

# The unfortunate incident at HOY

Most of the competitors and many of the spectators who attended this year's Kelt Capital Horse of the Year Show will be aware of the terrible and stupid incident of hooliganism that resulted in the serious injury of a talented and valuable young horse.

To summarise, just after midnight on the Friday of the show, a group of unidentified drunken youths rolled a large cable reel directly into some covered yards where horses were sleeping. A number of horses were frightened and injured, and several escaped, while the youths responsible ran away.

The worst injured was four-year-old dressage horse Astek Gymnast, who belongs to Victoria Wall. It is believed the reel was rolled straight into the pipe yard in which 'Oliver' was resting. He bolted straight through his pen, taking the side of it with him, and trampled through several sheep pens, somehow flipped over a high, solid fence, fled into the open and ended up near the show hunter rings, having gone through or over several more rope barriers on the way.

Victoria was unaware of the incident until 7 the next morning, when she came to feed her horse, and in some quite considerable panic, eventually located him.



Oliver's legs two weeks after the incident

Oliver had suffered extensive injuries, including a puncture wound to his jaw and lacerations to his limbs and body. "He looked like he had been slashed with a Samurai sword," Victoria says. "He was in shock, shaking and terrified, and his knees, stifles and hocks were all massively swollen. I was angry beyond belief."

Shocked and horrified, the HOY community rallied behind Victoria and Oliver, and many trade stand owners donated products, services and even cash to help his recovery.

Although it looked extremely serious and career-ending to begin with, with Oliver needing two-and-a-half weeks of IV antibiotics, over Easter he turned the corner, and has recently returned to work.

"I used TuffRock poultice straight after the accident on his joints and it was quite amazing at getting rid of the heat and swelling. And a session with Dale Speedy from Contact Care made an extraordinary difference to him in a very short space of time. I have absolutely no doubt the wonderful resources made available to us have contributed to a successful recovery.

"He has a few permanent scars and lumps but I am very grateful I still have a horse and a sound one at that!"

She is also grateful to Kevin Hansen and the HOY management, who have picked up the associated vet bills, and says the incident has not put her off returning next year. "I have already booked my stables, actually.



Victoria and Oliver - now on the mend

The show is fabulous, but I do think that security needs to be looked at. And I'm just gob-smacked that the eejits responsible ran away, did nothing to help my horse, and have not even attempted to own up or apologise, even anonymously."

While the police investigated the incident, they have been unable to find proof of who was involved.

HOY director Kevin Hansen says that show has offered full support to Victoria and her horse. "We are appalled if underage drinking was the cause. Alcohol through the bars was strictly enforced. The HOY show wants the support of the equestrian public to help stop underage drinking at shows."

#### Victoria Wall would like to thank the following for donating products and expertise:

Lynley Moroney from Equine Muscle Release Therapy who treated Oliver several times over the weekend at the show.

Airlite Animal Bedding who donated their fabulous bedding for him at the show and at home for the first month.

Marj Marks who gave him Bach Flower remedies and Rescue Remedy soon after the accident.

Equine Health NZ, Savvy Touch, TuffRock, Shirlee Fistonich from the Natural Equine,

Caroline and Erin at Equine Trader, and the people at Equine Magic all who incredibly kindly donated products to help with his recovery.

"And also a big thank you to the Murrays and friends from Blenheim. As I was leaving to go home they were pressing money into my hands to help with his rehabilitation. I actually used it to pay for the session with Dale Speedy from Contact Care. Thank you also to the HOY show for picking up the vet bills and for bending over backwards to try to help in anyway possible after the accident. Despite everything, HOY is a fabulous show and I am really looking forward to next year."



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