

THURSDAY SPEAKER BIOS

GABI WHITFIELD – HEAD OF WELFARE COMMUNICATIONS



Gabi Whitfield leads the proactive promotion of racing's story to help shape public opinion in favour of racing, demonstrating the sport's commitment to prioritising the welfare of horses bred for racing across the full extent of their lives. The position sits in GBR and works in partnership with the Horse Welfare Board programme Team to help deliver the sport's 5-year welfare strategy 'A Life Well Lived'. The role is responsible for consumer, corporate and internal communications on welfare topics. Gabi was previously Global Communications Director for Jaguar Land Rover and has a wealth of experience in the automotive industry as well as a passion for racing and horses.

RISHI PERSAD – SPORTS BROADCASTER



Rishi began his broadcasting career over 20 years ago and has since been a regular presenter on terrestrial racing coverage for Channel 4 racing and ITV Racing as well as Racing UK. He has significant experience covering both domestic and international racing fixtures.

Whilst racing is his passion, he has a wealth of experience in other sports having worked for the BBC at some of the greatest sporting events in the world covering the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Cricket World Cup, Wimbledon Tennis Championships and featuring in the BBC golf team covering the Ryder Cup, US Masters and The Open.

ELEANORE KELLY – JOURNALIST & BROADCASTER



Ellie competed as a Three-Day Event rider for seven years and during that time, wrote articles and did a number of media placements. Since then she has worked as a broadcast journalist for BBC and BT Sport and presented on Eurosport, Horse&Country TV, Six Nations Rugby, The R&A Women's and Junior Open Golf Championships, Kia Women's Cricket Super League among others.

She's passionate about equestrian sports and has worked with GBR in freelance roles, and has written features for a number of newspapers and magazines such as Country Life and Tatler.

MIRIAM WALKER KHAN – SPORTS PRESENTER



Miriam Walker-Khan is Sky Sports' first Diversity and Inclusion reporter. She worked at BBC Sport for 6 years, reporting for Sports News at the Commonwealth Games and Tokyo Paralympics, Match of the Day, MOTDx, Football Focus and was a quarter of the Question of Sport podcast.

Internally at the BBC she was the co-chair of BBC Sport's BAME Advisory Group, the first Sport employee on the BBC News Next Generation panel and created BBC Sport's Diversity Editorial network. She is also the editor of SEASON, a football and fashion magazine and has written essays on race in sport for the New York Times, Guardian Opinion, Dazed magazine and gal-dem. In 2023 Miriam set up Brown Girl Sport, a new online platform and community celebrating South Asian women in sport.

TOM SCUDAMORE



Tom Scudamore retired as a Jump jockey after a 25 year riding career with over 1500 winners including multiple Cheltenham Festival successes and a King George aboard Thistlecrack.

He was renowned as being extremely professional both on and off the track and has engaged with JETS regularly whilst riding, doing media training courses and a Level 3 Journalism course.

He is currently assistant to Michael Scudamore and Lucinda Russel as well as an Ambassador for Corals and makes regular media appearances.

LISA AKESSON – PERSONAL BRANDING EXPERT <https://lisaakesson.com/>



Lisa has spent 25 years in the business world as a voice, presentation skills trainer and leadership Coach. She enables individuals to find their personal brand, articulate their vision and deliver their message with confidence, credibility and impact.

Lisa has extensive experience in both the public and private sectors and is hugely passionate about supporting underrepresented groups and runs a 10-year flagship programme on "Executive Presence for Women" for RADA Business. She has been featured on BBC Radio, written articles for the Guardian, Independent, Business magazines, Training Journals and in sport for the League Managers Association. Her interactive session will help jockeys explore their personalities and identity areas of development as an ambassador so you can learn how to take your space, own your voice and land your message confidently and credibly.

FRIDAY SPEAKER BIOS

CATHY WOOD – ATHLETE ANGEL



Cathy Wood is a former athlete, Daily Mail sports journalist and author of one of the official books for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

After leaving the Daily Mail Cathy set up her own company to help young people, footballers and athletes be the best version of themselves online.

Since 2013 Cathy has delivered workshops, on behalf of League Football Education (LFE), to hundreds of footballers, in both the UK and USA as well as working with jockeys, Olympians, students, managers, coaches and parents.

RYAN CURTIS - GBR DIGITAL LEAD

Ryan Curtis is responsible for all digital output across GBR channels, ranging from the shortform entertainment of TikTok to the longform storytelling of YouTube. Coming from a non-racing background a large part of Ryan's role is sense checking our content output ensuring it's accessible and relatable to a wider audience that we aim to attract to the sport.

SIMON CLARE – ENTAIN GROUP DIRECTOR OF CONSUMER PR



DEJI AKANDE – CEO & FOUNDER, GATEWAY SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Gateway Sports & Entertainment is a next generation sports, media & entertainment agency based in London.

Graduating from Brunel University in 2012, Deji went on to work with leading organisations across the world of sport, entertainment and charity as he helped develop and oversee major brand partnerships with global rights holders and sporting talent.

In 2018, he decided to launch his long-term vision to create a sports & entertainment agency that can bring a new approach to the world of talent management and the commercial side of the industry he loves! Today, Gateway Sports represents world class athletes across the globe and works with some of the biggest brands in the world.

With a huge passion for the industry, Deji is keen to ensure the next generation of athletes are equipped to understand and maximise the opportunities possible throughout their career.

ASHA PHILIP – TEAM GB OLYMPIC SPINTER



Asha Philip is a two-time Olympic, World, European & Commonwealth medalist and one of the UK's most decorated sportswomen, including medals at the Rio & Tokyo Olympics.

With natural sporting talent, Asha was in a unique position representing Great Britain in both Athletics & Gymnastics. A freak injury to her cruciate ligament put her sporting career in major doubt but with over three years of recovery, she returned to the top of her game.

Asha is also a Board Member of the British Elite Athlete Association and a member of the European Athletics Athlete Committee, as she works with industry leaders to create, protect and better the future for athletes across all sports within the UK.

With a rich history of working with global brands such as Nike & Gymshark throughout her career, Asha is inspired to support the next generation to navigate life as a professional athlete.

