional funding would always be well-received, the challenges extend much more widely than money alone. The field needs to be made more attractive so that high-performing researchers, who frequently get drawn away to areas where they will receive better recognition, chose to remain in it. Researchers need better access to data and biological specimens to support vital studies. We hope that, by providing an opportunity to establish more direct communication and sharing between funding bodies, we might help develop a more effective, global, approach towards these problems.

**Q: The conference will accept abstracts for oral and poster presentations. What would you like those who are considering applying to know?**

A: Some sessions are restricted to speakers who

have been invited to address specific questions, but we have also opened a portal for the free submission of work, for presentation in sessions designed to allow the sharing of the latest research findings. Submitted abstracts will be scrutinized through peer review and the allocation of talks will be based on merit.

We are open to any topic that includes work that may impact the quality of life of the Thoroughbred racehorse, if it is ethically sound, based on reliable scientific methodology and well presented.

It will be important for all those presenting to remember that the audience will be a mixed crowd, and so they should avoid scientific jargon and favor plain English whenever possible.

The deadline for submission of abstracts of work proposed for presentation is 31<sup>st</sup> July, and this will be strictly applied. Potential applicants can find full details and gain access to the abstract submission portal via the conference [website](#).

**Q: Is there anything else about the conference that you would like to add?**

A: We will hold an intellectual “sandpit” during the conference, which is designed to encourage new collaborative links. We hope that new teams of international researchers co-operating together will form at the conference to propose projects that address two problems related to racehorse welfare. For each of the two problems, the Foundation intends to select one team to receive a grant that will be awarded after the conference to fund their new research proposal.

### Conference Partners



Grayson-Jockey Club  
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## WORLD RANKINGS

With a rating of 127, Field Of Gold and Ombudsman have joined Forever Young as the co-highest rated horses in the world in the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings for 2025.

Forever Young earned his rating following his victory over Romantic Warrior in the Saudi Cup (G1). Both Field Of Gold and Ombudsman impressed at Royal Ascot. Field Of Gold won the St James's Palace Stakes (G1), while Ombudsman took the Prince Of Wales's Stakes (G1).

The next edition of the Longines World's Best Racehorse Rankings will be published on Thursday, the 14th of August.

### LONGINES World's Best Racehorse Rankings Leading Horses

for 3yos and upwards which raced between  
1st January 2025 - 6th July 2025

Rank	Horse	Rating	Trained
1	Field of Gold (IRE)	127	GB
1	Forever Young (JPN)	127	JPN
1	Ombudsman (IRE)	127	GB
4	Delacroix (IRE)	126	IRE
4	Ka Ying Rising (NZ)	126	HK
4	Romantic Warrior (IRE)	126	HK

### LONGINES World's Best Jockey Leading Jockeys \*\*\* as of 13 July 2025

Jockey	Total Points
James McDonald	136
Ryan L. Moore	86
William T. Buick	68
Oisin Murphy	48
Ryusei Sakai	46

James McDonald, who was crowned the 2024 Longines World's Best Jockey, has a commanding lead in the 2025 competition. He currently has 136 points, while Ryan Moore is in second with 86 points.

McDonald's qualifying victories thus far include the Longines Hong Kong Cup (Romantic Warrior), Longines Hong Kong Mile (Voyage Bubble), Stewards' Cup (Voyage Bubble), Citi Hong Kong Gold Cup (Voyage Bubble), TAB Verry Elleegant Stakes (Via Sistina), Ranvet Stakes (Via Sistina), Queen Elizabeth Stakes (Via Sistina), Ladbrokes Doomben 10,000 (Sunshine in Paris), and Eva Air Kingsford-Smith Cup (Joliestar).