

June - Busta Tribute

Hello everyone and welcome to June. Early in May, Channel 7 replayed the Doctor Harry segment from Better Homes and Gardens in 2021. This stars Diesel, Busta, Macey and some of our stalwart volunteers like Karen D, Em, Jo and Charlie. For those who haven't seen it or want to watch it over and over (like Diesel) here is the link.

[Dr Harry - Better Homes and Gardens](#)

So in this month's Rescue Roundup, Clyde was planning to fill you in on Diesel, Macey and Busta's current status. However as things happen, we have had to say a very sad farewell to Busta, so instead Clyde will do that next month and in the mean time this edition will be a tribute to our beloved Busta and will include a bit of a rundown on "Shivers" which is what afflicted him.

All of our other regular articles will return next month. Don't forget our socials and if anyone has anything to share in our July edition, have it to Clyde by Thursday 26 June.

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"On the outside Busta was a 'Man's Man' who loved a big feed, his best mate (Diesel), a beer after working on a hot day, and he had been known to appreciate the ladies".

Volunteer 'Jo'

Additional credit this edition to guest paparazzo, volunteer Jo for sharing so many photos and anecdotes.



Hoofbeat Herald



Busta once tried to be stealthy and steal Jo's hat.....a lovely straw hat it was.....now slightly misshapen. It started with a cuddle and then a playful nibble and exploration.....and then Jo caught him just in time! He was about to take the hat and run - to this day Jo's still not sure if he was going to eat it (always hungry this one - big belly to fill) or if he was going to take it off and play catch me if you can! (suspected mission).

Maybe when he couldn't get the hat, he hid his eyes behind his forelock to keep the sun out.

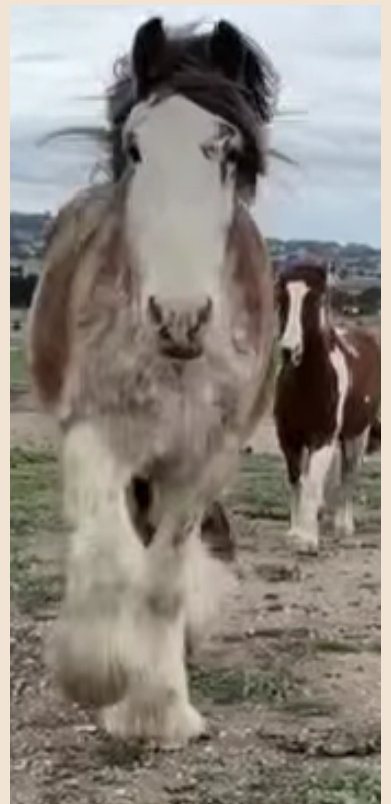
Eighties rock legend?

Volunteer Jo: "The Bon Jovi locks that seriously rivalled Bon Jovi - no actually beat Bon Jovi (Sorry Dude) The forelock, the mane, the tail - allof it. No one rocked the 80's hair band look like Busta! The eyelashes and the eyes....swoon....say no more ladies.



Hoofbeat Herald

He really liked to dress up 😊 - so another possible reason why he needed Jo's hat 😊



Busta was a particularly practiced performer. There are some videos of him on our Facebook page. Here some “stills” taken from them.

<https://www.facebook.com/heavyhorseheaven>

What? I didn't do nuffink!



This one is from Kazz who said it reminded her of a toddler with a faceful of spaghetti. I think he looks like he has been caught digging in the hay maybe expecting to find a stubbie hiding in there

Kind to the little kids.



Just a little bit of nose-to-nose encouragement. Mousse was just checking for treats in the big guy's nostrils. The tall and short of it is that Mousse was Busta's nostril-level neighbour. Busta and his little buddy, proving that true friendship knows no size difference.

Big horse, little friend, giant hearts. Nose boops across the fence!"

Shivers: Understanding a Horse's Neurological Challenge

Shivers is a frustrating and chronic neurological condition in horses, causing involuntary muscle spasms and an abnormal gait. It's especially noticeable when a horse tries to back up. While research continues, there's no definitive cure.

What Shivers Looks Like

This neuromuscular syndrome primarily affects a horse's hind limbs, sometimes the tail, and rarely other areas. The main symptom is a sudden, exaggerated lifting or extreme extension of one or both hind limbs, often with trembling. For our Busta, his inability to lock in his front legs to get a normal standing sleep results in a lack of REM sleep which like in humans leads to sleep deprivation. This affected Busta as he was rarely able to down for a rest.

These signs are most evident when a horse is:

- Backing up: This often reveals the exaggerated leg action.
- Having a hind limb picked up: Farriers or owners frequently find the horse resists or snatches its leg away.
- Under stress: Excitement or nervousness can worsen episodes.

The Brain's Role in Shivers

For centuries, the cause was a mystery. Recent research, particularly by Dr. Stephanie Valberg's team, points to damage in Purkinje cells (nerve cells) within the cerebellum. This part of the brain is vital for movement coordination.

This cellular damage disrupts muscle timing, causing muscles to fire simultaneously, leading to spasms. While the exact trigger for this damage is unknown, genetic predisposition (seen in draft horses, Warmbloods) and environmental factors are suspected. It's distinct from stringhalt, which involves an exaggerated upward leg snatch during forward motion.

Managing Shivers: No Cure, But Support

Currently, there's no cure for shivers. However, careful management can significantly reduce symptoms and improve a horse's comfort. Strategies include:

- Consistent, moderate exercise.
- Ample turnout and limited stall time.
- Stress reduction by avoiding triggers.
- Dietary support, like Vitamin E.
- Farriery adaptations, sometimes with sedation.
- Supportive therapies like massage.

The prognosis varies.

Some horses remain active for years with mild signs. For many, however, the condition slowly progresses, leading to muscle wastage and difficulty with care, ultimately impacting their welfare.

Research continues, hoping to pinpoint cellular dysfunctions to develop future treatments or a cure. For now, responsible management and close veterinary partnership are crucial for horses with shivers.

References

<https://cvm.msu.edu/annualreport/2016/in-pursuit-solving-the-mystery-of-shivers>

<https://www.petmd.com/horse/conditions/neurological/shivers-horses>

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Disclaimer - Scientific Sources:

The information provided is based on publicly accessible knowledge and widely accepted scientific understanding. Due to the nature of academic publishing, many specific, in-depth scientific studies and research papers are often behind paywalls or require membership to particular professional and research communities for full access.

Additionally, no specific Australian scientific sources on this topic were available for comprehensive review without such memberships. Therefore, direct access to all proprietary or subscriber-only scientific sources was not possible for this general information.

Hoofbeat Herald

Busta had good friends but especially his bestie Diesel



“C’mon D-Man - you’re always keeping me waiting!”



“Race ya to the Vol pack!”



And here they are, all combed-up and presentable while waiting at the gate to welcome some new guests.



“It’s ok Matt, I’ve told Diesel I have his back but as you can feel - I actually have yours - if he so much as winces.....”



Love you buddy.

Love you mooore.

Hoofbeat Herald

Busta with some other friends



More Bits about Busta - Observations by Jo

Busta was so gentle with children that he has been led by a 2 year old...and long-reined by a 2 year old (with mum just behind). To everyone's delight, including his own - smiles all around, including Busta.)There is video of this on our FB page

<https://www.facebook.com/heavyhorseheaven>

#HHHBusta

Busta and Lucy, the Barn Queen (cat), had quite the con going on. They would both feign great neglect and sing a tale of woe with their eyes and song....only to then mob you for treats and cuddles. And do it again - on the next victim! Busta had his part down to a fine art worthy of a Tony Award.



On the inside - he was just a big hearted softie with great emotional intelligence. He had an incredibly sweet and kind nature and oozed kindness and love. He had patience for days -especially for people who needed it, including children. He has been patient with the littlest vols, the new vols, vols who have additional needs or trouble with balance, and the nervous vols.

The unbelievable beauty and power of watching him careen through the paddock with his friends! You could hear the thunder and feel it in the ground when they got close to you. It was quite amazing and a sight to be seen - one that will be missed - especially with his Bon Jovi locks flying behind him.

There are quite a few videos of this on our FaceBook page

<https://www.facebook.com/heavyhorseheaven>

#HHHBusta

He was ready, so I know it's best for him. We are simply re-homing him to the spirit world. We will miss his sweet fine self to no end (as we do all of them when we rehome them) but we know he is going to be living his best life and having a fine time. So it is a see you again one day love. It's not goodbye.

A Gentle Giant's Journey

Heavy Horse Heaven's a quiet grieving space
Where six years of Busta's joy once filled this place.
Our gentle Clydesdale, with a heart so grand,
Has crossed the Rainbow Bridge, hoof-in-hand.

His Shivers, a challenge he bravely bore,
Managed with love, and so much more.
But time, it moves on, and farewell we must say,
As Busta moves on for a brighter new day.

Oh, the joy he found in a stubbie of beer,
A quirky delight that always brought cheer.
And licorice, a treat, a sweet, dark delight,
Leaving fond memories, ever so bright.

At Heavy Horse Heaven, his spirit shone true,
Loved by volunteers, a dedicated crew.
They'll miss his soft nuzzle, his calm, steady gaze,
Especially Kazz, for through all of his days.
She's been the boss lady, whose heart understood,
The gentle giant, in all of his good.

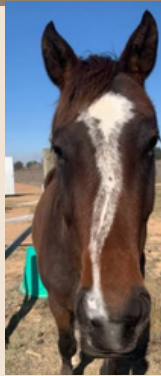
His best mate, dear Diesel, a Shire so grand,
Together they graced the HHH land.
Through pastures they ambled, side by side,
A bond unbreakable, nowhere to hide.

And Matt, his kind farrier, with skillful, soft grace,
Cared for his hooves, right here in this place.
While Sinnead, with massages, so tender and deep,
Helped soothe his muscles, to help him to sleep.

Now raise a glass high, for our Busta, dear friend,
His life full of love, right up to the end.
Though tears may fall, and hearts may feel sore,
His spirit will gallop, forevermore.

Ready for her new home

HHHEmily



Rescue Roundup

HHHEmily, a dark bay Warmblood mare, is approximately 15.2 hands high and four years old. She has distinctive markings, including a stripe and two hind socks. Emily, also known as "Lil Emmy" or "Velcro Pony," was admitted into our care in April 2023 as a two-year-old, suffering from severe emaciation.

Emmy has spent most of her time with her foster carer regaining her health and learning to be a horse within a large, supportive herd. She is now ready to find her special person.

Emmy understands the basics of leading, tying up, and picking up her hooves. While she is still very green, she's a quick learner when her teacher is patient and calm. She will need an experienced individual to continue her education. Emmy can be a little challenging to catch at times and remains wary of sudden movements. She has worn a surcingle once without any issues and is now ready to begin her journey under saddle.

With her naturally floating trot, Emmy shows great potential for dressage, though she could certainly excel in any discipline. She is currently barefoot and receives regular trims from Matt Fordham. Her teeth were recently attended to by Dr. Emma Mainprize in May, and she is up-to-date with her worming and 2-in-1 vaccination.

Emmy is an absolute sweetheart with immense potential and an abundance of love to offer. Her ideal person will be kind, patient, and confident, with a solid understanding of biomechanics and the skills to help her truly shine. Her fee is \$2000. If you think this is you and you'd like to offer this wonderful mare a loving home, please fill in the application form:



[Application form - HHHEmily](#)



May “spot the difference solutions”



From Top of page to bottom:

- 1.Missing top-knot
- 2.Eye more “bulgy” (yes, it is a word – well it is now)
- 3.Tree has been cut down
- 4.Left horse has gone deaf
- 5.Missing colouration in nostril
- 6.Dentist has been
- 7.No steam rising from cup
- 8.Pattern gone from coffee mug
- 9.Cupcake must have been eaten
- 10.No coaster under coffee mug

28 May 2025 - a word from Kazz

It's a pretty tough day here at HHH HQ today as we laid our big floofy sweet Busta to rest.

This beautiful soul was our mascot, our friend, our rock and our all round good guy from the day he set his big hoof on our hearts in October of 2019.

Busta loved everyone and everything. He taught so many of our vols confidence and love and how not to be afraid of big things. He made us laugh with his big goofy antics from shoving his head into the centre of a round bale and coming out covered in hay to snorting at our barn cat and giving her the fright of her life.

He knew when some of our volunteers and visitors needed a little something extra and always treated everyone with such respect and love. The hoof prints he has left on our hearts is unfillable, but we will always be grateful to have had him in our lives for this long.

We knew he was compromised from day one with shivers and we promised him that when things got to the point we couldn't keep him comfortable that we would honour him and let him fly free. Today was that day.

Our thanks go to our amazing professional team **Matt Fordham Equine Hoofcare Professional** , **Boyne Equine Health - Sinead McCann**, **Mainprize Veterinary Services** and **James Picton Equine Chiropractor** for the care and love they have given our big man over the years.

And thanks to Dr Stuart from **Yass Valley Veterinary** for his compassionate help in sending him across the rainbow bridge this morning.

Fly free beautiful Busta. We love you