In This Issue

- Perth Conference 2012
- Equipment Maintenance Tips
- Properly Programmed
- Kikuyu & Racecourses
- Slattery’s Genes
- Pinecliff Training Centre
- Irrigation System Guidelines
- Around the Tracks
- ARMA News
Chairman’s Message

This issue of “Courses for Horses” signals the end of the second year of publication of our quarterly magazine, eight editions to date now and more in the pipeline. The reception from the industry continues to be very pleasing and we will strive to maintain the standard of content to meet the high expectations.

At this point in the short life of the publication it is fitting to again thank Horticulture Australia Limited for their great funding support in our first year. Without this backing, despite the valuable input from our sponsor advertisers, it would have been a struggle. HAL has important commitments to many other turf industry projects and believes we are now ‘well under way under our own steam’.

Two new segments in this issue look at private training centres and equipment maintenance. The former was a good suggestion from a respondent to the last reader survey. We start with the ‘state of the art’ Pinecliff in Victoria, one of the many such training establishments in Australia which are very important contributors to the racing industry.

The latter is the excellent initiative of one of our peers, Steve Routledge, Kalgoorlie-Boulder Racecourse Manager, who offered to share his knowledge with his colleagues. His mining industry experience with machinery maintenance gives him sound credentials for this topic. We welcome such generous input from Steve and hope it inspires others.

Our 2012 Conference returns to Perth in August, exactly 10 years after the first visit to the mining state. Full details are enclosed and we promise another stimulating and informative discussion for delegates.

Lindsay Murphy, ARMA Chairman

ARMA Conference 2012

A survey of racecourses back in 1995 found a wide variation in racecourse management expertise and technical knowledge coupled with a sense of isolation by many racecourse managers. The situation has improved greatly since then, primarily due to the initiation of annual racecourse managers conferences in 1996, an outcome of the survey.

The 17th Australian Racecourse Managers Conference is scheduled for August 5th - 8th at Perth Racing’s Ascot Racecourse in Western Australia. Conference objective is: “Improvement of racing industry communication, education and knowledge on issues of racetrack design, development, maintenance and performance for the advancement of economical, sustainable strategies for racecourse management”.

The forum will again enable racecourse managers to gather and exchange information, and to learn from colleagues’ experiences and inspection of operations at racetracks and racing enterprises.

The excellent program outline and registration papers are included as inserts with this issue of “Courses for Horses”. Be quick to book in as a delegate and join your peers in Perth.

The picture below was taken at last year’s conference at the Gold Coast Turf Club. It shows just how keen one delegate was to maintain fitness for the rigours of the conference sessions. We invite readers to exercise their imagination and submit a suitable caption for the photo. Whoever submits the winning caption, judged by the ARMA Committee, will win free registration for the forthcoming Perth conference. Send entries to: arma@racecoursemanagers.org.au.

Caption: (Cadel who) --------- ?
Properly Programmed

A foundation and continuous sponsor of ARMA is Programmed Property Services, a provider of staffing, maintenance, and project services to a wide range of market sectors in Australia and New Zealand. The involvement with racecourses actually started 42 years ago when Moonee Valley Racing Club contracted Programmed for racecourse maintenance. This contract continues to this day and includes responsibility for all painted surfaces and other critical maintenance at the venue.

Since that auspicious start, Programmed has expanded its list of high profile racecourse customers to include maintenance contracts with 7 racecourses in Victoria (including Flemington), four in Queensland (including Doomben and Eagle Farm) and one each in Western Australia and South Australia. Programmed is also heavily involved in the sponsorship of racing at Caulfield and Mooney Valley Racecourses and often brings other Programmed customers to these races. Programmed has now developed a strong relationship with many members of ARMA over the years, both on a corporate and individual level.

The progression to the size and breadth of services Programmed offers today began with the visions of two men: Norman Miles, the founder of Programmed Maintenance Services in 1951; and John Whittle, founder of Integrated Workforce in 1992. Both men created specialist capabilities in the fields of property maintenance and workforce services respectively, rapidly growing their operations throughout Australia based on innovative and successful business models. The need for, and ability to recruit, maintain and deploy a skilled workforce brought the two companies together in a friendly merger in 2007.

Along the way, Programmed has evolved, through a combination of strategic progression and acquisitions to improve and enhance abilities to delivered customer-focused solutions, as a leading provider of staffing, maintenance and project service. Recently, and perhaps most significant relevant to racecourses, is the acquisition of Turnpoint Group, which provides landscaping, construction and maintenance services for sporting venues across Australia.

Growing pains are common with the magnitude of increase in Programmed’s services, scope and financing. Debt reduction was a major problem but by strategic rationalisation of some services, focusing more intently on Australia and New Zealand, and refinancing, the company is now in a position to better grow and invest in the business.

The carbon tax will have a surprisingly high, cumulative effect on the company’s 1000-strong client base, but is seen as an opportunity as well as a threat. There is a potential advantage because it is not a stretch for Programmed to retrofit efficient lighting or solar-powered signage and apply hi-tech paints as part of existing maintenance charters. “Most buildings in Australia are 20 to 30 years old and will require upgrades and improvements as part of ongoing maintenance anyway,” said Chris Sutherland, Managing Director of Programmed.

Another problem is that Programmed is still perceived as just a painting company. However, Programmed is now equally skilled and able to provide maintenance and targeted solutions in other areas such as grounds, landscaping, facilities management and corporate imaging in addition to painting. Changing this perception will be boosted by the acquisition of Turnpoint.

A key service Programmed offers to a racecourse is a strong, detailed familiarity with the maintenance requirements of high profile entertainment venues such as racecourses, coupled with the ability to specifically tailor and deliver a comprehensive maintenance package to meet individual location-specific needs, backed up, importantly, by expertise and experience. Programmed, in consultation with the racecourse manager, designs a comprehensive property maintenance solution that serves as a roadmap.

Programmed’s specialist painting maintenance is not about ‘touch ups’. The company works with the RM to develop, implement and maintain colour specifications according to a set colour palette so that there is cohesion, colour-wise, throughout the entire venue. High internal standards of productivity are set for their painters in terms of the quality of their work.

Programmed has the skills, experience and licences to access even the most difficult to reach areas, which in the case of racecourses might be lights and grandstands. This includes working at heights with the aid of a variety of access methods, including elevated work platforms and the use of trained abseilers.
For grounds maintenance, Programmed works closely with the RM with a highly skilled workforce of horticultural professionals to develop and maintain the grounds, keeping them in great condition all year-round, taking care to ensure the gardens not only look good, but are also manageable, sustainable and environmentally responsible.

Programmed has recently designed, manufactured and installed what is believed to be the first fully solar powered and battery backup monolithic sign, contributing to sustainability and the environment through innovation at a very much lower cost.

The company is also able to offer LED lighting solutions that have important comparative advantages such as: longer lifespans (10 years); lower wattage (12 volts) but equal brightness; less energy consumption; lower running and maintenance costs; and improved light distribution with less shadows.

Dealing with emergencies at racecourses, due to the tight meeting schedules, has been a speciality of Programmed. One such incident was at Moonee Valley where, the evening before one of their night races, cockatoos had eaten through all the wiring on nearly all 80 light poles. Programmed was quick to provide trucks with 75 foot travel towers and personnel so that the racecourse electricians could repair the damage in time. In another incident the intricate, wrought iron gates at Flemington had to be repainted and ready in time for the Melbourne Cup after a truck had accidentally run into them. This required skilled painters, expert handiwork and a steady hand while painting at an elevated height to a tight schedule.

Most of the time the challenges experienced at racecourses are the high level access requirements. These include the grandstand roofing, light poles and stewards towers which call on a multitude of resources such as travel towers, bosuns’ seats and scaffolding. Another interesting occurrence at racecourses is that horses eat the paint on the stables. Programmed uses acrylic, water-based paints which do not affect horses when they chew on stable doors.

Prevention is better than cure as the adage goes and Programmed fully subscribes to this. Preventative maintenance and proper, on-going maintenance to keep the racecourse in a constantly well-maintained state so that it always looks professional, impressive and at consistently high standards is perhaps the most recommended approach for racecourse managers.

For this Programmed recommends a long-term maintenance contract which is definitely more effective budget, cost and time-wise as opposed to letting the racecourse slide in terms of its upkeep and maintenance and trying to spruce it up in a short time later on. This includes regular meetings to see how and where Programmed can assist in the day to day management of the racecourse or to improve its upkeep. These discussions can also serve as a platform to present, test out or monitor the use of new products that can be of benefit to the race course.

The racecourse industry is a key sector moving forward. Some of the racecourses are aging and Programmed sees opportunities in the maintenance and refurbishment of the facilities and all the grandstands. Programmed further sees an opportunity to get involved in the reconstruction of new grandstands and is able to get involved in more than just the painting aspect of this refurbishment by offering services in grounds upkeep, landscaping design and maintenance, including feature gardens, wayfinding and identifier signage.

Programmed is also able to offer in addition, expertise in the design, installation and maintenance of integrated, electrical, voice and data cabling, secure networks, audio visual systems, including video conferencing, green building energy management services and intelligent lighting control solutions through our sister company KLM.

It is important that racecourse managers ensure their facilities are always properly maintained as racecourses have becoming more popular as venues for weddings, corporate function and exhibitions. These increasing mixed-use opportunities mean that the racecourses and their facilities need to be meticulously well-maintained at all times, and not just in time for races. A long-term maintenance contract will achieve this effectively.

(For more details or information contact: Nathan D’couto, National Sales & Marketing Manager, 03 8542 5738 or 0412 581 017)
Today many of us are faced with the responsibility of maintaining used and sometimes outdated equipment.

Equipment often fails at inconvenient times, when it is needed most. As most failures can be categorised as minor mechanical, they can usually be prevented. Examples of these types of failures are bearings, bushes, belts and tyre failures. Nearly all of these failures will have a human element attached to them (i.e. the grease nipple that didn’t receive grease etc.)

To both prevent and offset these we need to implement a preventative maintenance system. Preventative maintenance can be described as the maintenance of equipment before breakdown occurs. Here are some useful tips which will help you get the best out of your plant and equipment.

**Maintenance schedules**
A maintenance schedule is a simple plan which, if followed, will ensure that preventative maintenance is carried out at a specific time or date. It can be found in a number of forms and today is more than likely to be electronic.

A simple example of a plan could be:
- Equipment title.
- Service hours or date of last service.
- Type of service.
- Service hours or date of next service.
- Type of service.

In a commercial contracting environment, equipment will operate between 1000 and up to 3000 service hours per annum. As none of the equipment that we use is likely to attain service hours this high, it is more likely that a date will be used in place of a service meter reading.

One of the best methods of maintaining service schedule information is still the simple whiteboard or calendar/year planners. All OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) suppliers will have some form of service schedule available for their equipment. Most of these can be found on line.

New equipment will have specific service guidelines that are set down by the OEM supplier who will sometimes have a service agreement written into the purchase contract.

**Service Types**
Services can be broken down into three main groups and for the purposes of our industry are best kept in basic form:

- Daily Service and pre start checks.
- Minor Servicing.
- Major Services.

**Daily service and pre start checks**
The importance of daily service and pre start checks cannot be emphasised enough as they are the front line of any preventative maintenance system. As the front line, they can not only prevent failure but can assist in predicting potential failure. A Daily Service and pre start check should be carried out before any equipment or machine is operated and generally consists of the following:

- A check of all lubricating oils and where applicable radiator coolant level.
- Lubrication of specific grease points.
- V belt tension checks.
- Air Cleaner status.
- Tyre checks.
- Operational and safety checks.
- Identify and prioritise defects.

Daily service and pre start checks ensure that the equipment is safe to operate and must be carried out by a competent operator. The check will also be the first point audited should there be an incident or accident involving the equipment.

For most, a daily service is not something that we record so we have to rely on staff to complete the check. So, how do we ensure that the checks and service are undertaken correctly? Other than the check sheet system, one of the easiest methods is to undertake random monitoring by asking “Have you checked today?” While this may be cumbersome initially, doing so often enough will reinforce the routine and guarantee to improve your staffs diligence and competence in this area.

For those of us who are able to carry out their own daily service and pre start, it is a simple task to ensure that the checks have been completed before we start the machine. Again the importance of daily servicing and pre start cannot be emphasised enough.
Minor Services
Minor services generally consist of attention to the following points:
- Changing engine and sometimes specific lubrication oils.
- V belt checks and adjustments.
- Tyre checks and rotation.
- The changing of blades and GET etc.
- Specific OEM requirements.
- Operational and safety checks.

As minor services are recorded they are used to record predictive information. Examples are V belt and bearing condition, component monitoring, wear and tear, etc.

Major Services
As most of our equipment is subjected to seasonal requirements it is advantageous to carry out a major service once per year. As noted previously, major service will also generally meet with OEM requirements.

Major Services can consist of the following points:
- Changing all lubrication oils and filters.
- Changing air cleaner elements.
- Changing fuel filters.
- Replacement of V belts.
- Specific component changes.
- Specific mechanical adjustments.
- Specific OEM requirements.
- Operational and safety checks.

Summary
The implementation of any form of preventative maintenance system is guaranteed to help your equipment perform better, last longer and be more cost effective. Systems can be tailor made and track specific and should be a necessary requirement. Most systems are effective if kept in simple form and are easy to implement and maintain.

Unlike commercial contractor’s equipment, most of our equipment doesn’t earn direct revenue. Hence expenditure on equipment is often seen as unwarranted. It is therefore essential that the cost of preventative maintenance is included in the ongoing running costs at the time of purchase.

(Next issue: Part 2 - Employees, Contractors & OEM’s)
Courses for Horses

“Pinecliff” Private Training Centre

Pinecliff, located on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria, is a marquee thoroughbred breeding and training centre providing safety and comfort for its equine residents at an environmentally sustainable facility. Pinecliff is owned by the GSA Group, a large global corporate group with annual turnover in excess of $600 million and substantial bloodstock investments.

The training tracks at Pinecliff are examples of proprietary track technology developed by GSA’s Armour Track Pty Ltd subsidiary. This technology was developed in response to the requirement for a resilient, low maintenance track surface. After searching the world to find the best surfaces, it was found that nothing of acceptable standard existed. Instead it was resolved to research and develop a proprietary track technology and to make that technology commercially available to owners of racetracks and training centres. After an outlay of millions of dollars on research, a track was successfully installed and tested with favourable evaluation by leading turf scientist, John Neylan, and peer review by the CSIRO. The tracks have now been operating for more than 10 years and are widely recognised as providing surfaces that are unique in terms of useability and safety, allowing for dramatically more intensive racing usage in all weather conditions.

The company has two types of track surface: the “Armour Grass” track for grass racetrack surfaces and the “Armour Sand” sand track. The “Armour Grass” profile, combines sand and fibre with Kikuyu grass and other specially engineered components. It gives a resilient, all weather, well drained, sub-soil irrigated grass surface that requires little if any maintenance or recovery time. The grass track at Pinecliff is capable of supporting in excess of 120 horses in work on a track that is only 12 metres wide. This 1400m turf track is accompanied by a parallel “Armour Sand” track combining sand and fibre in a proprietary, all weather, specially engineered sand track which again combines high performance with long life and low maintenance costs. Another 4 metre wide Armour Sand track loops the property providing 3 kilometres of uninterrupted galloping potential.

Equine safety and comfort is paramount at Pinecliff with attention to detail in every aspect of the complex. Padded, rotating bollards decorate the entry to the horse washes and fast track bends to ensure there are no exposed or dangerous corners to cause injury or discomfort to horses. Another example is the use of specially designed layered foam laminates that absorb kinetic energy on the surfaces in wash areas and tie ups and specially engineered vet boxes, substantially reducing the likelihood of kicking injury.

The theme continues in the paddocks which are double fenced in special safety mesh and horse stables that are both well protected from the elements and cleverly cross-ventilated, again with walls constructed in the best safety materials. A further safety innovation is the use of rubber infused asphalt on all areas traversed by the horses. This not only reduces slipping risk but provides cushioning required to eliminate unwanted joint concussion, maximise horse shoe life and preserve hoof quality.

Environmental sustainability is a byword at Pinecliff in all horse facilities and associated activities. The water in the equine swimming pool does not use environmentally damaging chlorine but rather is ozone treated, providing the highest possible water purity and a superior exercise facility for sensitive skinned horses. The pool is set up so that the horses can swim clockwise and counter clockwise eliminating uneven muscle use and has the ability to swim horses with a bungee line.

Capitalising on ideas that have been utilised in other areas of agriculture, Pinecliff has incorporated a dairy style wash concept in its horse walking machines, allowing any manure to be pushed to the centre of the walker where it is redirected to the worm farm.

A unique high speed treadmill imported from the USA provides additional training experiences for the GSA race horses. With full suspension like a car and air cooled rubber, the treadmill can provide full gallop practice on a range of computerised track simulations.

Equipped with a commercial farrier station, a vet facility designed to allow small procedures to be performed on site, round yards, sand and rolling yards, dressage and show jumping arenas, Pinecliff is the complete facility for breeding and training horses and preparing yearlings.

With 1200 tonnes of manure and 280 cubic metres of grass clippings to handle, waste management is a major issue. This is addressed at Pinecliff with a state of the art worm farm as big as an Olympic Swimming Pool. All waste on the property, animal and human, is treated onsite in the worm farm and the by-product worm castings used as organic fertiliser for pasture and track maintenance. The two storey worm farm is buried underground to ensure the aesthetics of the landscaping is maintained and to maintain a constant temperature,
Courses for Horses

operating like a rainforest floor as it filters water through the organic material stored on the false floor.

All reclaimed grey water including the backwash that comes from the equine swimming pool passes through the worm farm and is then pumped to the upper wetlands for further filtration and polishing before re-use. A unique water veil is created when fly proof sliding canopies are opened to allow access for the organic material to be dumped inside. The water veil keeps the worm farm sealed and fly free.

The upper wetlands are a series of heavily vegetated terraces that use plant density and diversity to suck up high levels of nutrients. This allows Pinecliff to put class C water in at one end and 72 hours later have class A water at the other end. Because of the bird life supported by the wetlands, the water is also polished through a UV filtration system to eliminate the risk of E.coli as it is recycled for irrigation.

Storm water is captured in a dam and 5 underground concrete retention tanks. The 7 megalitre dam that is located at the lower end of the property closer to the sea also has the ability to circulate water from that dam through another specially developed adjacent wetland to improve water quality.

Upper Wetlands

The upper wetlands are juxtaposed against the largest dry stone wall in the Southern Hemisphere. The wall is an architectural statement with its massive scale and organic curved form but is sympathetic to the rugged coastal setting. The wall also serves a practical function in providing both a retaining wall and a protective buffer to the wetland area from strong sea winds.

Buildings at Pinecliff have minimal visual impact and are unseen from a distance due to cleverly designed landscaping. The buildings are beautifully resolved architecturally and harmonise with their environment. The setting of buildings into the landscape also reduces wind turbulence, creating a safe environment for the horses as they move from stables or paddocks to the training tracks.

Over 1 million indigenous plants have been planted with more to follow. Large-scale erosion control and weed removal has been undertaken along with extensive revegetation along the coastline.

Typically, equine properties quickly become nutrient deficient, compacted and sour from too much of the same grazing and lack of rest. To avoid this, Pinecliff has incorporated cross-grazing using cattle and sheep.

Pasture management begins with paddock design and layout. Each large paddock is separated from the next with a combination of tree lanes, hedgerows and safety mesh fencing. The hedging and shade trees in the tree lanes between each paddock not only look attractive but also provide shade from the sun and shelter from the wind for livestock in the paddocks. This also reduces moisture being lost from the ground, which reduces the need for watering. To ensure that none of the recycled water used to irrigate the pasture is lost, Pinecliff uses pop up sprinklers placed throughout the paddocks.

All pasture grasses are selected Endophyte free. This ensures that the fungus that causes infertility in horses is not carried in any of the pasture seed.

Horses often "churn up" paddocks either through digging or when running and turning. This is particularly pronounced along the fence lines and near paddock gates. The use of "Armour Sand" in these areas keeps the surrounding grass protected and also stops them turning into mud when it rains.

One third of the farm must be spelled at any one time to maintain the quality of the pasture. After other animals have cross-grazed, the paddocks are left to recuperate. Any final clean up is done by sheep before the paddocks are ready for equine use again. While the sheep are not being used for clean up jobs inside the paddocks, they happily roam through the tree lanes and hedgerows as woolly mowers and tree pruners.

Each paddock contains an electric fence inside the post and rail. This is a completely solar driven process and demonstrates Pinecliff’s full commitment to sustainability.

Pinecliff is a magnificent establishment and certainly not a standard farm or horse facility. The animals on the farm are truly blessed with facilities that put their welfare as the highest priority. The environment keeps them calm, healthy, fit and, very importantly, safe. Pinecliff reflects a substantial investment in research and development that has produced exciting new innovations, technologies and practices that are incorporated in many aspects of the property and are now available for commercial sale.
**Courses for Horses**

**Slattery’s Genes**

It goes without saying that a good pedigree is important in breeding top racehorses. The same applies to racecourse managers and Peter Slattery, RM at Kilmore Racing Club in Victoria, is a prime example. His grandsire was Paddy Slattery, a top South Australian jockey in the 1930s and his sire, Brian, part owned a number of racehorses. Thus Peter inherited good racing genes. No doubt there was a sound pedigree on the dams side too!

With that background, Peter went to the races a lot as a young buck and often wondered about track preparation, “particularly after my pockets were emptied”. After completing an apprenticeship as a Cabinet Maker in 1980, a racetrack career beckoned and Peter, a native South Australian, became the Maintenance Groundsman at Victoria Park racecourse in Adelaide, then at Morphettville and later at Cheltenham where he moved to be Leading Hand. He then applied for and was appointed Racecourse Manager at Mildura Racing Club in 1997 and six years later got the job as RM at Kilmore.

Apart from being a keen student of racecourse management all along, keeping up with the latest techniques and developments through the literature and attending ARMA conferences as much as possible, Peter gives credit to several mentors for guidance. They include, Stuart Laing and Scott McQueen at Mildura, Colin Bellchambers, Michael Mooney and John Cameron at Kilmore, and Ross Farrar of Racing Victoria.

“All have been very supportive CEOs along the way and Ross was always there for good advice”. He is currently studying for a Diploma in Turf Management at NMIT.

In a career now in its 32nd year there will be highlights and lowlights. Peter’s highlights include, “spending 6 wonderful years in Mildura which included many track improvements and a unique lifestyle. Then moving to Kilmore (a little bit cooler than up north!) and continuing my passion for racecourse management with one of the great cities of the world, Melbourne, at my doorstep”.

Peter with Norm Thompson, President, Kilmore Trainers Association
Courses for Horses

A lowlight was, “acclimatising to Kilmore weather and the Turf and Harness Horse Trainers, but overall the majority of the trainers are good people. However, a major problem there was the Kilmore Drainage Audit which was initially thought to take about two weeks but took 4 months to complete. It started in the first week of winter and finished in the fifth week of spring, 2011. The audit found lots of pipe separation and damaged drainage pipes plus installations on top of old installations. “A Track Manager’s inherited NIGHTMARE!” Peter recalls.

Kilmore Racing Club celebrated 150 years of turf racing in February this year. The Club now hosts 14 turf race meetings and 32 harness meetings a year. Peter’s responsibilities also cover 25 sets of harness trials plus a host of jump outs and grass gallop mornings, subject to track condition. Turf training facilities include the Course Proper (1735m), based on a ryegrass mix, a sand track (1550m), jog track (400m), swim dam and bullring. Harness tracks are the main race track (1000m) and an inside training track.

Peter checking the track with Shane Goss, Asst. RM

The Club caters for 35 Turf Trainers and 24 Harness Trainers handling 65-100 turf horses and 35-40 harness horses training daily. All track management and supervision is managed by Peter with an assistant track manager, a turf apprentice, a maintenance grounds person and a curator for the Harness track. Casual labour is called upon quite regularly around race meetings for track repairs and rail movements. Peter observed, “continued liaison, respect and fair dealings with trainers ensures good mutual relations”.

His key management techniques for maintaining tracks in good condition are, “lots of reading. Careful planning and a plan B. Walking the tracks as much as possible. Liaising constantly with the trackwork supervisor, trainers representative and neighbouring track managers”. Indispensable equipment includes his Verti Drain and Track Mower.

Peter sees the track managers role in the racing industry as, “very important, often overlooked in the past but the support base is changing every day in the Track Managers favour”. He suggests that all Track Managers and their assistants would benefit from issue with a Racecourse Manager identification pass that is recognized for entry at all Australian racecourses, particularly for race meetings. Peter’s advice for staff aspiring to be track managers is, “Stay focused on the theme. Customer Service. Lots of reading”.

He is optimistic about the future of the racing industry in Australia, except for jumps racing due to the animal welfare lobby, and believes racing in general is still prospering but could do with fewer and more ‘carnival’ type race meetings. Peter believes that increased horse syndication is the best way to promote horse racing to the public. “Get that winning ‘part horse owner’ feeling. Can become addictive”, as he has experienced in both Turf and Harness codes.

Peter is married to Libby, his partner for 25 years, and they have a daughter, Emma, 21, and a son, Joseph, 16. As well as barracking for the Adelaide Crows, he relaxes away from the track with his dog Lia and watching daughter and son play weekly sport, netball, footy and cricket. Peter recently played with Joseph in the local district C Grade cricket Grand Final, Kilmore v. Broadford, which they won, just. He reflected, “I’m still lame, but it was worth it”.

He aims to, “Continue in my current position and keep an eye out for a position upgrade when it suits my family situation”.

Horse Racing in Kilmore

The first race meeting in the Kilmore area is believed to have been a fixture in 1849 to celebrate St Patrick’s Day under the patronage of the Catholic Church. By the early 1860s there were at least three race courses plus a tough steeplechase course in the Kilmore district as well as a two horse point to point racetrack.

Prior to these ‘organised’ meetings, local squatters and their staff had conducted regular hunts after kangaroos. Hunting and steeplechasing were popular in the 1850s with several packs of hounds in the area. In the 1860s the Kilmore Grand National Steeplechase was a tough race run over 4 miles with 36 jumps, Adam Lindsay Gordon was one of the riders in 1870.

The Kilmore Turf Club was formed in 1862 and established itself at the current site after being denied access to a paddock by the owner of the land the morning of a planned meeting the previous year. Harness racing joined turf racing at the site in 1959 and the name changed to the Kilmore Racing Club Inc in 2007.
Kikuyu and Racecourses
Tech Note by Trackwatcher

Pennisetum clandestinum (kikuyugrass, or kikuyu for short) is native to the tropical highlands of eastern and central Africa (1950–2700 metres above sea level (masl)) (Cameron, 1960; Quinlan et al., 1975). Its common name was derived in 1903 from the Kikuyu people of Kenya, within whose tribal boundaries it thrives. Kikuyu is now used in most tropical, subtropical and many temperate regions of the world, being recognized as a valuable grass for pasture and amenity use, soil conservation and flood control purposes.

Kikuyu was introduced to Australia by seed in 1919 and then propagated vegetatively for more than 50 years (Whittet, 1921; Aitken, 1975). Seed set under Australian conditions was first reported by Whittet (1934), but it was generally thought that flowering resulted in little or no seed set until Wilson (1970) showed that good seed yields were possible with certain strains of kikuyu. Since then, commercial seed production in Australia has become a reality, largely through the efforts of farmers and engineers, who built on Graeme Wilson’s pioneering work.

Kikuyu seed production is a highly specialized and mechanized enterprise, with every operation requiring perfect timing and precision. Success depends on the successful integration of weed control, fertilizer application and defoliation (leaf-tip mowing). As an enterprise, however, it tends to be low-yielding, high-risk and high-cost.

History and Cultivars
In the late 1960s, a large range of kikuyu ecotypes were evaluated in NSW. This led to the release in 1970 of the first seeding cultivar, ‘Whittet’, which has coarser stems and leaves and is more erect than the older ‘Common’ kikuyu. The release of three other seeding cultivars followed: ‘Breakwell’ (developed from bisexual plants of ‘Common’ kikuyu) in 1971, ‘Crofts’ (selected for cold tolerance) and ‘Noonan’ (selected for tolerance of kikuyu yellows disease) in 1983 (Oram, 1990).

At present, seed of only two cultivars, ‘Whittet’ and ‘Noonan’, is produced in Australia. The certified area of ‘Whittet’ has increased from 16 ha (planted in 1970) to approximately 215 ha in 1997. On average, around 50 t of certified ‘Whittet’ seed is now produced annually. ‘Noonan’, however, has declined drastically in area from a peak of 76 ha in 1987/88 to 10 ha in 1997, which produces only about 3 t of certified seed per year.

Kikuyu and Racing
At the present time there is a preference for vegetative, male sterile kikuyu cultivars that exhibit superior growth, wear and colour characteristics to most seeded varieties. They also do not present the same concerns as fertile kikuyu seed varieties becoming an environmental weed. Recent developments have seen a number of vegetative cultivars being granted Plant Breeders Rights but there has been a complete lack of properly conducted trials in various parts of the country to evaluate these and other species for racecourse turf. Work of this sort is essential to determine the value of any grass type for racecourses and is currently on the drawing board.

(Full details of references quoted in this article can be obtained from the Editor)
Courses for Horses

Guidelines for New Irrigation Systems for Racetracks
by Peter Semos, Global Turf Solutions

When proposing a new irrigation system it is important to know what you want from the irrigation in order to obtain the flexibility of the system to do what you want in the time you have available to water. An automatic irrigation system will be your biggest asset on a race track if it is flexible and functional.

The irrigation system should be designed and installed so that little trouble and repairs are encountered by its design and installation. A general rule is not to compromise as compromise generally results in less flexibility and performance. It is best to sit down with a designer and set what you want and set an appropriate budget. Be sure that what you are compromising for price will not create difficulties during the operation of your system and will not restrict you in obtaining the best out of your track.

Is it best to go to a design and construct or to go to have a design done and then the installation tendered? It is considered best to have the design done and then have the installation tendered to the design and specifications that you require. With design and construct, if you have not provided a detailed brief the submitted prices will generally be to different designs and many times to the basic of designs in order to win the tender. Design and construct tenders are difficult to evaluate and to compare apples with apples. It is much easier when a detailed specification and a detailed bill of quantities is presented for installers to price on. All are pricing on the same thing so you can better evaluate the tender.

It is best to set up a guideline brief for the designer that states the things you want from your irrigation system and which may be derived by the following information that you have obtained from an audit of your irrigation system:

- The track soil type and infiltration rates.
- Track drainage rates or if it has drainage.
- Maxim daily and weekly evaporation rates.
- Grasses used and their relevance to evaporation rates (crop factor)
- Time frames you have available to water owing to training, usage and maintenance. It may need to have, for example, a watering capacity for applying 12mm within eight (8) hours over the entire track
- Available water quantity, particularly dam, lakes or bores.
- Water quality and if you need access to good clean water sources from time to time if water supply is of marginal quality and marginal salt levels
- What other tracks or horticultural areas do you need to water at the same time to adequately water every area in the time available at peak demand periods.
- Flow rates and pressures available, and more importantly, flow rates and pressures required
- If current pumps and filters will be adequate.
- High and low wind periods.
- Main direction that the winds come from.
- Poor drying sites owing to shadows from trees and or buildings such as grand stands.
- If the system is to have a manual watering system such as a quick coupler system on the outside that is set up so that all sections of the track can be reached with a 50m hose.
- How many of the quick couplers you would want working at the same time while the irrigation is operating.
- How you want the watering to occur, such as watering both sides of the track at the same time or each side independently, and be arranged so that watering commences from one point and sequentially goes around the track in the one direction.
- You may want to have individual head control so that you can water one sprinkler or water the maximum sprinklers as required, anywhere on the track such as can be done on the Moonee Valley track.
Courses for Horses

- A sprinklers design to provide the following performance criteria:
  - A Co-efficient of uniformity (CU) of at least 90%
  - A Distribution Uniformity (DU) of at least 85%
  - A Scheduling Co-efficiency equal to or less than 1.1.
- To have the controller coupled to decoders, and have the capability of automatic programming and manual control, and be capable of multiple starts of at least 12 starts per day. To have the controller housing preferably placed where the whole of the track can be viewed from the controller’s position. If the controller is not in a building then the controller housing must ensure weather proof light and power.
- To have isolation valves placed on the main lines that allow sections of track to operate while other sections are being repaired.
- In the constructed drawing layouts you may want to include all the information such as the precipitation rates of all sprinklers layouts, shift sequences, all valve placements and types, pipe types and sizes and cross sections of all pipe installation, all valve assemblies, all sprinkler assemblies, all quick coupler assemblies, controller housing layout, pump and filter layout and wiring layout so that when you look at the drawings you have all the information there.

The specification will also need to address best installation practices and materials and this is where the designer will be of considerable assistance.

Although it is very important to have a good brief and specification it is also critical to have adequate witness and hold points within the installation that are conducted by an independent irrigation specialist. This may even be the designer if the project is not a design and construct.

Knowing what you want from your irrigation system is paramount and by having it designed and specified to your requirements will go a long way to having an asset that will allow you to produce the track performance you are after. Having a poor irrigation system installed will only give you never ending problems that are generally not easily fixable.

Perth Conference Program
Conference sessions in Perth will concentrate on turf species, health and profiles, the foundation of successful and viable racecourses throughout Australasia, and indeed the world. Horse racing is synonymous with turf, yet the choice of appropriate turf species mixtures, the management of the selected turf layer, and just as importantly, the construction and maintenance of the track profile, are the ongoing challenges that racecourse managers face.

Eminent turf scientists will lead discussions on these vital issues and the practical application of the best principles of turf management will be demonstrated by inspections of the two capital city racecourses in Perth, Ascot and Belmont, plus visits to Pinjarra racecourse and the Lark Hill training centre. Turf maintenance in the fragile Western Australian environment will also be a feature of these discussions and inspections, and will have strong relevance to other regions.

Additional highlights of the program will include updates on racecourse management in New Zealand and Asia, lessons that are always pertinent to the Australian scene, and an interactive discussion with those whose livelihoods and safety are closely linked to turf racing surfaces, the jockeys.

The Perth Conference is a ‘must do’ educational opportunity for racecourse managers wanting to keep on top of their game.

Awards
Details and nomination forms for the Turfcraft International Racecourse Manager of the Year, the Sterilene Racing/ARMA Scholarship, and the Anco Racetrack Event Education Award can be obtained from Warren Williams (see below)

ARMA Committee
NSW – Lindsay Murphy (Chairman & Treasurer)
0417 744 252 lmurphy@australianturfclub.com.au
VIC – Martin Synan (Deputy Chairman)
0407 819 027 msynan@mvrc.net.au
QLD – Warren Williams (Secretary)
0410 779 625 arma@racecoursemanagers.org.au
SA – John Tonani
0413 448 507 jtonani@sajc.com.au
TAS – Sam Webster
0414 886 100 s.webster@tasracing.com.au
WA – Geoff Murphy
0419 769 462 gmurphy@perthracing.org.au
Courses for Horses

Around the Tracks

NSW

Andrew Small reports the following Appointments:
Scott Jarvis has taken over as Racecourse Manager at
Coffs Harbour. He has been replaced at Albury by Luke
Garland. Steve Bottomley is the new RM at
Muswellbrook. David Williamson has resigned from
Orange, a replacement yet to be announced.

Project Updates include:
The $150m Royal Randwick Racecourse Redevelopment is
underway. The key deliverables associated with this
project are:
Demolition of the existing Paddock Grandstand and
construction of a new Stand, together with extensive
refurbishment of the existing QEII Stand to create two (2)
new state-of-the-art grandstands providing first class
spectator facilities, function areas, restaurants and corporate boxes;

A new 4,500 person multi-purpose “Theatre of the Horse”
parade ring including Owners Pavilion, horse tunnels &
amenities buildings;

Demolition of the existing Tea House and Pavilion
buildings including associated site preparatory works,
landscaping, temporary & enabling works.

Brookfield Multiplex was appointed Head Contractor in
late 2011 following a competitive tender process. The
project is being procured under a “Design and Construct”
type contract and at this stage, Practical Completion is
estimated for June 2013 with early handover of some
areas in April 2013 for the Sydney Autumn Racing
Carnival.

Re-surfacing of approximately 2 hectares of the course
proper at Broadmeadow racecourse (Newcastle) was
undertaken late last year by Sustainable Turf Renovations.
This work was urgently required due to undulations in the
course proper which gave rise to safety concerns. The
work commenced in late October, re-turfing was
completed in early November and racing successfully
resumed on Boxing Day.

Rollout of PVC rail to the top thirty (30) country TAB
racecourses has commenced. Scone has been finished,
with Muswellbrook targeted for completion by Friday 18th
May. The remaining 28 tracks will be addressed over the
months ahead. PVC rail will be installed on the inside of
the course proper (plus all starting chutes) at each club.
Fornells 10100HD+ (Heavy Duty Co-extruded) rail was
selected following a competitive tender process in 2011.

Future Works planned:
Following its recent emphatic High Court Victory in the
Race Fields Legislation Case, Racing NSW is currently
finalising plans for a substantial capital works program
upgrading racing & training facilities across NSW. It is
anticipated that the highest priority projects will
commence in the second half of 2012.

ARMA Membership

The Australian Racecourse Managers Association
welcomes new members. Annual membership
subscription is a modest $110 inc. GST and entitles
substantial discounts for ARMA conferences, interactive
use of the ARMA website, enrolment in the Epar Racing
environmental program plus eligibility for ARMA
awards. Club and individual memberships are available.
Application forms for new membership or membership
renewal are also available from the ARMA website.