

News

Last week's poll results:

68% of you think there hasn't been nearly enough television coverage of the World Equestrian Games

This week's question:

What do you think of equestrian vaulting?

Robert Walker and Sam Roberts

▲ The pair have battled back to the top — Robert (right) claimed the hunter title at Horse of the Year Show with Pride & Joy, while Sam's Millcroft Iska Roc headed his M&M section.



Horses in India

▲ The Worshipful Company of Loriners has pledged £500 to a scheme to produce safe bits for horses in India. More than 300 snaffle bits have been donated to the Friends of Marwari/Kathiawari Horse UK project and will be delivered next month.

Tina Fletcher

▲ The mother, showjumper and joint-winner of this year's Horse of the Year Show's (HOYS) puissance was named HOYS equestrian of the year last week.

Bruce Menzies

▲ The West Sussex showjumper's victory in the Cushionbed National Championship class at Scope last month with Sultan V has been voted British Showjumping's Performance of the Month for September.

Good week

Bad week

Riders in Co Galway

▼ Five people were treated for injuries at the horse fair in Ballinasloe. Two fell from a carriage after a horse bolted, two fell from horses and one was kicked.



The Leheup family

▼ The owners of Stonedge El Supremo were disappointed when the pony was withdrawn from his M&M working hunter pony section at HOYS due to a dispute over who should ride him.

A Greenwich man

▼ Edward Hill is accused of cutting 100 white tufts, marking the planned path of the Olympic eventing course, in Greenwich Park. He pleaded not guilty to criminal damage on

7 October, was bailed and will be committed to Crown Court next month.

Escort'men

▼ Chepstow racecourse is to up its security after a reportedly drunk racegoer ran in to the winners' enclosure and tried to mount the Paul Nicholls-trained Escort'men.

Consumer COVER STORY

Rider ordered to pay rates on private arena

A dressage rider plans to appeal after being told she must pay almost £2,000 in rates on her manège.

Carole Stewart, who lives near Burley in the New Forest, was surprised when the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) — part of HM Revenue and Customs — said she must pay a £1,200 annual levy on her 60x20m sand school.

This has been reduced to around £300 a year, but backdated five years — so she must pay nearly £1,800 within the month.

"The VOA contacted me out of the blue. The arena is 36m from the house, falls within the curtilage of the property and is for my use alone," she said.

Mrs Stewart asked the VOA officer for evidence of other manège users being charged and was told that commercial arenas were already subject to the levy, but she was to be the first private user. She was told the VOA is looking at four more properties in Hampshire.

The Valuation Office should not discriminate against equestrian facilities

Dominic Knollys, surveyor, on behalf of the British Horse Society

"If we don't win the VOA could demand rates on every other manège in the country," she said.



Commercial arenas are subject to a levy — and private ones could be too

"The implications are huge, I know of 10 private arenas in this village alone."

A VOA spokesman said:

"Manèges, whether used as part of stables or separately, are liable for business rates unless occupied as part of the domestic use of the house and included in council tax."

If a ratepayer is unhappy, they can appeal to the local

valuation officer and then a valuation tribunal.

David Parker of estate agents Savills said: "If a yard adjoining a residential property is close to the accommodation, shares access and is not run as a business, there is a strong argument to say it should be incorporated within the council tax assessment of the home."

Speaking on behalf of the British Horse Society, surveyor Dominic Knollys added: "The VOA should not discriminate between equestrian facilities and other facilities, such as pools or tennis courts."

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H&H MANAGING EDITOR SAYS

"My parents' dog, Kara, is absolutely gorgeous, but she doesn't smell as good as she looks. So to save them the hassle of continual bath times, I'll be investing in the Ionic Pet Brush as an early Christmas present. This clever little brush gets rid of that horrid doggy smell and, unlike regular bathing, it doesn't strip the natural oils from the coat. Happy parents, happy dog, happy home!"

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Win a winter outfit from Tottie

If you fancy updating your wardrobe ready for winter, then don't miss the chance to win a stylish Rebecca quilted jacket, warm Precious fleece, funky Drew rugby shirt and Amelia low-rise jodhpurs from Tottie. We have three complete outfits up for grabs so enter now for your chance to win. www.horseandhound.co.uk/win



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