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PRESS RELEASE

Racing staff honoured by Racing Welfare's Pride of Racing Awards

Once again, racing staff were given recognition at this year's Betfair Pride of Racing Awards on Saturday. Hosted at Chester Racecourse for the first time, awards were presented in five separate categories and the worthy winners were presented with trophies by the charity's Chairman, Joey Newton.

This was the 6th Awards Ceremony sponsored by Betfair, in support of Racing Welfare's objective to highlight the outstanding degree of commitment and dedication given to the sport by an army of often unsung heroes. Tribute was paid to the winners' achievements and activities throughout the industry.

The event was well supported by all sectors of the racing industry, including the British Horseracing Authority, Weatherbys, Reflex Courier, Jockey Club, Haydock, Aintree and Perth Racecourses. Awards were presented as follows:

Stable Staff Award

Winner: Michael Curran works for John Gosden and it is his diligence with the horses under his care that makes him stand out. He plays a key role riding out on the home gallops, has a fine pair of hands and is an excellent judge of pace.

Runner-up: William Gleed from Marco Botti's Stables in Newmarket has spent over 40 years in racing and is heavily relied on by all the yard staff. Despite being past retirement age, he is always first in the yard each morning

and last to leave in the evening. He is dedicated to his work and knows each of the horses individually.

Stud Staff Award

Winner: Fay Court, has worked at Wood Hall Stud, Hertfordshire, for four years and been stud manager for two. With a background in top level show jumping she adapted very easily to handling young racehorses and brood mares, equally at home preparing youngsters to go on to their trainers, as being in charge of the foaling unit.

Runner-up: Mark Wall, works at Stratford Place Stud, Cheltenham, foaling and breaking yearlings as well as prepping and selling racehorses. A chance meeting gave him his first Point to Pointing opportunity and in June he achieved his 199th win in the Champion Novices Hunter Chase at Stratford with Theatre Queen, a mare he bought and trained himself.

Racing Industry Support Staff Award

Winner: Mark Davison, joined Sedgefield Racecourse 23 years ago. Under his leadership, Mark's team is responsible for the maintenance and presentation of the racing surface, the stables, fences, hurdles and all other areas of the concourse. Thanks to his expertise, dedication and commitment, the track is produced to a high level every meeting year on year, whatever the weather.

Runner-up: Phil and Pauline Edwards have run the Stable Staff Hostel at Haydock Park for 15 years and have earned the appreciation of all those with whom they come into contact, through their efficient, painstaking and courteous manner. They ensure that the hostel is always clean, with good food and a happy atmosphere.

Graduate Award

Winner: Rebecca Menzies became the youngest female jumps trainer at the age of 24. She knows her charges inside out and her door is always open to existing and potential owners. She provides honest, realistic plans and the welfare of her horses is paramount. She takes immense care to find homes for those no longer able to race.

Runner-up: After graduating from the British Racing School, Lee Moulson worked for a leading National Hunt trainer. He rode as an amateur Jockey until 2004. Currently Regional Head of Sales for Cheltenham and the South West, Lee has restructured the sales force which has been responsible for an

impressive increase in hospitality sales.

Outstanding Contribution to Racing Award

Winner: Sam Morshead has been a great ambassador for British Racing both as a successful Jockey, riding more than 400 winners, and as an equally successful Racecourse Manager. Few people have succeeded in two such different careers in horseracing. He has transformed Perth Racecourse into a hugely successful summer jumping course, frequently attracting crowds of more than 12,000 racegoers.

Runner-up: Stan Walsh has been a valued member of the Aintree groundstaff team, since he left school over 40 years ago. Part of his job was to help build the famous Grand National fences, originally from hawthorn, gorse and then covered in spruce. He used to spend 9 months travelling around farms collecting hawthorn and spruce and the rest of his time building the fences.

Lesley Graham, Chief Executive of Racing Welfare hosted the ceremony and commented, *"We are immensely grateful to Betfair for the sponsorship of this event and to all those who support it. As a result of their generosity, we have raised approximately £35,000 from the event and this will greatly enhance the services we provide. We work on a daily basis with racing's staff and we understand the enormous contribution they make to our sport. We are delighted to be able to recognise today's award winners, who also represent their colleagues in the industry"*.

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Notes to Editors

Racing Welfare is a UK-wide charity whose headquarters are in Newmarket. It serves the needs of racing personnel from the beginning of their careers through to retirement. The wide range of help provided includes provision of affordable housing, mentoring schemes for young workers, advice for those coping with illness and disabilities; through to specialist counselling and support at times of need or personal crisis.

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