

SUMMER HORSES

With the mixed weather over the past few months, the season has felt a little stopstart so far. The horses, however, continue to be in good form and we have had three winners as well as plenty of placed horses since our last update.

Ecossais is definitely a yard favourite and so it was extra special when he won recently at Perth. Having won three races for us when he first came over from France, he was initially given a relatively high handicap mark which has barely gone down as he always runs a solid race.

In recent races he appeared to struggle slightly under the weight so we opted to give him a wind op at the start of this season which seems to have done the trick. Turning in at Perth, it looked as though getting placed was the best we could have hoped for but, as the leaders started to tire, Ecossais was clearly more comfortable in his wind and battled on to get up on the line. He is owned by one of our racing clubs which are a great fun and affordable way to get involved in entry level ownership.

Having been bought at the Newmarket HIT sale in October '22 and taken a little time to find his feet, Dandy's Derriere is now on flying form and it was such a thrill to see him win so well at Newcastle on the all-weather track. This was his second victory of the season, and he then went on to finish a very close second at Wolverhampton in a nail-biting finish.

El Borracho is another superstar who is having a fantastic season. Having won earlier in the season on the flat at Thirsk, he went to Bangor off a mark of 134, his highest winning mark over fences. Toby Wynne gave him a confident front-running ride and he responded perfectly, jumping like a stag throughout.

One horse that has run notably well without winning and deserves a mention is Tre a Peni who finished third recently at Worcester. She has not been the most straightforward to train but Toby strikes a great note with her and she jumped better than ever, so fingers crossed she goes two better next time.

Another is Go on Chez who has won plenty of races for the yard in the past and, as such, is now operating off a much higher mark in higher calibre races. The wet summer hasn't worked in his favour as he likes quick ground but, despite the conditions being against him, he has run three great races finishing second each time and will be back to his winning ways very soon.



ECOSSAIS winning at Perth



Dandy's Derriere



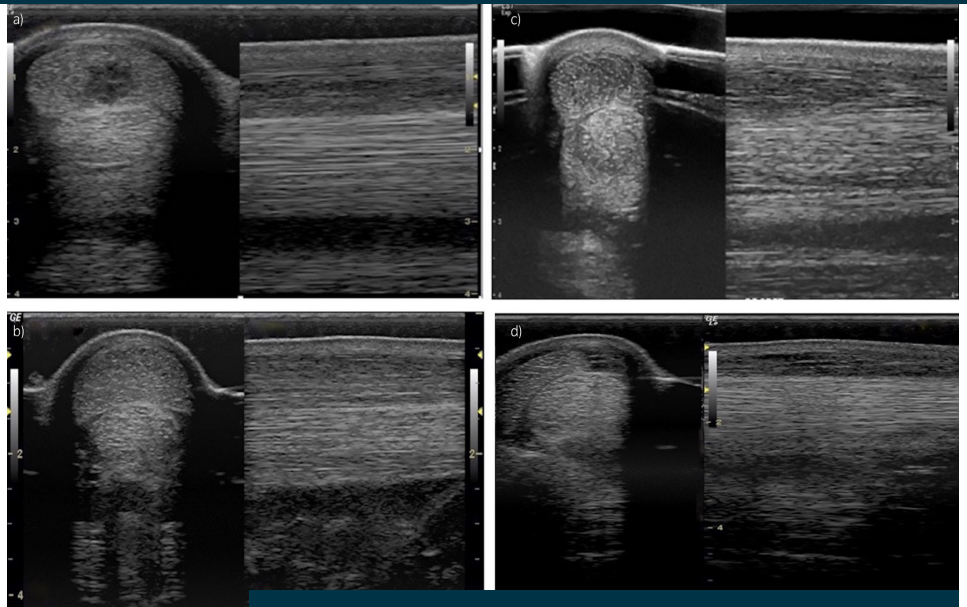
El Borracho winning at Bangor

FAMILY LIFE



The children are really getting into their riding now and we have now borrowed a third pony so that they can all ride at the same time without arguments about whose turn it is next. It's early days but Walter is starting to trot!! The main thing is that they are all keen and that we are having a lot of fun riding all together as a family.

TRAINING HORSES AND MINIMISING RISK OF INJURY

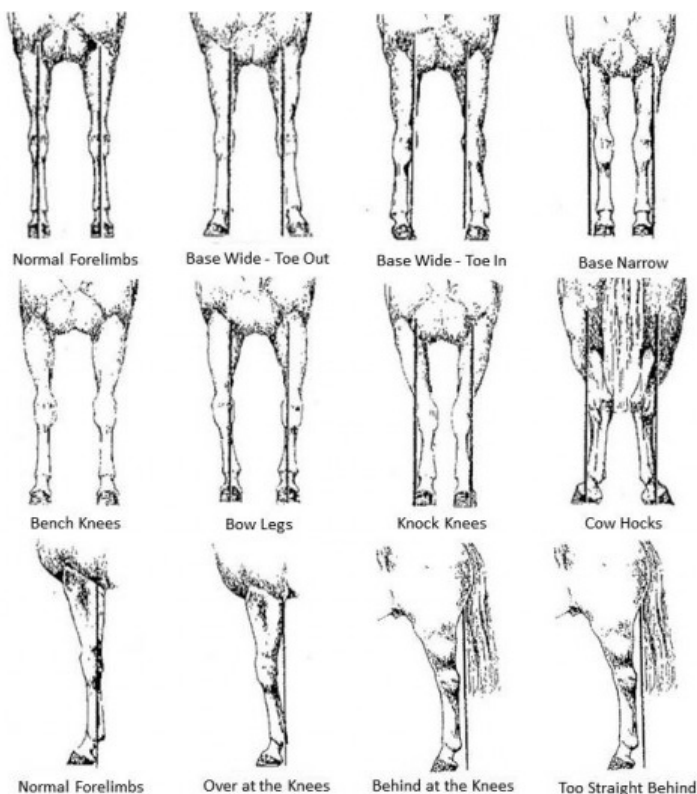


a) SDFT tendonitis with an anechoic core lesion, b) SDFT tendonitis with a hypoechoic core lesion, c) hypoechoic SDFT tendonitis without a core lesion and d) anechoic SDFT tendonitis without.jpg

At this time of year, the bulk of our horses are graduating through the training regime with the aim of getting them to peak fitness as the ground softens in early November.

It's always a fine balancing act to produce the horses in the best possible form to coincide with the ideal race whilst keeping them sound of limb and mind, and without over-training them. Owners are often surprised when, after their first run of the season, the trainer might report that the horse was not 100% fit coming into the race and will benefit from the run. If a horse is trained relentlessly hard every day, there is a very high chance that it will either cause lameness or that the horse will get soured and not want to race, or both. The key is to build them up slowly and to use all our various facilities to aid the process.

Each with their individual training schedule, there is a huge amount of pressure to get these athletes to the track and perform on the day, so it's gutting and definitely one of the worst parts of the job when a horse sustains an injury during the training process. Whilst many injuries are unavoidable, we do everything possible to minimise the likelihood in order to give each horse the best chance of having a long and successful racing career.



Over the years, we have developed and tweaked our facilities to enable us to get the horses fit with the least amount of pressure on them.

Coming off their summer break, all horses do a month of walking and trotting on the roads followed by a month of steady cantering, mainly on the deep sand, before progressing onto a month of faster work using a combination of both the deep sand and carpet gallops.

The deep sand loop works the horses extremely hard at a low speed and gives them a fantastic base level of fitness, whilst the carpet gallop is used for the fast work. As well as being super spongy and shock absorbing, the carpet gallop (unlike many synthetic gallops) is kept extremely level which greatly helps in preventing hoof twists that can so often cause a sprain.

We also have three grass gallops which play an integral part in the fitness regime and race preparation. Natural surfaces are always the ultimate to work on as they see the horses come alive and working that little bit harder thus gaining an extra notch of fitness.

Using the different surfaces is a key component of our training strategy and definitely benefits fitness as well as reducing injury. Alternating the surfaces and gradients sees a reduction in repetitive strain injuries and makes the horses move differently on each and therefore works and conditions different parts of their bodies.

Also key to making the horses use themselves properly is the riders holding them together as well as regular physio treatment back at the yard to ease any tightness and to keep them supple.

We also use the three walkers at the yard for gentle warming up before exercise and cooling off afterwards.

Whilst there are many different injuries a horse can sustain, the most frustrating and serious is a tear to a front tendon, including the suspensory ligaments and flexor tendons. It is also possible to injure the hind tendons, however these are less common.

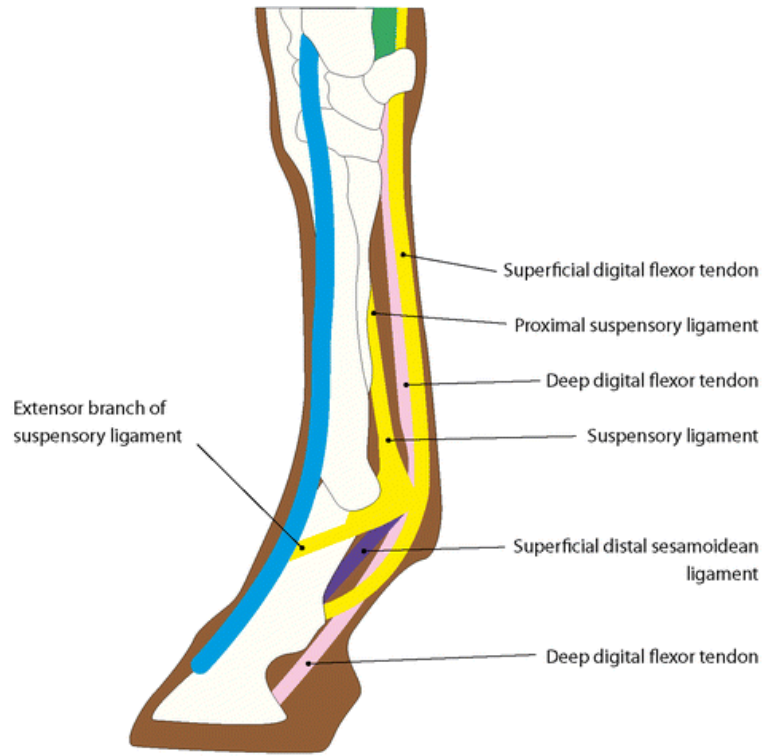
“Prevention is better than cure”

With the smallest of tears, often there is no lameness or pain yet the horse has to be given 9-12 months off without strenuous exercise to have best chance of a full recovery. And once a tendon injury has been sustained, unlike with bones, the weakness will always be there.

Prevention is better than cure so we also use boots and bandages as required and ensure horses don't run on unsuitable ground. The horses' front tendons are felt religiously every morning by me and evening by Josh so that if any heat or swelling is present, we can treat it straight away before any further strain is put on it. Often the tendons are only bruised, and cold therapy (cold hosing and ice) will effectively reduce any swelling and help the tendon to recover more quickly.

The integrity and professionalism of our vets are another key component in preventing serious injuries. With their state-of-the-art equipment to scan tendons & ligaments, they have best chance of picking up any problems early before they develop into tears. Early detection of an issue often leads to a horse only requiring a short period of rest before returning to full work and can prevent more serious injuries from occurring.

Treatments have also improved over the years including stem cell therapy and injecting plasma into tears to increase the rate of regrowth. Whilst such treatments don't reduce the time of recovery, they can facilitate a stronger mend that can help prevent reinjury. Overall, however, the key to successful recovery is giving the horse the necessary time off before starting a slow build up. We then regularly scan the affected tendons to ensure they are holding up and adjust the workload accordingly.



It's also important to only buy horses that have correct conformation. You can change and improve many aspects of a horse during training, but conformation isn't one of them. For National Hunt horses, amongst other factors, it is crucial that the hooves are straight and point forwards and not to the side, that the cannon bones are short, the knee is not behind the fetlock and that the horse is not top heavy. By starting with a correct model, it mitigates (although doesn't eliminate) the chances of injury further down the line.



ROR – UPDATE

Poppy Wynne continues to retrain our ex racehorses and the demand for them is still very strong, she is so good at getting them used to new situations, taking them to shows and getting them used to a more family style of living. Here is Andonno sticking his tongue out and looking very smug at his new home.

Here is Andonno sticking his tongue out and looking very smug at his new home.



And Ice Coast loving doing some road work and nannying his new friend!



THREE TO FOLLOW

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There is a list of our horses on our website: greenall-guerriero.co.uk
Our Horses | Greenall Guerriero Racing



Staff Profile: Ellie Dickenson

1. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Thelwall, Warrington

2. How did you first get interested in horses?

My family went to Norfolk when I was little and there was a field of horses next to the cottage we were staying at and the owner had seen me stroking her horses so she invited me to go on a hack on the beach with her. Then after we got back I started riding lessons.

3. How did you get into your current job?

I had seen there was a travelling position available and I always enjoyed taking horses to the races so I thought it was the perfect opportunity to progress.

4. What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoying taking horses to the races and leading up a winner is the best feeling ever but also watching the younger horses improve is also very rewarding.

5. Most challenging aspect of the job?

I find the winter the most challenging time with the rain and it being cold.

6. If you could change anything within the industry what would it be?

More support for people starting out in racing regarding riding and progression within the industry.

To keep up to date with runners, and hopefully some more winners, don't forget to visit our website, follow us on Twitter and like our page on Facebook.

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