

# Annual Review 2020





# Chairman's Introduction

I was delighted to be asked to take over as Chairman of the PJA in December 2020. Having spent a career working with elite sportsmen and women, and having owned racehorses for almost 20 years it was a perfect match for my experience and passion. In doing so I would like to pay tribute to the work of my predecessor and good friend Nigel Payne, who rightly received an MBE for his work in racing in the New Year's honours list.

You will be pleased to read that in the short time I have been Chairman I have been impressed by the work the team at the PJA does on your behalf and the service they provide you. You are some of the bravest, hardest working of sportspeople and deserve to be well represented and looked after. Never was this more needed than in 2020, a year turned upside down by the Covid 19 pandemic and a year which will never be forgotten following the loss of two incredibly popular members of the weighing room in tragic circumstances with the deaths of James Banks and Liam Treadwell, who I know remain much missed to this day.

Jockeys are the face of the sport and key to its continued promotion. A new generation of jockeys are breaking through at the top of the sport and their embracing of their role in promoting the sport is hugely important. Hollie Doyle was third in the BBC Sports Personality of the Year, Bryony Frost became a much admired public figure after winning the King George on Boxing Day, Brian Hughes and Oisin Murphy became Champion Jockeys over jumps and the flat respectively, Brian for the first time and Oisin for the second.

Despite the good work that has been and continues to be done, myself and the team at the PJA understand there is more to achieve on your behalf and to deal with the challenges that face our sport. I am currently working on strengthening the PJA Board structure whilst the team are focusing on a variety of projects and issues. These include working with the BHA on changes to drug testing procedures and penalties, pushing for wellbeing-related changes to the fixture list, further enhancing our work on mental health and wellbeing and looking to do more on diversity and inclusion.

Only a few of you will have met me in person and several in virtual meetings, but I am very much looking forward to getting out and about and meeting many of you over the remainder of this year as Covid restrictions ease.

In conclusion, it would be wrong of me not to mention the outstanding achievement of Rachael Blackmore, whose success at the Cheltenham Festival and Grand National has brought lustre to the profession worldwide. And finally, to express the good wishes of all of you to Richard Johnson, one of the great ambassadors of your profession and racing as a whole, on his retirement and to wish him every success in his new life.

Good luck for the remainder of this year, and stay safe.

**Jon Holmes**  
PJA Chairman



Jon Holmes

# Goodbye to Old Friends



2020 saw the retirements from the PJA of Ann Saunders, our long serving Executive Director and Company Secretary, and Nigel Payne, our Chairman.

Ann spent 43 years at the PJA and had dedicated almost her entire career working tirelessly for jockeys, helping them both on and off the racecourse. Never was her dedication better demonstrated than by her decision to voluntarily defer her retirement by a month to help see us through the initial phase of the Coronavirus Crisis.

Numerous vital improvements to professional jockeys welfare and well-being have evolved under Ann's watchful eye over the last four decades, including the introduction of the Jockeys Pension Scheme, Jockeys sponsorship, The Lesters annual awards ceremony, Career Ending Insurance cover and many other important services and initiatives.

Ann, who was awarded an MBE in 2002 for her services to jockeys, said:



Ann Saunders

***"I am who I am today because of the jockeys I've had the pleasure to work for, their work ethic, loyalty and strength in times of adversity has been inspirational. It has been a great honour to work for the PJA, it has been far more than just a job and next to my family, it has been my life. No matter how hard I work, and there have been challenges at times, it has never felt like work. I would like to thank jockeys past and present and all the good people who helped and supported me along the way and wish them all the very best for the future, never more so at this time of acute uncertainty."***

Many PJA figures, both past and present, paid tribute to Ann. Sir Anthony McCoy, formerly Jumps President of the PJA for many years, said:



Sir Anthony McCoy

***"Ann was like a mother figure to many jockeys throughout her time at the PJA, her kindness and dedication to professional jockeys will be greatly missed. Not every Association is lucky enough to have an Ann Saunders. I wish her all the best in retirement. She deserves it."***

Nigel meanwhile stepped down from his role at the end of June.

He has also been chairman of the Sir Peter O'Sullivan Charitable Trust since 2002 and is well known as one of the owners of 1998 Grand National winner Earth Summit.

During his tenure as chairman Nigel oversaw significant developments at the PJA, including the introduction of a non-runner fee for jockeys and a dedicated and comprehensive mental health network. There has also been a significant increase in commercial income for the jockeys' body, along with major rule changes such as the introduction of flexible suspensions and adjustments to apprentice and conditional jockey pay.

Speaking of his time at the PJA, Payne said:



Nigel Payne

***"I feel that after eight years I have achieved as much as I can, although it is of course for others to judge these achievements."***

***I joined the PJA shortly after Paul Struthers became Chief Executive and together we have taken great strides in strengthening the Association and its standing in the industry. I have seldom enjoyed a role more and I have been very proud to represent our jockeys at the various industry committees and forums over the years. It has been a true privilege and I have made many friends among the jockey ranks and look forward to continuing those friendships."***

There were tributes from leading jockeys PJ McDonald and Tom Scudamore, who both have active roles with the PJA. PJA Flat president McDonald said:



PJ McDonald

***"I was very sad to hear Nigel was standing down and he will be sorely missed. I'd like to thank Nigel for all he has done for the PJA and its members and it has been very much appreciated. He has been a big help to me personally and I wish him all the best."***

Scudamore, PJA board member, said: "I would like to thank Nigel for all of his hard work over the last eight years with the PJA. I'm very grateful for all he has done for jockeys, and I've seen the PJA go from strength to strength under his chairmanship and with all the work from the PJA team."





# 2020 in Review

It goes without saying that 2020 was full of unprecedented challenges as a result of the global Covid 19 pandemic, which saw racing suspended on the 22nd March and not resuming behind closed doors until 1st June, and the 1st July for jump racing.

With a streamlined team and unprecedented volumes of work, the whole PJA team has worked a considerable amount of overtime week in, week out since COVID-19 restrictions came into place. However, our focus hasn't solely been on Covid-related matters as we endeavoured to push on with our existing plans.





## Covid 19



The PJA played a significant role in securing financial support for jockeys through the suspension of racing and worked very closely with the BHA and racecourses in helping to get the show back on the road.

We secured £1m in funding to provide financial support and assistance to jockeys through the lockdown and suspension of racing. £900k of this was from the Racing Foundation to fund the PJA Income Support Scheme, which was payable to jockeys, agents and valets who did not qualify for the Government's Self-Employed Income Support Scheme.

The scheme was designed and administered by the PJA, supported by the Racing Foundation, and by the time the scheme closed over £600k had been paid out to almost 150 individuals.

We also secured £100,000 from the Peter O'Sullivan Trust and paid out £25,000 from that in hardship grants via the Jockeys Association Trust.

We were heavily involved in the resumption of racing plan, which involved multiple daily meetings with BHA/Racecourses and other stakeholders including senior jockeys alongside work on future and current fixture lists with the aim to improve income and decrease costs.

## Non-Runner Fee



At the start of 2020, we reached agreement with the ROA to forego an inflationary riding fee increase and instead extended the non-runner fee to cover all non-runners. This change was effective from 1st January 2020 and therefore a jockey receives a fee equivalent to 50% of their riding fee if their intended mount is a non-runner. Previously jockeys received 40% of their fee if the horse was declared a non-runner after 9am on the day of the race.



## Member Communications



Despite the work pressures of Covid we pressed ahead with our plans to transform our communications with jockeys. We had already established our WhatsApp Broadcast Groups in late 2019 and these proved invaluable in keeping members, their valets and agents informed throughout the crisis and since. We have expanded this service to provide brief video updates on key matters.

If any member still isn't receiving these messages, all you have to do is save the PJA's WhatsApp number – 07585 633400 – into your contacts and you'll start receiving them. Call Vicky in the office for advice and support. Please remember to update the PJA if you change your contacts details.

We produced and distributed a brand-new Members Handbook, providing members with two copies, the additional one designed to be given to a family member or partner, and supported this with the launch of an improved website, designed to complement and not simply repeat content that was in the handbook.



## Structural Review / New Chairman



With Ann's impending retirement, the PJA commenced a review of its structure, assisted by Stratton HR. This has resulted in a revised team structure and responsibilities for the four remaining full-time staff

The PJA also appointed a new Chairman in December in Jon Holmes, sports agent and racehorse owner.

Jon's career in sports is long and distinguished, having represented elite sportsmen and women in many different sports, both in their sporting lives and broadcasting careers for over forty years. He is currently Managing Director of Jon Holmes Media and has held numerous Chairmanships and Non-Executive roles, including as Chairman of Leicester City after a consortium including Gary Lineker helped rescue them from administration in 2003. Jon has been a racehorse owner for almost 20 years and currently has shares in three horses, two with Phillip Hobbs and the other with Oliver Signy.

## Appeals



In 2020, the PJA supported and lodged 18 appeals on behalf of members, and was successful in 12 of them, a success rate of 66%. In hindsight some of those appeals shouldn't have really gone ahead, so we shouldn't read too much into a lower than normal success rate, which now stands at 84% over the last 5 years.



## Mental Health And Wellbeing



Having established our first mental wellbeing support line and 24-hour confidential counselling service in 2015, the PJA formally launched a new partnership with Sporting Chance in September to coincide with a new “Jockey Matters” film in partnership with JETS on Substance Abuse and Support.

The PJA has already been working with Sporting Chance for some time, as well as using the services of former jump jockey and Sports Psychologist in training, Aodhagan Conlon, who the PJA retains as a Performance Consultant for our members.

2020 also saw us pilot a mental health awareness training session for jockeys and their support teams. The feedback from the session was excellent but all attendees felt it would be best to wait until we can host the training sessions face to face before rolling it out to more people.

In total, throughout 2020 we supported 72 of our members with one-to-one support, paying for over 400 sessions, and in partnership with the Injured Jockeys Fund supported almost 130 jockeys or former jockeys.

The PJA also provided funding to help with the making of “The Fall”, a powerful short film that will focus on the mental health of jockeys, the impact of social media abuse and aims to raise awareness of mental health within the sport of horseracing. It is the brainchild of former jockey and Equine Productions co-founder Nathan Horrocks. The film is due to be released in 2021 so watch this space!







## Financial Review



Our accounts for the year end December 2019 were filed in December 2020 and can be viewed on the Companies House website (<https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/>). These show a healthy members funds' balance of just under £800,000, though these reserves will have been reduced significantly by our commitment in 2020/21 to maintain your Career Ending Insurance coverage.

As for the financial year ending December 2020, whilst we incurred significant losses in 2020 as a direct result of the suspension of racing, through prudent financial management and from further savings that resulted from the structural review, we managed to offset our losses, and after subsidising the Group Insurances only made a small overall loss.

## PJA Events



Sadly both the Pro Am Golf Day and the Lesters events could not take place in 2020 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. However, thanks to Sky Sports Racing, we were able to present the winners of the nine Lesters awards on 22nd December during a live broadcast of the popular awards ceremony, which celebrated the achievements of jockeys during 2020.

Hollie Doyle was the star of the show, walking away with three Lesters including Flat Jockey of the Year as well as Female Jockey of the Year and the Flat Jockey Special Recognition award. In doing so, she becomes the first female jockey to win Flat Jockey of the Year and only the second jockey ever to win three Lesters in a single year, after Paul Hanagan achieved the same feat in 2010.





# The Benefits Of PJA Membership



We appreciate that being a member of the PJA comes at a cost, with all members paying 3% of every riding fee (capped at 1000 rides per year) as well as an additional 75p per ride for their insurances.

We are rightly challenged on offering value for money and strive to provide value in every aspect of our work to promote and protect the best interests of licensed professional Jockeys up and down the country. When looking at the cost of PJA membership it is worth remembering that the fees you pay to the PJA, including the insurance contribution, are tax deductible and therefore can be subtracted from your earnings for tax purposes, saving you (as a higher rate taxpayer) 40% tax on that amount and 2% National Insurance (you pay 9% National Insurance on earnings up to £45k, 2% on earnings over £45k). It is worth noting here that personal insurance costs are not tax deductible.

We therefore thought it would be useful to highlight the benefits of being a member versus the costs. The PJA offers:

- Legal Insurance cover, covering you for legal costs in the event of an appeal, referral from the racecourse or as part of an investigation, though limits apply and there is a maximum of £4,800 plus VAT for any one claim. The rates the PJA secures for the cost of appeals is far lower than the solicitor's or barrister's actual hourly rate, with a relatively straightforward appeal likely to cost in the region of £2000 to £3000 at full rates. Included in the legal insurance is a provision for up to £800 + VAT for motoring offences, excluding drink driving, driving without insurance etc.
- Travel Insurance, which covers you for medical expenses and repatriation costs when riding overseas up to a maximum of 60 days and can be extended at very competitive rates.
- Professional Indemnity cover, which covers you in the event you are sued for something you did in your role as a Jockey (sued by another rider for injury for example) and is an insurance that, whilst you are unlikely to ever need it, you would struggle to obtain otherwise and is essential for a professional jockey.

## Career Ending Insurance

Career Ending Insurance commenced in 2011 via the Stobart sponsored posterior site, and since its inception over £2 million has been paid out to jockeys who sustained career ending injuries.

Since the end of the Stobart sponsorship in 2019, cover has been maintained and paid for out of PJA reserves, costing just shy of £500,000. We were on the verge of signing a three-year agreement with a sponsor in March, and had contracts drawn up and photoshoot done, but this deal was sunk by the pandemic.

Fortunately, with short term financial assistance from the Levy Board we can continue to cover you until 20th June 2021 whilst we seek a new sponsor and investigate other options.

In addition to the extensive insurance package, we also provide the following benefits you receive as a member of the PJA, which briefly include:

- 50% off Racing TV subs (saving around £150 a year)
- Free access to 24/7 mental wellbeing helpline, paid for one-to-one therapy (including residential treatment if required) and free access to our Performance Consultant.
- Free access to PJA nutrition team
- Two metal jockey badges giving free access to race meetings for you and your partner
- 30% discount for Private Medical Insurance, which can be easily accessed through our broke Nugent Sante. If jockeys already have their own health insurance, they should check their policy carefully to ensure they are covered for racing as we believe most health insurance providers don't cover professional sportspeople.

We also oversee the PJA Pension fund which has been in operation successfully since 1984 and has seen over £17m put into jockeys' pensions since its inception.

All the above is before you even look at the individual advice and support we provide our members, which we appreciate if you do not need you do not always see. Whether it is putting in hours of work supporting solicitors in appeals and disciplinary matter, assisting with an insurance matter, liaising with an injured jockey or helping someone with their mental wellbeing, the individual advice and support is at the heart of everything we do and something we're very proud of.

## Longer Term Achievements



Beyond the direct benefits above are the less tangible benefits of the wider work of the PJA, particularly around the lobbying and representation we provide within racing.

Recent achievements/improvements that have only been possible because of the PJA are:

- Jockeys to be allowed individual sponsors and to be able to partner with Betting Organisations.
- Improved Jockey Welfare – we extensively lobbied for flat and extended NH breaks in March/August and November, plus agreed earlier All-Weather finish time of no later than 8:30 pm.
- Extensively negotiating with ROA to secure the improved Non-Runner fee payment, which you will have seen the benefit of last year. 2021 payments are £87.32 NH and £63.95 flat for ANY non-runner.
- Improvements in racecourse nutrition and facilities for all jockeys (an ongoing issue)
- Improvements to female facilities, with much more work still required.
- Flexible suspensions were brought in and subsequently expanded, allowing you to bring forward one day of a four-day ban.
- On racecourse safety we lobbied for hind shoes on the flat to be mandated, which has seen a significant decrease in incidents, plus the recently improved stop race procedure and NH start trial.
- We also secured over £600,000 of financial support for jockeys during the initial COVID-19 lockdown and administered the entire scheme.
- We lobbied over an extensive period to secure significant and important financial improvements for all Apprentices and Conditional jockeys last year, alongside negotiating a 25% reduction for all Apprentice/Conditional Jockey Training deductions per ride.
- We set up and pay for your Non-Runner texts, saving you time and unnecessary travel expenses.
- The PJA set-up, co-funds and manages your Safety Officers, under each code, who provide a vital service on your behalf.

## Key Contacts



### The PJA Team



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