

## Veterinary Ireland Media Release 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017



### John M Oxx Opens 2017 Veterinary Ireland Equine Conference

John M. Oxx, a leading Irish trainer of thoroughbred racehorses, who also graduated as a veterinary surgeon, officially opened the 2017 Veterinary Ireland Equine Conference today (Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017). Organised by the Equine Group of Veterinary Ireland, the two day conference takes place in the Killashee Hotel, Naas on 10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> November, 2017.

“Ireland is the largest producer of Thoroughbreds in Europe and the third largest in the world; therefore, the veterinary profession has a large part to play in ensuring these valuable animals perform to their very best,” says Catherine Dwan, Chair of the conference organising committee. “With over 7,000 registered thoroughbred breeders and some of the world’s best stallions standing here, Irish vets have to be at the leading edge of new techniques aided with the latest technology. Our conference aims to deliver just this.”

International speakers include Dr. Martin Furr - Professor and Head of the Department of Physiology at Oklahoma State University and the Interim Director of the OSU Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. He has authored two textbooks of equine neurology, and over 80 primary journal articles in the field of equine medicine. He is speaking at the conference about equine neonatal medicine, critical care and equine neurological challenges.

#### Positive Improvement in Survival Rate of Hospitalised Foals

In his presentation about recent developments in Neonatal Medicine, Dr. Furr said that one of the key parameters of neonatal intensive care over the years has been an assessment and measurement of outcome – that is, survival either short term or long-term.

“In a study of 1,065 hospitalised ill foals, the overall survival to discharge was 72.8%. This study encompassed foals over a large period of time, (30 years) with survival increasing from **58% in the 1980’s** to **81% in the decade from 2000-2010**,” said Dr. Furr.

“Controlling for types of disease present and severity, the probability of survival for foals after 2000 was 3.4 times greater than that for a foal in the 1980’s. This is a very encouraging finding and speaks to the significant advances that have been made in foal care during this period.”

#### Judicious Use of Antimicrobials is Important

However Dr. Furr also highlighted that one important finding in the studies is the fact that the presence of bacteremia was significantly associated with non-survival. “Bacterial infection is one of the leading causes of death in foals during the first few weeks of life,” said Dr. Furr.

“Judicious use of antimicrobials in the ill neonate is important and is informed by temporal and historical trends in antimicrobial sensitivity.”

Dr Furr is also presenting on determining if a gait abnormality is due to disease of the nervous system or the musculoskeletal (MS); and diagnosis and treatment of spinal ataxia.

#### DAFM Update

New European veterinary medicine legislation which will be passed in 2018 will examine the distribution, drug safety and use of veterinary medicines. In an update from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine on Medicine Legislation, Hazel Sheridan SSVI will give practitioners guidance on current legislative requirements with regard to prescribing veterinary medicines to equidae, helping practitioners adapt to the challenges of prescribing in today’s climate.



## **Disease Protection Measures**

Of paramount importance to veterinary surgeons is the welfare of the horse which can be best managed by disease protection measures such as vaccination, laboratory assisted disease screening programmes and biosecurity. A speaker who has a wealth of experience in this field is the former Chief Veterinary Officer for the Irish Turf Club, Mr Terry Smith MVB MRCVS. Mr. Smith, also a partner with Rathfriland Veterinary Clinic in Co. Down, delivers the **Ned Gowing Memorial Lecture** on Friday afternoon (10<sup>th</sup> November, 2017).

The Conference includes an update from the Irish Equine Centre by Dr. Ursula Fogarty MVB, PhD, MRCVS on current Post Mortem findings, the status of endoparasite levels and the incidence of Sycamore Poisoning in Irish horses this year.

## **WetLab, Practical Sessions & Case Studies**

The Veterinary Ireland Conference was preceded by Wetlab practical sessions at the Race Academy, Kildare on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November, organised in conjunction with the Veterinary Defence Society.

Subjects covered in the Wetlab sessions ranged from how to recognise neurological gait abnormalities to ocular and cardiac findings at pre-purchase exams. The Wetlabs also featured international speakers Martin Furr, Josh Slater and David Green - joined by local practitioners including Marcus Swail and Kevin Corley.

Case study sessions were presented by Sunita Jaewon, UCD Veterinary Hospital; Julien Racine, Switzerland; Kevin Corley, Veterinary Advances; Peadar O'Scanaill MVB, Ashbourne; and Joao Oliveira, UCD Veterinary Hospital with practical how to sessions by Andrea Ryan, Kilcash Equine Clinic, Clonmel and Joe Collins, Donkey Sanctuary, Cork.

**Dr Josh Slater** is Professor of Equine Clinical Studies and Clinical Director of the Equine Referral Hospital at the Royal Veterinary College, London. Dr. Slater is delivering a lecture on 'Equine Asthma and the Coughing Horse,' exploring what is new in equine respiratory medicine. He is also running an equine dermatology workshop, a session on gastric ulcer syndrome and a session on management of Strangles outbreaks.

Dr. Slater was biosecurity advisor for the 2008 Equestrian Olympic Games, the London 2012 Equestrian Olympic Games and the World Equestrian Games 2014. He is a co-director of the British Animal Rescue Trauma Association, is chairman of the Horse Trust and secretary to the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation. He is a past president of the British Equine Veterinary Association, the European College of Equine Internal Medicine and the Federation of European Equine Veterinary Associations.

The event was organised by a conference committee Chaired by Catherine Dwan and including Rosalinda Devereaux, Louis Hassett, Donald Collins, Bridget McGing and Liz O Flynn.

ENDS

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2017  
Issued by: Antonina Ni Dhuinn, Progress Communications  
Tel: 01 276 6117 Email [nina@progresspr.ie](mailto:nina@progresspr.ie)



## **EDITORIAL FOOTNOTES & REFERENCES:**

### References quoted in presentation by Dr Furr:

- Factors associated with outcome and gradual improvement in survival over time in 1065 equine neonates admitted to an intensive care unit. Giguere, et al. EVJ 49 (2017) 45-50
- Trends in bacterial prevalence in septic foals (1979 – 2010). Theelen, et al. EVJ (2014) 46, 169-173.
- Temporal trends in antimicrobial susceptibility 1979-2010. Theelen, et al. EVJ (2014) 46, 161-168.
- What is likelihood that Thoroughbred foals treated for septic arthritis will race? Smith, et al. EVJ (2004) 36(5) 452-456.
- Factors associated with outcome in 94 hospitalised foals diagnosed with neonatal encephalopathy. Lyle-Dugas, et al. (2017) 49;207-210

### John M Oxx

John M Oxx qualified as a veterinary surgeon MVB, MRCVS from UCD and acted as assistant to his father, John Oxx (Senior), until 1979, when he then took over the training licence at Currabeg stables at the edge of the Curragh in Co. Kildare.

John had his first Group winner within the year with Orchestra, who was owned by Lord and Lady Donoughmore. Currabeg Stables has sent out almost 2000 winners since then, including 155 Listed winners and 137 Group winners. Among these are 37 Group 1 wins.

Of those Group 1 wins, the most recent of the more notable ones were the six Group 1s won by Sea the Stars whom John would class as the perfect racing machine and the point to which thoroughbred breeding 'after 300 years has arrived'. Sea the Stars won the English 2,000 Guineas, the Epsom Derby, The Eclipse Stakes, the Juddmonte International, The Irish Champion Stakes and finally the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe in Paris and all in the space of 6 months. This is a unique achievement by any horse in the history of racing.

John has always used his training and knowledge of veterinary to assist him and his owners in understanding the many veterinary problems which beset racehorses. He has a great interest in the breeding side of the industry, also, and has trained for many owner /breeders over the years.

John Oxx has held various positions in the industry over many years, including Chairman of the Irish National Stud, of the Irish Racehorse Trainers' Association and of the Racing Academy and Centre of Education. He also served on the Anti Doping Task Force for horse racing in 2016.