

FINAL

Irish Horse Welfare Trust looking for new homes for rescued horses

Charity Irish Horse Welfare Trust (IHWT) is looking for new homes for some of the rescued horses currently homed at the charity's farm in Woodenbridge, Co. Wicklow.

IHWT rescued a large number of horses from a Co. Kilkenny farm in December. The rescued horses, mainly of sport horse breeding, were initially seized by Department of Agriculture on welfare grounds, as they had been abandoned, and were to be slaughtered. IHWT appealed to the Department of Agriculture to save the horses which resulted in the charity's staff and volunteers collecting the horses and transporting them into care.

The Wicklow-based charity is now seeking good homes for these rescued horses. Anyone interested in re-homing should contact IHWT on (0404) 45720 or (0404) 30773 or visit www.ihwt.ie.

According to animal welfare charities, the recession has dramatically increased the number of horses being abandoned by their owners. This has multiplied the number of horses being rescued and sheltered by IHWT in Wicklow. But IHWT staff and volunteers are confident many families across Ireland might be looking for a horse and this is the perfect opportunity for both horse-lovers and the rescued animals.

Jillian Godsil from Coolboy, in Co Wicklow, recently re-homed an ex racehorse, Jaguar Claw, from the IHWT. Jaguar Claw was ridden by famous jockey Ruby Walsh and enjoyed success on the track before being retired four years ago.

“Until October last year, my daughter had been riding a beautiful bay mare called Ballyknocker Shiraz, She used the mare for interschools show jumping competitions, ponyclub events and hunter trials. Tragically, Shiraz had to be put down after an infection in her hoof failed to heal,” explains Jillian. “It was very hard to see Shiraz go.”

Timing is everything as when Jillian rang the Trust, she discovered that Jaguar Claw was looking for a home. The 16 2 racehorse is now happily ensconced in Coolboy and has already competed in a number of interschools competitions, earning a double clear on his last day out. For Jillian's daughter it is an amazing opportunity to take care and ride a wonderful show jumper. For Jaguar Claw, it is a new life as a show jumper and together horse and rider have ambitions to travel to Hickstead in the summer to compete on behalf of the school, Colaiste Bhríde in Carnew.

“I would encourage anybody looking for a horse to contact the Trust. It is a perfect match for both horse lovers and horses. In return for a donation, you can bring one of the horses home. The horse remains property of the IHWT but you can still enjoy the riding without the cost of buying it. And you'll be giving rescued and re-trained horses a new caring home and new lease of life,” she adds.

The Irish Horse Welfare Trust, Charity No. CHY14634, was established in 1999 and gained charitable status in 2002. IHWT is involved in the rescue, rehabilitation and re-homing of horses and ponies, as well as campaigning and promoting Equine Welfare Awareness and Education.

The IHWT farm in Woodenbridge is open to visitors on Saturday afternoons between 2pm and 4pm and also by appointment.

IHWT is also on Facebook, you can join its network here:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Irish-Horse-Welfare-Trust/191759453021>

Ends

Jaguar Claw in the news:

May 2002, Irish Independent

Jaguar Claw, heavily backed from 5/2 to 6/4, received a huge roar from the packed stand when leading four out under Ruby Walsh to beat Knockawad by seven lengths.

RTE Sport 2003

Jaguar Claw was ridden up with the pace throughout by Ruby Walsh in the three miles handicap hurdle, and eased clear after two out for a convincing six lengths verdict at Galway this afternoon.

Irish Examiner 2007

Jaguar Claw, trained by Frances Crowley and having his first run for over three months, ran away with the HP Software Licensing and Management Solutions Handicap Hurdle.

Ruby Walsh had him on the pace throughout and there was only going to be one result once Jaguar Claw eased on heading to the second last.