



# PALM BEACH EQUINE CLINIC

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## Shes Packin Fame: Back in Winning Form

by Lindsay Brock, Jump Media



Following the identification of the injured area, a Standing MRI produced highly detailed images in several different planes to capture a complete view of the injury and further define the issue.

After Dr. Davis located and identified the fracture, he surgically inserted a screw into the central tarsal bone to stabilize the fracture. Sissy was discharged from the clinic on six months of recovery with follow-up diagnostic imaging every month to monitor the injury's repair. During the fourth month of recovery, Dr. Weston removed the screw. At the end of March, Sissy was cleared to begin exercise and Crowther began by hand walking the mare slowly progressing to trotting her under tack. They started with ten minutes of exercise and worked up to 45 minutes.

"Weston was a huge part of Sissy's recovery," said Crowther, who set her sights on entering Sissy in the Old Fort Days Derby, held over Memorial Weekend in Fort Smith, AR. "It is the biggest derby of the year for five-year-olds. When it came time to enter, Weston rechecked the leg, did flexion tests, cleared her to run, and wished me good luck."

When they arrived in Fort Smith, Sissy had not seen a barrel since the day of the injury. Crowther and Sissy posted a time of 16.405 seconds, the fastest time of the event, to win the 25-horse final and collect a \$23,469 prize money check.

Nearly eight months ago, Shes Packin Fame, a 2012 Quarter Horse mare owned by Margo Crowther of Fort Myers, FL, suffered a rare slab fracture to the central tarsal bone in her left hock while competing in a barrel racing competition. After a diagnosis aided by Palm Beach Equine Clinic's (PBEC) state-of-the-art diagnostic imaging equipment and a surgery performed by PBEC's own Dr. Weston Davis, Shes Packin Fame has not only returned to running barrels, the five-year-old mare is back to winning.

Crowther purchased Shes Packin Fame, affectionately known as Sissy, as a three-year-old after the mare reminded her of a horse she ran in college. Crowther trained Sissy herself and won or placed in nearly every barrel futurity she entered during the horse's four-year-old year, accumulating \$100,000 in prize money.

In November of 2016, Crowther and Sissy were competing at the No Bull Finals in Asheville, NC, when Sissy went down at the first

barrel on the final day. The fall fractured the horse's central tarsal bone, which was not easily diagnosed. Crowther met with a veterinarian in North Carolina who was unable to locate the fracture via x-ray before contacting Dr. Davis, who had managed Sissy's healthcare since she joined Crowther's string.

Dr. Davis utilized PBEC's Equine Standing MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) and Nuclear Scintigraphy camera to locate a flat piece of separated bone known as a slab fracture.

The process began with a Nuclear Scintigraphy scan – a bone scan. Sissy was injected with a radioactive isotope named Technetium 99. The isotope attached to the phosphorous proteins localized within the bone and was absorbed. A specialized nuclear isotope gamma ray camera was used to capture images of the skeletal anatomy with a 360-degree view. Points of interest lit up on the image to indicate increased metabolic activity and was able to locate the site of the injury.

"She just came back so confident and so strong, like she never missed a beat," said Crowther. "She always ran like an older horse, but I was surprised at her time. I knew she would be in the top ten, but I was surprised just how strong she was. Weston told him to let her set her own pace and that is what I did. I did not push her. So, when I called Weston to tell him we had won, he was very surprised.

"She feels like her hock is maybe even stronger than it was before the injury," continued Crowther. "I am so thankful to Weston and Palm Beach Equine Clinic, and feel blessed that she has come back strong and healthy."

With Sissy back in top form, Crowther's next goal is a lofty one. Her hope is to qualify for and compete at the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, NV, this December.



## Health Care Reminder

# The Importance of Vaccinations

by Lauren Fisher, Jump Media

As the summer competition season shifts into high gear, the veterinarians at Palm Beach Equine Clinic continue to stress the importance of vaccinating horses against infectious diseases. The constant travel of horses from show to show makes proper vaccinations protocols even more imperative and can prevent horses from contracting life-threatening infectious diseases.

Below is a look at the most common types of equine infectious diseases and how to vaccinate against them.

### Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is a serious, mosquito-borne illness in horses that can also affect humans. In unvaccinated horses, it is almost always fatal. The death rate for EEE is 75-95%, usually within two-three days from the onset of signs.

Symptoms usually develop in horses from two to five days after exposure. These clinical signs include stumbling, circling, head pressing, depression or apprehension, weakness of legs, partial paralysis, inability to stand, muscle twitching, or death.

EEE cannot be transmitted from horse to horse, but rather is spread by mosquitoes that serve as the vectors, or carriers, that transmit the disease. The EEE virus is maintained in nature through a cycle involving the freshwater swamp mosquito, *Culiseta melanura*, commonly known as the Blacktailed Mosquito. Two to three days after becoming infected with the virus, a mosquito is capable of transmitting the virus by biting horses and humans.

The best defense for horse owners is to maintain current equine vaccinations for Eastern Equine Encephalitis. Vaccinating at the proper time of the year is critical to protecting horses

from the sometimes-fatal mosquito-borne disease. Horses vaccinated after late March should be protected during the height of mosquito season, but those that were vaccinated prior to March should receive an EEE booster. Especially in warmer climates, such as Florida where mosquitoes are present year-round, boosters should be given regularly. The vaccine should be effective for six to eight months.

### Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1).

Equine Herpes Virus (EHV-1) is highly contagious among horses and can cause a variety of ailments. EHV are viruses that are found in most horses all over the world. Almost all horses have been infected with the virus and have no serious side effects. It is unknown what causes some of the horses to develop the serious neurological forms that may be fatal. EHV is a family of viruses, which are named by numbers such as EHV 1, 3, 4. To date, nine EHV's have been identified worldwide, but EHV 1, 3, and 4 pose the most serious health risks for domesticated horses.

EHV-1 can cause four manifestations of disease in horses, including neurological form, respiratory disease, abortion, and neonatal death. With respiratory infections, there is often nasal and ocular discharge, but limited amounts of coughing. There may be some persistent enlargement of lymph nodes under the jaw. With



the neurologic form, there are typically minimal respiratory signs and a fever (rectal temperature greater than 102 degrees F) being the only warning sign. Neurologic disease appears suddenly and is usually rapidly progressing, reaching its peak intensity within 24 to 48 hours from onset of neurologic signs.

EHV-1 is contagious and spread by direct horse-to-horse contact via the respiratory tract through nasal secretions. It is important to know that this disease can also be spread indirectly through contact with physical objects contaminated with the virus, such as: human contaminated hands or clothing, contaminated equipment and tack, contaminated trailers used for transporting horses, contaminated wipe rags or other grooming equipment, and contaminated feed and water buckets.

While there are several vaccines available for protection against both respiratory disease and abortion as a result of EHV-1 infection, at

this time there is no equine licensed vaccine that has a label claim for protection against the neurological strain of the virus (EHM). Consult with your veterinarian for further guidance if you are considering the use of EHV-1 vaccines.

### Prevention

Two main methods of prevention you can establish to help avoid disease outbreak on your premises include a proper vaccination program and biosecurity protection.

Biosecurity protocols are preventative measures taken to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases onto your farm by people, animals, equipment, or vehicles. Biosecurity is important at all times, even when an outbreak has not occurred. Consult with your veterinarian regarding any newly developed travel restrictions and always stay current with

vaccinations to protect your horses.

PBEC President Dr. Scott Swerdlin cautions clients on the importance of properly vaccinating and protecting against these diseases.

"It is imperative that equine owners maintain a regular vaccination program for their horses," said Dr. Swerdlin. "Horses must receive the first two doses of every vaccination in order to develop a safe immune response for protection. Just giving the first dose is not enough. The first dose gives a weak response to sensitize the horse so that when they get the second vaccine, it really charges the antibodies. Owners need to be really careful in the management of vaccines; the schedule must be accurate. I recommend that imported horses be vaccinated after quarantine, and then again at 14-30 days, and then again at six months.

"For EHV-1, the immunity is not very long," Dr.

Swerdlin advised. "If you are showing your horses and you are in a high density horse population, you should be vaccinating for flu/rhino every three months or four times a year. Even if your horse is not in a high-density area and just at home, they should be vaccinated every six months."

Dr. Swerdlin also suggests that owners vaccinate once a year for Rabies if they have horses anywhere in the Southeast or Midwest, and twice a year for the West Nile Virus.

Visit this link for the Equine Disease Communication Center to see where the most recent equine disease outbreaks have taken place around the country: <http://www.equinediseasecc.org/outbreaks.aspx>.

Contact your veterinarians at Palm Beach Equine Clinic for more information on disease control and prevention at 561-793-1599.

## Meet the Vet

# Meet PBEC Veterinarian Dr. Katie Atwood



*This month, Palm Beach Equine Clinic welcomed a new face to their team. Dr. Katie Atwood, 30, hails from Jacksonville, FL, and attended vet school at the University of Florida, making her return to south Florida from Lexington, KY, a special homecoming.*

### What brought you to PBEC?

I grew up in Florida, so I wanted to be closer to family and the ocean! But, I was also looking for an opportunity to grow and become a better veterinarian. This is a difficult industry to get into, but it is especially difficult to find the right

practices. This is a chance for me to work with some of the best doctors in the country.

### What would you say is your specialty at PBEC?

In addition to general medicine, including colic cases, simply dentistry, and new foal exams, I will be focusing on PBEC's reproductive work. I did an internship and a fellowship in repro and realized that it is what I am most interested in specializing in. I will be working up mares, doing frozen and fresh semen breeding, as well as breeding management and embryo flushes for transfers to recipient mares.

### What inspired you to be a veterinarian?

When I was a little kid we had a trail behind our house that was really popular and I would sit on the back wall and watch everybody ride their horses by. We do not have any other veterinarians in the family, but I was five years old when I realized that I wanted to work with animals. Then, during my undergraduate studies in Animal Science at Berry College in Rome, GA, a professor named Dr. Martin Goldberg really pushed me to pursue vet school. I wake up every morning so excited to go to work and if I don't come home exhausted and filthy then I have

done something wrong. It is an "every minute of every day" commitment, but very rewarding.

### When you aren't working, where can we find you?

I like to spend as much time as possible in the water. I can usually be found swimming or paddle boarding at the beach and spending time by the pool

### What advice would you give to someone considering vet school?

Do it! It will be the most difficult time in your life, but if you have a passion for it, it is so rewarding. Dedication is so important; take advantage of every wet lab you can, go to any conference that is available, and take advantage of opportunities to meet new people and gain mentors. The best practices are going to take the best people and if you're the best at what you do, you will be fine. Who wouldn't want to do what they love for a living?

### Name one thing most people wouldn't know about you?

I am a pretty open book at this point. But, when I retire, my fiancé Mackenzie and I want to sail around the world!

# Meet PBEC Veterinary Technician Brittany Cain



*Originally hailing from Chicago, Illinois, Brittany Cain, 25, attended Southern Illinois University before moving south and joining the staff at Palm Beach Equine Clinic as the manager of the nuclear scintigraphy lab.*

### What is your background with horses?

Growing up, my parents actually had nothing to do with horses; we're from the city of Chicago, so they were not horse people at all. I was just always the horse obsessed little girl – you know, the one horse girl in the class! When I was about 13, I started volunteering at a therapeutic riding center, so I got a lot of hands on experience there. I learned to ride a little bit and worked with the special needs kids. That was great. Once I got a job when I was 18, I started paying for actual riding lessons and just went from there!

I did a lot of work on Standardbred breeding farms up in Illinois. I foaled out a lot of babies and trained a lot of weanlings and a lot of yearlings that are now Standardbred race horses. I did that for three years during college, and that was a really neat experience.

### What led you to pursue a career as veterinary technician?

Throughout high school, I was really always obsessed with horses. I volunteered with any of my free time. I knew I wanted to do something that I loved, so I found Southern Illinois University, and they had a bachelor's degree in equine science. I applied to one school, got in, and it was perfect. I didn't have to find a bunch of schools; I just went to the one that I wanted right away, and I knew what I wanted to do!

### What led to your focus on the nuclear scintigraphy lab in particular?

I've always had a strong interest in the anatomy of horses. I knew a lot of the anatomy from college of course. We had a lot of courses that covered the musculature anatomy as well as skeletal. In addition, working with all of the Standardbred yearlings is really good experience for working with the two and three-year-old race babies that we get here. Just that extra horse handling really comes in handy.

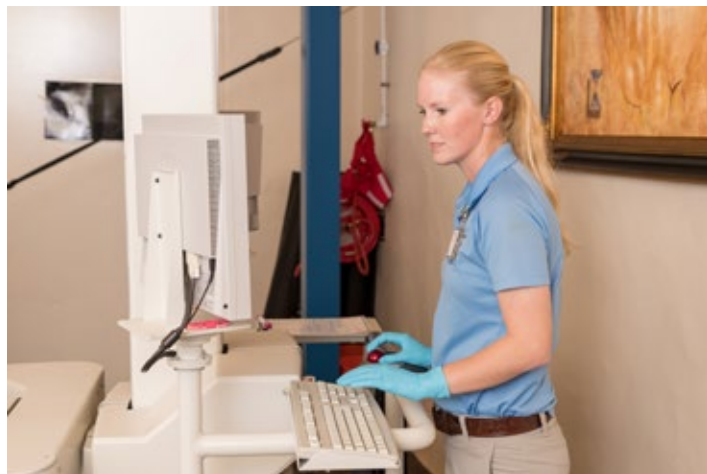
### What is your typical day like at PBEC?

As the manager of the nuclear scintigraphy lab, I have the horses in here for bone scans. They'll come in, I'll do a temperature, pulse, and respiration check on them, and then I place a catheter and inject the radioactive isotopes.

It takes two hours for the isotope to settle into the bones, and then I can begin the scan. I usually inject the isotope, and then I do a lot of paperwork in between the two hours since there's a lot of tracking and recording for dealing with radioactive materials. Then the scan begins. The horse comes into the room; they're lightly sedated. The scans usually take from one to two hours or, for full body scan, anywhere from two to four hours. It's a lot of keeping the horse sedated and keeping him quiet, getting all of the images that are needed, and making sure that the images turn out well. That's pretty much my ideal day. Usually during season, we have anywhere from two to three horses a day so it keeps you busy.

### What do you enjoy most about working for PBEC?

I love the variety of horses that we get here. We get everything from race horses to polo ponies to barrel ponies to top show jumpers and hunters. It's really neat seeing all of these talented and often expensive horses.



### Have you had any standout or favorite moments since you joined the PBEC team in 2015?

We went down to Miami for the Longines Global Champions Tour for when they took the horses off the plane. We were able to help out with that – doing temperatures, pulse, and respiration checks on all of them. It was really cool seeing the caravan from the airport to the show grounds and just how it's set up on the beach. That was a pretty neat experience.

### What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?

My fiancé and I go fishing a lot usually at the beach or off a pier; we definitely enjoy spending our free time fishing.

# PBEC Pharmacy Product Feature

### T.H.E. Equine Edge Calming Powder and Calming Cookies.

Calming Cookies™ contain a blend of natural vitamins, minerals, and amino acids to improve general health and well-being. L-Tyrosine is used to produce the neurotransmitter serotonin, which helps a nervous or anxious horse to focus and feel confident without affecting the ability to compete.

For those who prefer it as a top dress, Calming Powder is available. Our calming products help to take the edge off, remain focused and calm the mind without dulling the body. Provide peace of mind during thunderstorms, loading them into their trailers or stable, vet or grooming visit, or any situation that causes anxiety, stress or fear. Both products are USEF and FEI compliant.



# Photo of the Month



Dr. Weston Davis with a very happy patient at Skywalker Miniature Horse Farm in South Florida! **Photo courtesy of Betty Buzzella**

# Where in the World are PBEC Vets during July?

**Dr. Sarah Allendorf** will be traveling between Tryon (NC), Kentucky, and Michigan

**Dr. Bob Brusie** will be in Michigan

**Dr. Alex Emerson** will go between Kentucky and Chicago

**Dr. Natalia Novoa** will be treating chiropractic in Tryon and Kentucky

**Dr. Daren Tamplin** travels to Colorado

**Dr. Kathleen Timmins** will be in Virginia

**Dr. Richard Wheeler** will be in Tryon and Kentucky

# Monthly Giveaway

Don't miss your chance to win in the Palm Beach Equine Clinic Monthly Giveaway! At the beginning of each month, PBEC will announce a special prize that will be given away. Participants will have the whole month to register [HERE](#). At the end of each month, we will draw a random winner and announce the winner on Facebook.

This month's product giveaway is a 10 lb. supply of EQUI-BLOOM supplement. EQUI-BLOOM is a highly stable, flavored OMEGA-3 fatty acid supplement for horses. It improves hair coat, body condition, and expression of estrous behavior. OMEGA-3 fatty acids have been demonstrated to be anti-inflammatory and to increase pregnancy rates and sperm production. Additionally, vitamin A, vitamin E, selenium, and zinc are included in EQUI-BLOOM to replace any deficiencies in the diet. Sign up to win today!

