Boasting 25 worldwide contributors the wealth of knowledge brought together is impressive and makes for inspiring reading. This book is aimed at a wide ranging audience, from sport horse owners and trainers to postgraduates in physiology. An intricate level of detail is provided enabling the reader to make informed decisions with regard to training, nutrition, management and treatment of athletic horses.

The book is divided into 8 sections. The first focuses on the horse as an athlete, with an interesting resumé of why horses are able to perform intense physical exercise so efficiently. This section also covers the use, limitations and future potential of exercise testing in the field.

The second section is by far the largest and deals with the musculoskeletal system. Here all components of the system are discussed with a chapter on each of the following; muscular, skeletal, joints, tendons and ligaments. Each chapter starts with a thorough review of the physiology, leads on to the implications of exercise and training and concludes with current theories on diagnostic, preventative and treatment options available for different disease states.

In the third and fourth sections the physiology of both the respiratory and cardiovascular systems are written about in as much detail. The adaptive changes that occur in response to exercise and training and the specialised ways in which the horse deals with high intensity exertion are written about in great depth.

The remaining 4 sections in the book, those on metabolism and nutrition, fluids and electrolytes, haematology and immunology and the gastrointestinal system are approached in a similar manner, complementing the aforementioned sections.

This book has been well laid out and indexed making for easy use. Although at first the lack of colour pictures may seem a little disappointing, the numerous illustrations used are clear and well annotated.

The result is a comprehensive book giving the reader an understanding of the fundamentals of equine exercise physiology whilst incorporating recent advances and expert opinions on how best to modify training techniques to maximise the potential of athletic horses. Whilst the depth and complexity of discussion may deter part of the target audience, i.e. those not responsible for primary veterinary care of athletic horses, I would strongly recommend it to everyone with an interest in equine physiology or veterinary science.

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