



DEVELOPING THE RACE PROGRAMME FOR JUMP MARES



Jump racing is part of British racing's heritage – spectacles such as the Cheltenham Festival and the Grand National are amongst the most attended sporting events in Britain and demonstrate the huge popularity of Jump racing with racing fans and the wider public.

Mares have been responsible for some of the great moments in Jump racing – from the likes of Dawn Run, Flakey Dove and Lady Rebecca, to the more recent fabulous achievements of Quevega and Annie Power; time and again mares have delighted fans on the sport's biggest stages.

Whilst these examples stand out for many Jump racing fans, mares still represent a relatively untapped and significant opportunity in terms of boosting the population of Jump horses.

During the last 10 years the British Horseracing Authority (BHA), with the support of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association (TBA), has been working on a long-term project to develop the race programme for, and population of, Jumping mares.



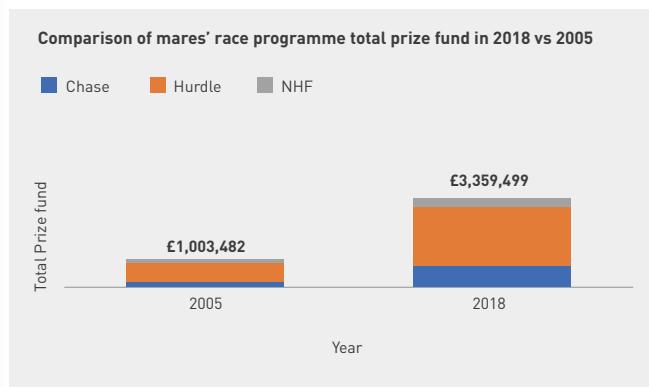
Quevega and Ruby Walsh winning the David Nicholson Mares' Hurdle at Cheltenham Festival in 2010, a race she won six times between 2009 and 2014; part of a remarkable career which included four victories at Grade 1 level and 16 wins in total

The aims of the project are:

- To increase the population of Jump mares in training in Britain
- To deliver graduated growth in a quality race programme for Jump mares, thereby enabling such horses to have the opportunity to develop to the best of their ability on the racecourse before becoming broodmares
- To incentivise and encourage behavioural change relating to a more positive approach to the breeding, buying, owning and training of Jump mares

Jump mares' race programme

In 2018, the total prize fund of the Jump mares' race programme **exceeded £3.3 million**, a significant increase on the amount invested in 2005. This level of investment has enabled the BHA to develop a comprehensive, valuable and aspirational race programme which allows mares to be campaigned ambitiously over a period of time, thereby **increasing the attractiveness of breeding, owning and training a Jumping mare.**



Black Type

In the 2018/19 Jump season there will be **35 Black Type mares' races**. This number has been gradually increasing year-on-year, and there are now more than seven times the number held in 2005/2006. Consequently, this has seen the number of mares earning Black Type increase from 33 in 2007/2008 to 84 in 2017/2018. **Eight** of the 35 are **Pattern races**, headlined by the **Grade 1 OLBG David Nicholson Mares' Hurdle race**. In addition to this, there are **27 Listed races**, 11 of which are Steeple Chases.

It is also worth noting that in 2017/2018 **the BHA boosted two existing mares' Listed Chases by contributing £25,000 to the prize money** of each, in order to ensure they would be run for a minimum of £75,000. The races are:

- Doncaster's Yorkshire Silver Vase over 2m 4½f in December
- Huntingdon's Lady Protectress over 2m 4f in January

Jump Pattern races restricted to mares

Date	Course	Race	Distance	Age	Grade	Value
Mid-Jan	Ascot	Olbg.com Warfield Hurdle	2m 7½f	4+	2	£50,000
Late-Jan	Doncaster	Olbg.com Yorkshire Rose Hurdle	2m ½f	4+	2	£50,000
Mid-Feb	Sandown Park	Weatherbys General Stud Book Jane Seymour Novices' Hurdle	2m 3½f	4+	2	£30,000
March	Cheltenham Festival	OLBG David Nicholson Hurdle	2m 3½f	4+	1	£120,000
March	Cheltenham Festival	Trull House Stud Dawn Run Novices' Hurdle	2m ½f	4+	2	£90,000
Late-March	Newbury	EBF & TBA Novices' Handicap Hurdle	2m 4½f	4+	2	£40,000
Early-April	Aintree	Nickel Coin Open NHF	2m ½f	4-6	2	£45,000
Mid-April	Cheltenham	Arkells Brewery Fillies' Juvenile Handicap Hurdle	2m 1f	4	3	£40,000



Trainer Dan Skelton said:

The juvenile fillies' handicap hurdle at Cheltenham which we won with Stylish Dancer in April 2018 has the potential to become a really competitive contest in 2019 and onwards.

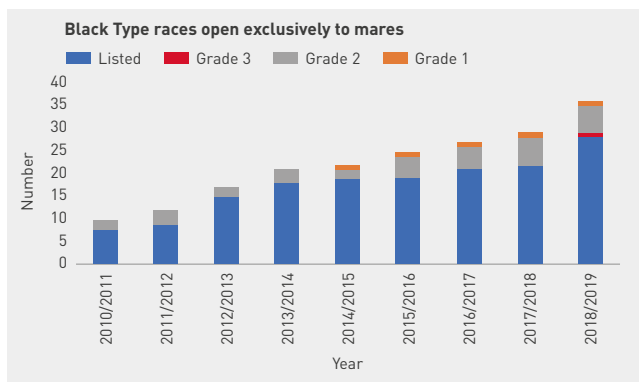
The race now being Grade 3 is definitely a step in the right direction and it gives the best horses in their age group a chance to compete for it, which is exactly as it should be.



As a new and added incentive, there are now **three Black Type races restricted exclusively to juvenile fillies:**

Date	Course	Race	Distance	Age	Grade	Value
Early-Dec	Aintree	Fillies' Juvenile Hurdle	2m 1f	3	Listed	£25,000
Late-Jan	Doncaster	Fillies' Juvenile Hurdle	2m ½f	4	Listed	£20,000
Mid-April	Cheltenham	Fillies' Juvenile Handicap Hurdle	2m 1f	4	Grade 3	£40,000

Ambitions exist to enhance the British mares' Black Type programme further in the near future.



Mares' Steeple Chases, Hurdles races and NHF races

- In the 2017/2018 Jump season there were 371 mares' races programmed: **48 Chases, 258 Hurdles** and **65 NHF races**, providing a wide range of opportunities for Jump mares in training.
- Valuable highlights in the non Black Type race programme include:

Date	Course	Race	Distance	Class	Value
April	Haydock park	Challenger Mares' Chase Series Final	2m 5f	2	£50,000
April	Haydock park	Challenger Mares' Hurdle Series Final	2m 3f	2	£50,000
Dec	Carlisle	Northern Lights Mares' Hurdle Final	2m 4f	2	£35,000
Dec	Hereford	Hereford Mares' Chase Series Final	3m 1f	2	£35,000

Point-to-Point

The TBA has provided incentives to campaign mares in Point-to-Point races, the grassroots level of the sport, through the delivery of its 3-2-1 Bonus which was introduced in the 2016/2017 season.

The bonus is offered to the highest-placed mare (within the first 5 finishers), in the qualifying end-of-season bumpers at Exeter (16 April 2019), Aintree (17 May 2019), and Stratford (31 May 2019). **Mares that are British-bred and owned by a member of the TBA can claim the maximum bonus of £3,000.**

Elite Mares' Scheme and Breeding

The TBA's Elite Mares' Scheme offers grants for stallion nominations to mares who have either achieved a certain level of performance on the racecourse or through their progeny.

The grants can be redeemed against nominations for qualifying British-based Jump stallions.

The initiative supports the British Jumps breeding industry by providing significant financial incentives to the owners of mares with proven ability, in order to continue to improve the quality of British bloodstock and its competitiveness on the racecourse.

NH Mare Owners' Prize Scheme (NHMOPS)



The NH Mare Owners' Prize Scheme provides prizes of up to £10,000 to the connections of registered horses that win qualifying mares' only races.

The scheme is run and managed by the TBA and was introduced to help increase the number of mares racing, encourage them to progress to the best of their ability, and improve the quality of mares entering the breeding cycle.

Over £450,000 in prizes have been paid out to owners, trainers, jockeys and yards since the start of the scheme. In 2018, sales results showed a higher average price for NHMOPS registered fillies than the overall fillies' sales average at the Goffs UK January, Spring Store and Spring Horses in Training sales.



Petticoat Tails, a British bred mare, who has won £25,000 worth of NHMOPS prize money

Anthony Bromley, Bloodstock Agent, said:

The improvements in the Jump mares' programme over the last few years, particularly with more Black Type mares' races, has seen an appreciable change in the buying policies of our clients, both owners and trainers alike.

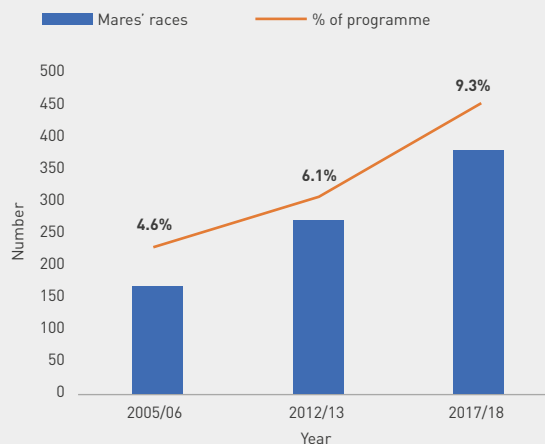
The prices of good quality fillies and mares, both at the sales, and privately, has certainly increased markedly, and I believe that this is largely in response to the wider and more varied mares' race programme which now exists.



Did you know...

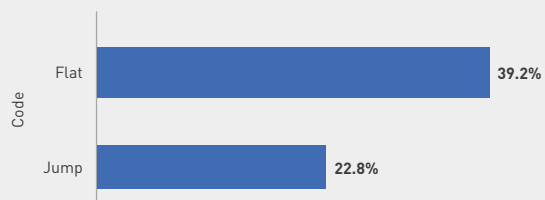
- The proportion of the Jump race programme made up of mares' races has more than doubled over the last five years.

Number of mares' races and their percentage of the race programme



- Mares typically make up approximately 20% of the total number of Jump horses in training. By comparison fillies and mares generally make up 40% of the total number of Flat horses in training.

% of horses in training which are fillies/mares in 2018



- Since 2017, 20 mares have sold for £100,000**, including Posh Trish who in 2017 won the Listed NHF race at Cheltenham in November, and then in 2018 won two Listed Mares' Novices' Hurdle races.

What you can do

Whilst there are certainly encouraging signs from this long-term project, both from the burgeoning race programme for mares and from the positive impact seen in the sales ring, there is of course much more that can be achieved.

Ambitions remain to provide even greater incentives to test mares on the racecourse, allowing their ability to race and jump to develop fully, before having them retired to the paddocks.

This project can provide more meaningful assistance to breeders by continuing to invigorate the market for such horses at the sales.

Our aim is to produce the optimum mares' Jump race programme in Britain; to improve the value of the filly to Jump racing; and to ensure the market for these horses is as competitive as possible.

We need your help and support to achieve these long-term aims; to deliver healthy, holistic growth in the horse population of quality race mares; to strengthen the market for fillies; and ultimately aim to improve the breed.

Over the next five years our target would be to increase the percentage of mares who make up our Jump horses in training to 25%, and with a target of 30% by 2030. With further growth in the appropriate incentives to deliver behavioural change, breeders, owners and trainers should be encouraged to increase the number of mares they invest in and have in training, such that mares end up representing a considerably larger proportion of the horses in each yard.



Plaid Maid (IRE), dam of Carruthers (GB) and Coneygree (GB), and Ardstown (GB), dam of Thistlecrack (GB) and West Approach (GB) are two mares who were successful on the racecourse, rated 125+, and who have also produced progeny with an official rating of 150+.