



Unique's in his prime — he could do everything
Nick Skelton on his 11-year-old ride's performance in Florida [see page 72](#)



£100

the fine handed to owner Anthony Knott after he jumped up behind the jockey on his winner Hunt Ball at Wincanton. See racing, p36



Newly registered showjumpers must now be microchipped

COVER STORY

Showjumping

Row over new BS microchipping rule

A new rule that makes microchipping compulsory for horses newly registered with British Showjumping (BS) has been criticised by some members as an "unnecessary expense", writes **Flora Watkins**.

The rule — effective from 1 April — does not apply to horses jumping in BS club competitions (who compete for points, not prize-money) or those that are already registered with BS.

But critics say the decision will affect those who want to jump older horses at the lower levels, as most young horses are now chipped as a matter of course.

Robert J Twiddy, director of

At £50 per horse, this runs into a great expense on top of what are becoming expensive BS fees

Robert Twiddy, KWPN breeder

Sports Horse World — which breeds KWPNs — told *H&H* the change was "not needed".

"I have no problem with microchipping if it were dedicated to grade As competing for the larger prize-money," he said.

"What I object to is retrospectively asking us to microchip a 13-year-old horse who is jumped for pleasure at the lower levels."

Mr Twiddy — who had been planning to reregister his horses with BS — believes the cost will cause a "backlash" from owners who have several horses.

"At £50 per horse, this runs into a great expense on top of what are becoming expensive BS fees," he added.

BS members have also claimed that the amendment was "buried" in the rulebook. Others have said they will

jump on a day ticket rather than reregister.

But BS chief executive Iain Graham defended the decision, saying it was an "identification" issue.

"It helps us and the members know that the horse in the ring is the horse that is registered," he said.

BS stewards will carry out spot checks with scanners at shows throughout the year.

Mr Graham added that no one who wanted to jump affiliated should be deterred by the cost of microchipping.

"We are running chipping and vaccination days [flu vaccinations are compulsory for all BS horses from 1 April] around the country. People can bring horses to central venues so there's no vet's call-out fee," he added.

Although British Dressage (BD) and British Eventing (BE) have confirmed to *H&H* that they do not plan to make microchipping compulsory this season, the issue is clearly on their radar.

BE says it expects to hold discussions "this year" to consider whether its rules need to be amended, while a BD spokesman said the rule "would come in eventually".

Who needs a microchip?

- ▶ All newly registered horses and ponies competing in national BS competitions
- ▶ Horses already registered with BS do not require a microchip at this stage
- ▶ Horses competing in BS club competitions (for points not prize-money) are not affected

WHAT DO YOU THINK? — from the H&H forum



My mare was done as a foal anyway. Can see why it's a good idea though, surely there's only a minority now that aren't?

KatB



I can compete under FEI rules for British Eventing with no microchip yet now won't be able to hop round a BS class... ridiculous.

MagicMelon



For once BS is trying to lead the field — probably only a matter of time before the rest want it, too. Mine is chipped, it only cost £17 so not exactly breaking the bank. **StencilFace**

London 2012 Olympics

Ticket buyers must wait until April

LONDON 2012 organisers have reopened the ticket resales website — but only for people who want to sell unwanted tickets.

Those still trying to track down a ticket to the equestrian events will have to wait until April to attempt to buy one.

The resale site was suspended on the day it went live (6 January).

Problems developed as the site was slow to update sessions that had sold out (news, 19 January).

Unwanted tickets can be sold until 6pm on 3 February.

They will be released for sale — along with an additional 1.3million tickets across most events, including equestrian, in April.

▶ www.tickets.london2012.com

Dressage

Hester pilots Wie Atlantico in Florida

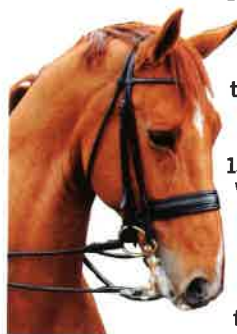
CARL HESTER and Charlotte Dujardin are contesting the World Dressage Masters in Palm Beach this week (26-29 January).

While Charlotte is campaigning her long-term partner, Carl and Roly Luard's Valegro — the subject of last week's Lucinda Green rides — Carl has a new contender.

He is partnering Penny and Fiona Bigwood's Hanoverian gelding **Wie**

Atlantico (left), as Fiona is expecting her third child.

It will be Carl's first outing on the 13-year-old 2010 World Equestrian Games team silver medallist, who has only been on his yard for a few weeks.



Hunting

Former soldier to command the CA

THE former Commander of the UK Field Army, Lieutenant General Sir Barney White-Spunner is taking over the reins at the Countryside Alliance.

Sir Barney replaces chief executive Alice Barnard, who resigned in November.

A long-term supporter of all country sports, Sir Barney is a contributor to *H&H's* sister title *The Field*, a former editor of *Baily's Hunting Directory* and was president of the Association of Masters of Harriers and Beagles.

Sir Barney was knighted last year and left the Army in December 2011.