



Racing
Together



Lingfield Park opens doors to 30 teenagers as part of new campaign #TakeTheReins

Press Release

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For Immediate Release

Lingfield Park racecourse played host to 30 teenagers on Wednesday 29th March as part of a new campaign championed by sport for development charity Active Communities Network (ACN).

The 'Take the Reins' initiative aims to get more young people into horseracing by providing first-hand experience of the opportunities and employment possibilities available.

Pupils from Platanos College in London's Clapham Road received a VIP tour of the facilities at Lingfield Park, before watching an afternoon of racing.

They visited the weighing room where professional jockey John Egan talked about how jockeys prepare for a race and received a track talk by estates manager Jon Harris about how they manage the 450-acres of land the racecourse, hotel and golf club is set in.

The group also visited the rest of the Resort and golf course hearing from head Green-Keeper Kevin Weller and trying their hand at mowing the golf greens and learned about the conservation work occurring at Lingfield Park. The group enjoyed special access to the racecourse kitchens, where they met head chef Sarat Kunwar and his team.

ACN is a national charity which uses sports to transform the lives of children and young people living in neighbourhoods where there is severe socio-economic deprivation.

Andrew Perkins, Executive Director of Lingfield Park Resort said the staff were delighted to welcome the pupils from Platanos College.

"This type of visit works very well from both points of view: it enables us to showcase what we can do at Lingfield Park and explain exactly what is involved in staging a race-day, and the youngsters can have a glimpse of the different types of career open to them.

"Our team enjoy facilitating these visits as they can hopefully inject some of their own enthusiasm of racing and the hospitality industry into the youngsters,"

Mrs Bryan from Platanos College said of the visit: "The young people have benefited a whole lot, they got far more than what they were expecting. They have seen so much, they came with the idea that they were looking at race horses but once they arrived they soon realised that it was much more than just racing, there is a whole hospitality side that goes with it. They are leaving with things to think about, it isn't just a day out, it is a day that they will look back on and say I think I might choose a career in this sector."

Hayley Turner, ex-professional jockey and ACN Ambassador said; “It’s great that these young people get a chance to see the inner workings of the racing world. I didn’t come from a traditional racing background and was inspired by visiting a taster day so if we can inspire these young people to think about a career in the racing industry that’s a great success.”

Oliur Rahman, London Programme Manager said ‘Take the Reins’ was an innovative way of engaging young people. He added: “The programme specifically targets 14 to 19 year olds and it is our hope that through events like the one organised today, we are able to open young people’s eyes to a variety of careers and experiences they would otherwise not consider.”

Adam Harman, Community Engagement Manager of Racing Together said; “The strong link between ACN and the racing industry can only have a positive impact on the young people engaged in these programmes. It is great to see first-hand the initiative with the team at Lingfield, who along with an increasing number of racecourses are recognising the mutual benefit of working with youth organisations,”

ACN was launched ten years ago, and over the past decade has supported more than 150,000 young people to access positive activities in their communities, more than 70,000 have progressed as volunteers, with 63,000 achieving qualifications and progressing onto further training, education or employment.

For more information about Active Communities Network (ACN) please visit the website at www.activecommunities.org.uk or call 020 7407 8177

Editor notes:

1. For more information, hi-res pictures or interview requests please contact Stephanie Mack on 020 7407 8177 or email stephanie@activecommunities.org.uk.
2. Active Communities Network (ACN) is a leading sport for development charity working with young people from disadvantaged communities. ACN delivers grassroots projects, primarily through sport and cultural activity, to engage, support and mentor young people into education, training and employment, countering negative social outcomes such as crime, poverty and mental health issues.

