



PJA MEMBERS' COVID-19 UPDATES

Dear PJA Members

First and foremost, we hope you and your families, friends and loved ones are safe and well. These are hugely worrying times and the PJA will aim to keep you updated throughout. Please find below some advice and updates on a variety of matters.

FRIDAY 20TH MARCH 2020

General Covid-19 Updates

Government Covid 19 Public Advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

Government Covid 19 Travel Advice

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Government Advice for Employers, Employees and Businesses

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19>

Questions and Answers

- **Will there be financial help for Jockeys whilst racing is off?**

The PJA continues to work with the rest of the industry to establish what funding support streams will be available and Paul is on the central group working on this. It is important that racing specific support complements any support from Government. We still cannot provide any detail but can 100% assure you there will be support for jockeys that may take several forms, including support directly from the PJA. We will keep you updated with developments but any announcement is still likely at least a week away.

However, any Jockey facing immediate financial hardship should contact your local IJF rehabilitation centre who will then refer you to your local almoner. They have asked us to assure you that they will help those in financial need.

- Oaksey House, Lambourn: 01488 674242
- Jack Berry House, Malton: 01653 602090
- Peter O'Sullivan House, Newmarket: 01638 662246

A number of government initiatives such as mortgage holiday and rental help have also been announced by the government with further information due to be released soon. Some mortgage providers have already issued advice so check directly with your provider if you are seeking immediate relief. An excellent website to provide specific information on the support available is www.moneysavingexpert.com which we highly recommend, as well as www.citizensadvice.org.uk

- **Can I still go to my GP for medical assistance?**

A number of GP surgeries are now closing down and conducting virtual consultations. We advise downloading the app www.meet.nye.health/register which will give you access to a bank of GPs online for medical advice you may require.

- **Who is considered a key worker for school attendance?**

Most schools are closing their doors from today unless one parent is classed as a key worker. For latest information, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-educational-provision/guidance-for-schools-colleges-and-local-authorities-on-maintaining-educational-provision>

- **What wider welfare support services are available whilst racing is off?**

The PJA's mental wellbeing support network is still available to support all members via telephone or skype sessions and can be accessed by contacting the Sporting Chance helpline on 07780 008877 or the PJA's Performance Consultant Aodhagan Conlon on 07815 016900/email aodhaganconlon@hotmail.com

The IJF are continuing to provide fitness, physiotherapy and nutrition support remotely as much as possible. Visit their website for their latest news: www.injuredjockeys.co.uk

- **Can I go and ride in Ireland during disruption to racing in the UK?**

The situation in relation to travelling is constantly evolving so please check for up to date information. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/travel-and-coronavirus.html>

As of today, the latest advice for anyone wanting to ride in Ireland is that you would have to self-isolate for two weeks and then be cleared to ride by the Irish Chief Medical Officer.

- **Keep in touch**

We will keep updating this page with any new relevant information for our members however if you have specific questions, please do get in touch and we will respond as best we can. Keep an eye on our communication channels, particularly WhatsApp and email, and the major contact numbers for you as a reminder are below. If we are unable to answer you immediately leave a message and we will get back to you.

If you haven't already, please store the PJA's WhatsApp number – 07585 633400 – into your phone contacts then send a message to it with your name so you can join our WhatsApp Broadcast Groups.

If anyone has changed their number please let us know immediately.

Paul Struthers – 07966 590105/01264 730770, ps@thepja.co.uk

Dale Gibson – 07970 149415, dg@thepja.co.uk

Izzy Desailly – 07771 656396, id@thepja.co.uk

Vicky Lee – 01635 778108/ 07585 633400, vl@thepja.co.uk

Lisa Delany, JETS – 07919 417462, lisa@jets-uk.org

Phil Kinsella, JETS – 07970 673351, Phil@jets-uk.org

Keep safe everyone

The PJA Team - Ann, Dale, Izzy, Nigel, Paul and Vicky

TUESDAY 17TH MARCH 2020

WHY WAS THIS DECISION TAKEN TO SUSPEND RACING FROM 18TH MARCH?

The decision was taken by Board of the British Horseracing Authority this morning based on the statements made by the government yesterday and after consultation with senior industry leaders.

The BHA took the decision to protect essential emergency services and the health and welfare of staff working in the racing industry. Racecourses and racing have obligations to ensure the safety of participants and provide medical cover which clearly cannot be fulfilled in these circumstances. This follows the new advice issued by government yesterday to combat the spread of the virus, advice which included social distancing measure and avoiding all unnecessary travel and contact with others.

BUT WHY COULDN'T WE CONTINUE FOR THE TIME BEING?

Scientific modelling suggests the UK is tracking approximately two weeks behind Italy in terms of the spread of Coronavirus. Italy is in total lockdown with all but essential services, such as supermarkets and pharmacies, closed down. Similar measures are in place in France, Spain and around the world.

Racing's medical coverage to protect jockeys is not provided by the NHS but by private contractors. Racecourse Medical Officers are also working on the racecourse in a private capacity but most have other roles, either within private medicine or the NHS. It is a matter of time before private medical services will be unable to provide services to racing, at which point racing's hand is forced even if the Government doesn't proactively step in.

The medical advice was increasingly concerned that there would be additional risk to jockeys by continuing to race. Firstly, with the government advising that everyone practices social distancing, jockeys and valets would be exposed to Covid 19 more so than others. Secondly, because we cannot underestimate the pressure the NHS will soon be under, there was genuine concern with the ability of the NHS to deal with emergencies in the event of a jockey suffering serious injury on a racecourse.

In those circumstances, and given racing was likely going to cease sooner rather than later in any event, and carrying on for even a short while (maybe no more than a week or two) risked huge reputational damage for the sport. Far better for racing to 'shut down' itself than it be forced upon us, hopefully placing us in a better position to consider and plan for a re-start after assessing the situation later on.

DID THE PJA SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE DECISION?

In light of the medical advice and concern for the safety and welfare of jockeys, combined with the other factors referenced above, we did support the decision as did other stakeholders.

WHEN MIGHT RACING RETURN?

At the moment racing is suspended until the end of April. This is such a major, national and global public health crisis it is impossible to say when we might re-start.

HOW AM I GOING TO PAY MY BILLS WHEN I CAN'T EARN A LIVING?

First and foremost, the efforts of the sport will now be on attempting to mitigate the damage this suspension will cause all those who make their living from the sport and to ensure our horses can be cared for to the high standard required. Those same concerns about mitigating the impacts of Covid 19 are faced by the entire country so it is impossible to say what that any racing specific support looks like right now.

From a purely PJA/jockey perspective, we were already making contingencies and were in touch with the IJF prior to today's decision. Whilst we cannot confirm the detail right now, **we can confirm that there will be support for jockeys facing financial difficulty** as a result of this crisis and we hope to make a more

formal announcement in the coming days. In the meantime, if you are facing immediate financial difficulties contact the PJA or IJF.

Additionally, the Government have announced this evening a £330bn package of support, including grants for small firms and Government backed mortgage holidays for those struggling – see <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-51935467>. We will seek advice and look to share further details on how this support might be accessed by jockeys as soon as we have it.

QUESTIONS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Due to the latest Government advice, most PJA staff are currently having to work from home although Vicky Lee is currently manning the office. We all appreciate that there are countless unanswered questions for all of us at the moment but we will share answers with you as soon as we have them.