

Now the League plans to prosecute the Quantock Staghounds

HORSE & HOUND

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Alternative equine jobs

equine law

Lizzie Robinson

If the idea of a career that combines horses and legal work appeals to you, then consider equine law.

Working in equine law requires someone who has a good background in horses, as a great deal of technical terminology is used on cases.

Mark Edmondson LL.M LL.B, head of the litigation team and a partner at Edmondson Hall Solicitors, explains that the work involved is always varied and that every day is different. Edmondson Hall, in Wiltshire, was set up as a specialist practice in 1994 to provide legal services to the bloodstock industry. The cases it deals with include sale and purchase disputes, veterinary negligence, debt recovery, stallion syndicates and road traffic accidents.

To get involved with equine law you don't need a specialised qualification. But you must obtain either a standard law degree from university or do a law conversion course if your first degree is in a subject other than law.

Mark Edmondson explains: "It's possible to qualify as a solicitor and then gain a training placement with a firm that deals with equine law."

Stuart Farr, a partner at Laytons Solicitors, specialises in commercial disputes and professional negligence, but alongside this

he works in equine law.

He says: "It is an interesting specialisation that works well in conjunction with my main practice."

His advice to those interested in equine law is to first gain some general experience working in law, so that you get a good grounding in the basics.

He explains: "Equine law is a specialisation you can grow into as experience is gained."

An alternative route is to gain a specialised qualification, as Mark did. He began with a law degree at Nottingham Law School, then gained his masters in international sports law.

Stuart says that the highlight of equine law is the wide range of interesting people and cases you deal with. The downside of the job is the sad cases you sometimes have to work on — when a horse has suffered, for example.

Those interested in a career in equine law should have good communication skills so they can deal with a wide range of different people. Edmondson Hall, for example, works with trainers, jockeys, breeders, owners, bloodstock agents, shipping companies and stud farmers.

An ability to analyse problems carefully and put your point across in a clear, precise manner is also necessary.

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JONATHON STEVENS

15, took the overall summer supreme title at the recent BPS Summer Championships with 138cm show pony Rotherwood Seniorita.

How many ponies do you ride?

I had five to show at the start with this year, but we sold one after the Royal International. Three have qualified for HOYS.

What have been your biggest successes?

Last year, I was champion at HOYS with a show hunter pony, Crafton Walz Of Toreador. And this year Rotherwood Seniorita has been champion at the Royal and East of England, supreme at Staffordshire Country Festival and second at the Royal International.

Do you do any other riding?

We go hunting every Christmas with a friend in Northumberland. We hunt with either the Bedale or the Zetland.

What are your ambitions in horses?

At the moment I'm mainly thinking about HOYS, the last show of the year. But I'm not very tall and quite light, so I'd like to have a go at flat racing.

Do you have any other hobbies?

I'm in the first team for rugby at school — I'm at Merchant Taylors'. I play scrum half, so it doesn't matter that I'm small. And I used to swim for the city of Liverpool, but the others have a height advantage over me now.