

Police horse is put out to pasture

A police horse that was on the Hampden pitch to quell unrest after Hibernian defeated Rangers in the 2016 Scottish Cup final is beginning a well-earned retirement after more than a decade of service.

Inverness, a 17-hands high Clydesdale cross, spent 12 years assisting Police Scotland at some of the most high-profile events in the country.

During an illustrious career, unflappable Inverness helped police the 2014 Commonwealth Games, Cop 26 in Glasgow, The Open Golf Championship, concerts and numerous Old Firm and Edinburgh derby football fixtures.

He was on duty at Hampden Park when fans invaded the pitch after Hibernian beat Rangers 3-2 in the Scottish Cup final in 2016.

He was one of a dozen dispatched onto the pitch to help restore order as horses were deployed at the national stadium for the first time in 30 years.

He was also called upon to help deal with disorder in Glasgow's George Square following Rangers' Scottish Premiership title victory in 2021. Thousands of fans marched from Ibrox Stadium to celebrate in the square, resulting in a

large-scale disturbance with more than 50 arrests.

Inverness, who celebrated his 20th birthday in June last year, with a cake presented by his rider PC Hay, will spend his twilight years in Buckinghamshire at the Horse Trust charity, which specialises in providing retirement and respite for former police and army service horses.

Constable Claire Knowles, Instructor and Assessor with Police Scotland's Mounted Unit, said: "Inverness has had a full and varied career during his 12-years with the mounted unit and been in partnership with many riders.

"He attended major football matches, concerts, marches and processions as part of his front-line duties.

"He was at the Commonwealth Games in 2014, Cop 26 in 2021 and the Open Golf championships at Royal Troon in 2024.

"Inverness also played an important role in the teaching of officers joining the mounted unit. This included being part of Standard Equitation Courses. Many recruits will no doubt remember how he helped tone their core muscles.

"His talents include being able to jog at a slow pace and canter extremely quickly on the spot, all attributes that have made him an interesting mount.

"Inverness is an affectionate horse in the stable and he has little quirks, like hating the rain. He will be sorely missed by everyone.

"We wish him all the best in his retirement and look forward to visiting him in his new home with the Horse Trust."

Janette Allen, chief executive of the Horse Trust, said: "Inverness seems to be full of character, he's a big boy and seems to be a bit of a cheeky chappie, with a bit of personality.

“He will be in isolation for a couple of weeks and then he will be out with the herd and we will find out who he wants to be friends with.

“The former service horses have a twilight of natural living that they absolutely thrive on.”

Mounted officers carry out public order patrols and are a presence at sporting events, demonstrations and processions as well as open ground searches for missing persons, where they can get into areas that vehicles would be unable to access.

Heroic horses that have served in the police and military receive no government support once they can no longer work and for over 138 years the Horse Trust has been bridging that gap.

The charity cares for around 120 horses and ponies at any one time, costing £134,000 a month, and is totally reliant on public support.



Police horse Inverness at Mounted Unit.



Police horse Inverness at Mounted Unit



Police horse Inverness at Golf Open