

'Electric' response for first-timers

There was no shortage of new launches and first-time exhibitors at this year's show. *ETN* talked to some of the companies involved. . .



EMC commercial manager Claire Thomas presents a crystal decanter to main sponsor Abbey Saddlery's (l to r) Peter Phillips, Richard Brown and Richard Pickering

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Abbey Saddlery & Crafts, main sponsor of BETA International, launched the Hilary Vernon Bit Collection. At a bustling press breakfast, representatives from key equestrian consumer and trade publications listened to Hilary's entertaining and informative presentation about the range, which caters for every horse, from tiny Dartmoor yearlings to show cobs.

"We are very excited about this year's BETA International," said Peter Phillips, of Abbey. "We have had a lot of interest in our products and we feel the sponsorship has worked very well."

Rockfish Riders unveiled its new Rflex 360° range – a "want to wear", hi-viz collection. "The response has just been electric," said owner Jules Aldred. "Multiples we have been tap-tapping away at for so long have come along and we now have big chains showing interest. It's thanks to *ETN* that we came up with this idea for attractive, hi-viz wear after reading letters and features about it in the magazine."

We caught up with **William and Pippa Funnell** on the **Polly Products** stand to check out the new Funnell Range of rugs and their Equine and Leather Care Range. "We are 150 per cent behind these products," said Pippa. "We could easily fall into the trap of going with companies that offered more money, but we have the horses' best interests at heart. It's all about their comfort, so we have to really believe in the products."

Polly Products managing director Tom Eastwood said that more lines are to follow, adding: "We know that people want our stock. The brand has not gone and we can provide a first-class service."

Carr & Day & Martin was showcasing its rebranded range of shampoos and the suitably retro packaging of its Cornucrescine hoofcare products. "We put an ad in the *Farmers' Guardian* to see if anyone had any of the old products," explained brand manager Paul Morgan. "Amazingly, an old wooden box that was full of the old products in their original packaging turned up. We have also colour-coded the tops and put the products back into tins instead of plastic pots."

Virbac's new Equimax and Eraquell Yard Packs proved a great success with retailers. With 48 x 700kg bodyweight syringes in each pack, they offer great savings and much simpler and easier worming on large yards. "We had many retailers commenting on the advantages of easier storage and the difference the packs will make to yards where many horses must be wormed in a



William and Pippa Funnell – working with Polly Products managing director Tom Eastwood to develop their rug range