



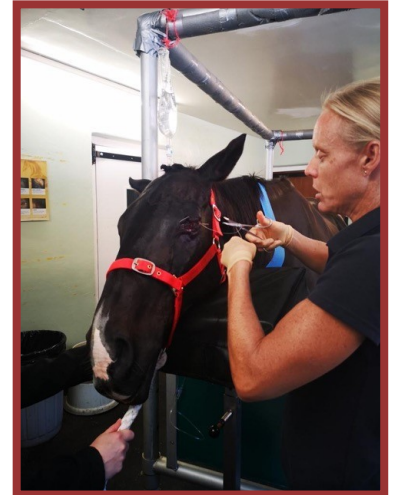
Director Naomi celebrates 20 years at Avonvale!

This autumn it will be 20 years since senior vet and director Naomi joined Avonvale.

Naomi graduated from Cambridge University in 2001 with degrees in Veterinary Medicine and Zoology. She was also awarded 'half-blues' for representing the university in Oxford-Cambridge varsity rowing and cross country running. As part of her studies she was lucky enough to spend time in the equine medicine department at the University of California, Davis, as well as many nights 'foal-sitting' at Rosssdales in Newmarket and also stint with the Wildlife Veterinary Unit in Kenya.

After graduation she worked in a mixed practice in Berkshire for 2 years before a desire to specialise in equine medicine brought her to Avonvale in 2003. She immediately enrolled in a Certificate in Equine Internal Medicine which she completed in 2006. Naomi became a director of the business alongside Chris, John and Andrew in 2007. Around this time, Naomi also became the youngest female vet to take on the role of Senior Veterinary Surgeon at a UK Racecourse, at Warwick, where she still holds this position.

Arriving at Avonvale, Naomi was incredibly inspired by the wonderful Andrew Higgins who shared his passion for stud medicine. And she quickly felt at home and so decided to stay! She has continued to build her experience and knowledge in all areas of stud medicine and internal medicine, as well as being the resident colic surgeon at the practice, a skill she learnt over very many years working alongside the brilliant surgeon Chris Colles. As a recognized Advanced Practitioner in Equine Internal Medicine, Naomi heads up both our stud medicine team and internal medicine referral service, and provides in house support and training for other members of the team. As well as a passion for stud medicine, Naomi has particular interests in gastroenterology, ophthalmology and cardiology and training of the performance horse and racehorse.



Outside of work, Naomi has a smallholding including a trio of ponies and a flock of pedigree Oxford Down sheep, and she continues to set herself ambitious sporting goals. In 2023 she won a national bronze medal in the 100 mile National women's time trial championships competing against cyclists of all ages. She then went on to win a bronze medal representing Great Britain at the age-group World Championship Time Trial in Scotland, bringing home a much coveted medal-bearing highland coo!

Office Hours

Mon-Fri 8:30am - 5:00pm

Contact Us

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24hr Emergency Service

Changes to RCVS Code of Conduct

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

The RCVS (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons) has reviewed its Code of Professional Conduct and there are some key changes that have been announced. The new regulations came into force on 1st September - the two main changes are:

Antibiotics can now only be prescribed after your horse has received a physical examination by a vet. This applies to all antibiotics whether oral, injectable or topical i.e., creams or ointments.



Where a horse is under the care of more than one veterinary practice, each practice must keep the other informed of any information about the horse that may affect its treatment. So, if you use another veterinary practice in addition to ourselves, then please do let us know.

Please call us or email if you have any questions on 012905 670501 or reception@avonvaleequine.co.uk.

Did you know.....?? We are an RCVS approved practice and passed our last Practice Standards inspection with flying colours.

The RCVS Practice Standards Scheme (PSS) is a voluntary initiative to accredit veterinary practices in the UK. The scheme aims to promote and maintain the highest standards of veterinary care.

Sponsorships and Brand Ambassadors

Avonvale continues to support local riders and clubs with sponsorship and we enjoy posting lots of photos and write-ups on our social media pages. We are delighted to be sponsoring Solihull Riding Club's Winter Arena Eventing Series which runs through to the Championship on 28th April 2024. For more information, see their website: <https://solihullridingclub.co.uk/event-diary/>



We've also been following our fabulous Brand Ambassadors with interest, they have all been out busy competing and flying the flag for Avonvale. We'll be introducing some new ambassadors in 2024. To follow their stories, like and subscribe to our social media pages on Facebook and Instagram.



Vet Carys Morgan retires from Vaulting Competitions

Carys has had a busy season and we've been following her progress with interest. Here Carys gives us a round up for 2023 and her difficult decision to retire from competition:

This season has been a bit different to previous years as we had to make the decision to retire my horse at the start of the year, but I have been lucky enough to borrow some fantastic horses to compete on for the year! I started the season off in April at Saumur, France on a lovely German horse called Cairo. From there I competed in Scotland winning at our home international, on another new to me horse, Logan. This secured my selection for the Senior European Championships in July.

June saw the CHIO in Aachen, this is one of my favourite competitions, a prestigious event and always a great atmosphere, I was lucky enough to borrow a Dutch horse, CSI, for this competition. Aachen was a great warm up for the Europeans which were in Sweden in July, I used Cairo again for this competition, and although luck wasn't on my side we all had a great time out there, and some of the junior members of our British contingent had fantastic results in their World championships at the same event.

The season was rounded off with some national competitions, we took our green horse Chester to the English Championships at Morton Morrell, where he was a little unsettled but overall had a good experience to prepare him for next year. I then managed to get back home to Wales for the Welsh Championships, where I managed to win the title. The horse I competed on at this competition, Woody, was one that I broke in (many years ago!) so it was very special to compete and win with him. The season finished in October with the British Championships, where I once again borrowed lovely Logan.

After 12 years in the sport I decided that this years British Championships would be my last competition. I still plan to be involved in this vibrant and fun sport though, and will now focus on coaching and lunging.



To Rug or Not to Rug?

When it comes to UK weather, rain is a common occurrence. Be it summer thunderstorms or winter drizzle, precipitation has horse owners rushing to and from the field as everyone asks the age-old question: To rug or not to rug?

The Importance of Providing Shelter

Rugging is not the only way to protect your horse from the elements. Horses will seek out shelter, stand with their backs to the rain and huddle together for warmth. Therefore, providing adequate shelter and company will give your horse some protection. Of course, some horses will require additional protection in the form of a rug.



Can I Put a Rug on a Wet Horse?

With the British weather being so changeable, it's easy to be caught out by a sudden downpour. If this happens, should you rush outside to rug your horse when he or she is already wet?

Rugging a wet horse will prevent the water from evaporating or running off the horse's coat naturally. Instead, the rug will absorb the water, holding it close to the horse's skin. As the temperature drops, the moisture will cool. This risks chilling the horse. Instead, using a moisture-wicking rug until the horse dries before switching to another rug will help to prevent chilling.

For the same reasons, you should not rug a horse immediately after bathing. Rugs should also be checked daily and changed frequently so the horse is not wearing a wet, dirty rug for a prolonged period.

Rain Scald and Rugging

Rain scald is a non-contagious skin condition that is similar to mud fever. It occurs when skin on the horse's back, neck or hind-quarters becomes infected. Rain scald can occur as a result of overexposure to wet and muddy conditions. However, it can also be caused by excessive sweating due to over-rugging. Putting a rug or rain sheet on an already wet horse during mild or humid weather can have the same effect and the warm, wet conditions are ideal for bacteria.

Will the Rain Make my Horse Cold?

Wet weather - particularly in the colder months - can exacerbate the effects of low temperatures. As humans, we are more likely to feel colder when it is raining. This is because wet skin allows more heat to escape, making you feel colder.

Unlike humans, horses have two layers of hair. The dense, soft underlayer is designed to trap heat and the longer, coarser outer layer is designed to keep the underlayer dry. When your horse gets wet, the outer hairs collapse, helping to channel water off the horse's body. This is designed to prevent the underlayer from getting wet and causing excessive heat loss. However, as the horse dries, the evaporation takes the moisture - and with it, heat - away from the horse. This can chill the horse, especially when it is also cold and windy.

For most horses, getting caught in the rain without a rug is not a cause for concern. However, prolonged or heavy rain - particularly when it is also cold or windy - could result in a chill for some horses.

Every Horse is an Individual

Your horse's age, breed and condition will affect how vulnerable they are to catching a chill. Native ponies are perfectly adapted to living out all year round and in all weather conditions. An unclipped native pony will be well-protected from the rain and the cold by two very thick coats.

Even when it is raining, the underlayer will probably stay warm and dry underneath the protective outer coat. Therefore, rugging is unlikely to be necessary and may even cause your pony to overheat. On the other hand, a thoroughbred horse, with its much thinner skin and coat, is more likely to get cold in the rain. In this case, a breathable but waterproof rug may be advisable.

As always, you should base rugging decisions on your horse's individual requirements and ask your vet for advice if you are unsure.

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